

## Beginning Employment First Implementation in Oregon

### Employment First Training and Technical Assistance Final Report

#### A. Introduction

This report summarizes the strategies and activities performed under Contract #138724 by the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) and its subcontractors during the period June 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Contracted activities have included developing a summary of state, regional and national resources related to Employment First, surveying stakeholders related to training needs, completing a training and technical assistance plan for the year 2012-2013, contracting with subject matter experts, delivering training and technical assistance, providing monthly messaging on Employment First strategies and resources, building the capacity of communities by supporting and monitoring 11 local Employment First Teams, providing advice to DHS leadership, and assisting in implementing the specific project plan associated with ODEP funds. This report also includes an evaluation of the overall project impact and recommendations related to the sustainability of training and technical assistance capacity. The report confirms and verifies that all requirements of the contract have been met.



#### Statewide Employment First Implementation Project 2012-2013

**Project Partnerships.** To fulfill the requirements of this contract WISE implemented the strategy of building local capacity by joining forces with Oregon's primary technical assistance group for developmental disabilities services—the Oregon Technical Assistance Corporation (OTAC)—to respond to the Request for Proposals for the Implementation Project. The partnership was designed to ensure that an ongoing capability for training and technical assistance on Employment First would be developed in Oregon. Working with OTAC also expanded the number of staff working on the project.

WISE also developed an agreement with Griffin-Hammis Associates as a key project collaborator to provide specialty training in the core competency areas of Discovery, career planning, marketing, customized employment, and self-employment.

In addition to the OTAC and Griffin-Hammis partnerships, WISE developed collaborative relationships on behalf of Oregon's Employment First efforts to expand the resources available to the project: The State of Washington, also contracting with WISE related to Employment First, agreed to share webinars with Oregonians, and the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER) at the University of Washington coordinated their training in Oregon through WISE and agreed to focus on Employment First topics. WISE also worked to support Oregon's efforts with the grant the state received from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), trying to coordinate that resource with the Implementation Project. The Employment First Implementation project also

contracted with both in-state and out-of-state experts to provide trainers for a wide variety of scheduled seminar topics.

**Project Staff.** The Employment First Statewide Implementation Project in 2012-2013 was staffed by a group of individuals with substantial supported employment experience in Oregon, nationally, and internationally. These staff members are:

*Cesilee Coulson, Lead Project Manager and Executive Director of the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment.* Ces brings 20 years of experience in training and development to her position, including board development, community development, leadership development, strategic plan development and non-profit management. She has experience in facilitating public policy implementation and process; has designed, implemented and managed local, statewide and national projects related to employment; and provided technical assistance to urban and rural communities, providers, and families on systems design and employment issues. Ces holds certifications as an Executive Coach by the Hudson Institute and a Somatic Executive and Leadership Coach by the Strozzi Institute. She is a board member for the National APSE Foundation and a past National APSE board member (Treasurer) and current past President of Partnership 2020 (a Washington State association of supported employment agencies). She holds a Masters Degree in Social Psychology/Exercise and Movement Science from the University of Oregon. Cesilee's role as Lead Project Manager for the Employment First Implementation Project included strategic planning, supporting staff, training and facilitating sessions, and working with ODDS leadership on strategic implementation decisions.

*Jim Corey, Project Coordinator and Senior Program Manager, WISE.* Jim is a trainer and technical assistance provider specializing in person-centered employment planning, self-employment, and innovative project development. He has over 19 years of experience serving the developmental disability community including work as an employment service provider, employment program supervisor, state vocational rehabilitation counselor, mental health counselor, residential program manager, and trainer. He has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from Washington & Lee University. Within the Employment First project, Jim acted as the contract manager, ensuring compliance with contractual obligations, supported several of the local Employment First Teams, took the lead on training event logistics and coordination, led Employment First messaging efforts, and provided training and facilitation. His expertise in benefits planning and use of video technology has been a gift to the Employment First project.

*Joyce Dean, Project Associate and Senior Partner, Dean/Ross Associates.* Joyce has 33 years of experience related to employment services for persons with I/DD. She worked with the University of Oregon's Employment Projects for 30 years, as part of the team of researchers that led work on supported employment in the 1980s and 1990s. She has worked as a national and international consultant and trainer on supported employment. Based on her special interest in quality systems management, she authored the book, *Quality Improvement in Employment and Other Human Services: Managing for Quality through Change*. This book addressed strategies for changeover to supported

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employment from facility-based services, applying principles and methods of continuous quality improvement. Joyce served as Project Coordinator for the Technical Assistance Brokerage, funded at the University of Oregon through Oregon's first state systems change grant on supported employment. This work included planning and coordinating a series of "changeover forums" that provided training and dialog to support executive directors to change from facility-based to integrated employment. Her expertise in systematic instruction techniques, including task design and task analysis, as well as graphic recording, facilitation, and design of personnel training events have been invaluable to this project. She also has worked as a classroom teacher for teenagers with severe disabilities, program manager for a non-profit provider organization, and director of a model demonstration site for the University of Oregon. Within the Employment First Project, Joyce supported several local Employment First teams, assisted in designing the Oregon Employment Learning Network, helped with messaging, and acted as project evaluator. Joyce holds a Master's in Education, specializing in Severe Behavioral Handicaps, from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

*Brandi Monts, Program Manager, WISE.* Brandi has over twelve years of experience working in the field of developmental disabilities. Her previous positions include residential services, supported employment, transition from school to work, teaching, and county government. Realizing her commitment to the disability field early in her education, Brandi earned a BA in Social Work from the University of Washington and later went on to obtain a Master in Public Administration, with a focus on Public Policy at The Evergreen State College. Brandi's interests and expertise include agency organization, public policy and practice, community organizing, service systems collaboration, and wrap around service coordination for people with significant support needs. Brandi also taught English in Japan and is interested in multi-cultural service coordination and international disability issues, including efforts surrounding the United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Within the Employment First project, Brandi was part of the team responsible to develop the inventory of local, state and national resources for integrated employment, assisted in designing the training and technical assistance plan, presented web training session on introduction to supported employment and provided support at events.

*Mary Anne Seaton, Executive Director, OTAC.* Mary Anne brings over 35 years of experience in developing, directing and implementing training programs that have helped to change how Oregon supports individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families. Her professional experiences have been greatly influenced by her son who has autism. Mary Anne joined OTAC's staff in 1995, after years of being a very active advocate. Her role within the Employment First project included strategic planning, staff support, assisting in design of training and technical assistance, coordinating with ODDS, and working with organizations in Oregon to promote Employment First.

*Debra McLean, Project Specialist, OTAC.* Debra is a highly-respected national and international consultant and trainer focusing on helping organizations to help people find and keep employment. Since 1981, she has been intrigued with community-building and person-centered planning as a way to see individuals who have a variety of support needs succeed in jobs that fit them. She has worked for

the University of Oregon and Oregon Health Sciences University on a number of projects. She has taught classes on community employment and person-centered planning at Portland State University, Highline Community College and throughout the U.S. and Australia. Debra holds a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and Deafness. Debra played a critical role in the Employment First project, coordinating the Oregon Employment Learning Network which provided Core Supported Employment Training and technical assistance to individuals and organizations from throughout Oregon. In addition, Debra assisted in designing the training and technical assistance plan, provided training, and participated on a Local Employment First team. Her unique knowledge and skills have been at the center of the Oregon Employment First Implementation Project.

*Alan Lytle, Technology Lead and Project Specialist, OTAC.* Alan has many years of experience providing direct supports, managing group homes, and providing quality assurance and training. At OTAC, Alan has a lead role in the ISP Support Request system, the ISP Pipeline Newsletter, OTAC's website, and web-based learning formats. Alan developed and manages the Employment First project website, [employment-first.org](http://employment-first.org), which provides a training calendar, resource inventory, links to monthly Employment First messages, as well as information on Employment First teams and OELN. Alan also developed the Moodle site to support OELN trainers and participants, including access to course materials and communications.

*C.J. Webb, Project Specialist, OTAC.* At OTAC, C.J. provides trainings on the 24-hour Residential Individual Support Plan process and specific employment trainings to assist people with disabilities to be employed. She has been a facilitator of Personal Future Plans since 1996 and is a certified Person-Centered Thinking trainer. Prior to working at OTAC, she worked for a non-profit provider organization, coordinating employment services for people with intellectual and mental health disabilities. In addition to her experience, C.J. has a degree in psychology. She loves working with people and has a strong belief that all people can be valuable workers, contributing to their local communities. C.J. has assisted in designing the training and technical assistance plan, led the development and updating of the local, state and national resources inventory, participated as a member of the Clackamas County Employment First team, and provided support for training events.

*Emily Harris, Project Specialist, OTAC.* Emily has worked as an Employment Specialist at Trillium Employment Services in the State of Washington, one of the pioneer supported employment agencies in the United States. She is committed to the concept of inclusion and full participation. Emily has had the good fortune to be affiliated with people with disabilities throughout her life. Her perspective brings a tremendous amount of enthusiasm to working at OTAC. Emily values and advocates for people with disabilities. She knows that employment is critical to equity. In this endeavor Emily has worked with a number of community organizations focused on community outreach and inclusion. Emily graduated from Portland State University with a BS in English and Women Studies. Within the Employment First project, Emily has provided training on using information technology such as iPads to support individuals with I/DD at work and at home, as well as providing support for Employment First events.

*Teresa Idris, Project Specialist, OTAC.* Until March 16, 2013, when our respected colleague and friend Teresa Idris unexpectedly passed away, Teresa supported the Employment First project through maintaining relationships and visibility for Employment First with the Oregon Rehabilitation Association and other Oregon groups. She assisted in designing the training and technical assistance plan, provided training support to the OELN leaders and supported ongoing project design through her insight into the employment provider network. Teresa was a strong force in this project, at OTAC, and in the Learning Community for Person-Centered Practices. Teresa led the ISP project team and recently had completed her Master's degree in Business Administration.

The breadth and depth of experience, knowledge and skills represented by this group of staff provided an invaluable resource to the project.

## **B. Employment First Implementation Activities 2012-2013**

This report summarizes the activities and deliverables of the Employment First Implementation Team. All deliverables were submitted on time, throughout the project, and reported in the next *Monthly Billing Back-up* (also referred to as *Monthly Training and TA Report*), with a link to the document as appropriate.

### **a. Training Needs and Resources Inventory**

#### **(1) Inventory of Oregon Providers' training needs**

*By June 30, 2012, using input from state agencies and stakeholder association representatives, Contractor will develop a survey for electronic distribution to identify Provider training needs. Contractor will provide DHS with a draft survey for approval prior to distribution.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.a.(1)(a)

## **Survey Development**

*Training Needs Survey Items.* The Employment First Implementation Project team developed draft survey items through reviewing the request for proposals for this project, the guidelines from the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), and the curriculum from Highline Community College's Employment Professional Certificate program, and through discussions with state agencies and stakeholders. Project staff edited the draft survey items prior to submission for approval by ODDS. The project submitted the draft survey to ODDS by June 30, and again with a link in the *June Training and TA Monthly Report*. The Implementation Team requested approval or suggested edits by July 13 to allow distribution by July 16. WISE received approval from ODDS for distribution of the survey within the desired timeframe.

*Survey Format.* The project entered the questions into an on-line survey using the Survey Monkey system, and sent out a link to the survey to the various mailing lists and partners. The survey included a total of nine items, six of which asked the respondent to "check all that apply" from the provided list. Most questions included space for entering open-ended comments.

The final survey questions were:

1. What is your role? (check all that apply)
2. What county(ies) do you work in or receive services in? (check all that apply)
3. Please select the Employment-related topics listed below which might be of interest to you or your community (check all that apply.)
4. In addition, are you interested in attending webinar or face-to-face training on any of these topics? (check all that apply)
5. (optional) Please provide names of any specific trainers you would like to see present on one of these topics in your area.
6. (optional) Do you know of any other training events occurring in the next year which we might want to share with the Employment First partners statewide?
7. Which type of training are you most likely to participate in? (check all that apply)
8. What format(s) do you prefer your materials to be in? (check all that apply)
9. Please share any comments or suggestions about how we can maximize the effectiveness of Employment First's limited training and technical assistance resources in the next year?

*Target Recipient Groups.* Although contracted to identify Provider training needs, ODDS encouraged the project to survey several stakeholder groups in Oregon on their training needs related to Employment First. These groups included vocational and residential service providers, family members, self-advocates, advocates, Community Developmental Disability Program staff, Brokerage staff, Vocational Rehabilitation, state staff, and others. The project used email lists from both WiSe (Employment First stakeholders who have signed up to receive the monthly messages) and OTAC. In addition, the project provided the survey link to other partners, including the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), who distributed the link to their mailing lists.

*By July 30, 2012, Contractor will complete a statewide survey and provide a written report to DHS of the survey results. The report shall include:*

- i. a summary of the survey results and comments made by participants in the survey; and*
- ii. Recommendations for training design and content including any revisions in activities or approaches for the Employment First project.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.a.(1)(b)

*Survey Process and Timing.* The survey link was distributed on July 16. We are unable to estimate an unduplicated count of recipients due to the distribution methodology through partner mailing lists. Because the link was sent via separate mailing lists by partners, some recipients received the link more than once. The email instructed the recipients to complete the survey by the July 25 deadline.

*Survey Responses.* A total of 287 responses were received, representing service providers, family members, self-advocates, advocates, Community Developmental Disability Program staff, Brokerage staff, Vocational Rehabilitation, state staff, and others, and represented all 36 Oregon counties. Most surveys received included responses to all items.

### **Summary of Survey Results**

Project staff reviewed survey results as a whole and segregated by stakeholder group. [Click here to view the full results.](#) All topics included in the survey were checked by more than one-third of the respondents—indicating that Oregon stakeholders have the need for a wide range of topics related to community employment.

A total of 248 people responded to the question, “Please select the Employment-related topics listed below which might be of interest to you or your community (check all that apply.)” Across all stakeholders, the eight topics with the greatest interest by stakeholders were:

- **Marketing and Job Development:** Includes community-building (e.g., community mapping, networking); employer leadership; job development (e.g., researching, approaching employers, using portfolios, job carving, negotiating hours and wages); writing employment proposals; and resources for employers (e.g., tax incentives, WorkSource, Job Accommodation Network). (57.7%)
- **Discovery and Career Planning:** Includes: discovery process, community-based assessment; Person-Centered employment planning (including goals, transferrable skills, support strategies); portfolio development. (57.3%)

- Job Coaching: Natural Supports: Includes identifying and developing natural supports, teaching coworkers to train and support individuals, and ongoing relationships with employers (e.g., communications, negotiating job enhancements). (56.5%)
- Systems, Partners and Resources for Employment: Includes Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Service (OVRS), partnerships with families and schools, intellectual/developmental disability services and waiver programs, braided funding, system navigation, WorkSource and One-Stops. (51.2%)
- Job Coaching: Support Strategies: Includes behavioral supports at work, structure and visual supports. (51.6%)
- Transition from School to Work: Includes work experience, navigating the systems (OVRS, DD, Schools), and best practices in transition. (51.2%)
- Job Coaching: Task Design and Training: Includes task design and accommodations (e.g., job aids, assistive and information technology), task analysis, systematic instruction, and fading. (49.2%)
- Managing Benefits: Includes benefits planning, Social Security Work Incentives (e.g., PASS, IRWE), medical benefits (e.g., Employed Persons with Disabilities Program, Medicaid), and State of Oregon benefits. (48.0%)

No topic was checked by less than 38% of respondents. Even “Organizational Change” (including, planning for changing from facility-based services to community employment, supporting staff in dispersed locations, enlisting board support, managing dual programs, and changing roles and responsibilities), which would be of interest primarily to service provider managers, was checked by 38.7% of respondents.

When asked, “In addition, are you interested attending webinar or face-to-face training on any of these topics? (check all that apply),” more than 45% of 222 respondents indicated interest in: Person Centered Employment Planning (58.1%), Community Building (56.3%), Assistive Technology (53.6%), and Communication systems for people who are nonverbal communicators (51.4%). Only “Employer Leadership” had less interest, at 37.4% of respondents.

In response to the question, “Which type of training are you most likely to participate in? (check all that apply),” 74.4% of the 238 respondents preferred “In-person training - three (3) hours (1/2 day).” However, 63.4% of respondents indicated they were likely also to participate in an “Online webinar event - one (1) to two (2) hours.” Only 36.6% of respondents indicated they were most likely to participate in “In-person training - six (6) hours (full day).”

For the question, “What format(s) do you prefer your materials to be in? (check all that apply),” 79.0% of respondents indicated they want to download and/or print materials; 52.9% preferred paper handouts in trainings. Only 22.7% of respondents wanted to be able to view materials on their mobile device, smart phone, iPad, or tablet.

Thirty-five respondents made suggestions when asked: “Please share any comments or suggestions about how we can maximize the effectiveness of Employment First's limited training and technical assistance resources in the next year?” [Click here to see these responses.](#)

### **Recommendations for Training Design and Content**

Based on the results of the survey, Oregon stakeholders have a need for a broad range of training topics related to employment in community settings. Therefore, the Employment First Outreach Team made the following recommendations, based on survey results, project staff experience with employment, and meetings with ODDS personnel:

1. Establish **a series of ongoing training events targeting employment specialists** that will include most of the topics identified as components of the Core Supported Employment Training (CSET) listed in the contract and most of those identified as “interesting” to survey respondents. Because employment specialists need a wide range of skills, including discovery, marketing, job development, systematic training, and support strategies, the project felt that investing in a set of employment specialists across time would give Oregon a cadre of well-trained, effective personnel, rather than staff who gain knowledge in only one topic area.
2. Rather than carry out a series of separate technical assistance visits, hold **a series of forums for directors and managers** of employment services and alternative to employment programs to assist them as a group to plan for and accomplish organizational change.
3. Include both the Employment Specialists training series and the forums for directors and managers on organizational change in a joint series to form the **“Oregon Employment Learning Network (OELN).”** This series of training events and forums was designed to include a cohort of provider agency directors, managers, line staff, and independent contractors who wanted to build their capacity to expand employment. The intention of the design was to bring a team of people from each participating organization, consisting of at least one Employment Specialist and at least one director or manager so that participants could support each other between events for implementing new knowledge and skills. OELN participants learned, practiced, and supported each other, applying vital skills and strategies gained from each other, as well as from local and national trainers and mentors. The series kicked off in September 2012.

4. Take advantage of webinars as a low-cost format to extend training resources to a broader range of topics, available to anyone in Oregon with an interest. The project planned to host a **Webinar series** with, on average, two sessions per month available for a small fee (\$30 per seat, 'sharing' of seats was encouraged). The Employment First Implementation Project Team selected a wide array of topics relevant to employment, to meet the needs expressed in the survey results, as well as to address some of the CSET topics.
5. Provide **“Specialty In-Person Trainings”**--face-to-face training in several locations on specific topics. Foremost among these was Discovery. We collaborated with Griffin-Hammis on this topic because of their unique approach to Discovery in their training on “Discovering Personal Genius”. This training honors person-centered practices while recognizing the unique characteristics of the individual. Our experience with this training in Washington State led us to select Griffin-Hammis. We had experienced first-hand the benefit of this training with direct employment line staff.

## (2) Resources Inventory

*By August 30, 2012, Contractor will complete and submit to DHS, for use by ODDS, a review of existing state, regional, and national training resources to meet the training needs identified by Contractor in training needs inventory (Section 2.a.(1)). The review of resources may include curricula, webinars, and articles used or recommended for use in the planned training and Technical Assistance.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.a.(2)

*Development Process.* Employment First Implementation Project staff gathered information from the project team, completed internet searches, and reviewed resource sites to find useful resources and to develop main headings for the Inventory.

*Summary of Resources Inventory.* The original inventory included approximately 40 items. At this time, the inventory includes over 60 resources and several success stories. The current Inventory can be found at: <http://employment-first.org/resources/> and at <http://www.scoop.it/t/employment-resources/> . These sites present the inventory in two formats, one for users who prefer a more visual approach.

Topics in the Inventory include:

- Employment First and Other National Efforts
- Career Development and Planning with the Person
  - Discovery
  - Transition from School to Work
- Job Development and Marketing
  - Customized Employment

- Job Carving
- Self-employment
- Job Accommodation Information
  - Employment Success Stories
- Job Coaching and Long-term Supports
  - Systematic Instruction
- Resources to Access Services

The link to the original Resources Inventory was provided to ODDS in the August Billing Back-up. [Click here to access the August report.](#)

*Contractor will update the training resources review on at least a quarterly basis and the updated resources will be included as part of the ongoing written reports to ODDS, the newsletter, and the web information.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.a.(3)

### **(3) Quarterly Updates to the Resources Inventory**

*Updates.* The project completed quarterly updates to the Resources Inventory, in December 2012, March 2013, and May 2013. Updates included some materials from the Oregon Employment Learning Network. In addition, staff completed additional research to add resources to expand information on selected topics.

*Dissemination of information about the inventory and its updates.* Information about the Resources Inventory and its updates were provided in written reports to ODDS, the Employment First newsletter, other newsletters, emails, through Employment First Teams, and on the website.

**b. Development and Management of Overall Training and Supported Employment Training**

*Core Supported Employment Training (CSET) Plan.* The contract defines Core Supported Employment Training:

**Core Supported Employment Training (CSET)** means training developed and matched to a support provider organization's demonstration of evidence based core competency. Core competency areas identified by the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) are: (a) introduction to supported employment (values, roles and responsibilities); (b) discovery and career planning; (c) marketing and job development, including customized job development; (d) training (job analysis, systematic instruction); (e) on-going-natural supports; (f) managing benefits; (g) organizational change; (h) self-employment; and (i) technology and assistive technology. (Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 1.e.).

The staff of the Employment First Implementation Project Team developed a plan to address each of the topics included in the definition. The plan was first provided to ODDS for review and approval in early

*Within 60 days of the Contract effective date, Contractor will submit a written plan to DHS for the regular on-going statewide delivery of Core Supported Employment Training to meet the identified core competency areas for the term of the Contract. The CSET plan developed by the Contractor will be reviewed and approved by DHS before implementation. The statewide training as described in the CSET plan will begin in September 2012.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.b.(1)

August. ODDS approved the basic framework for the plan—ongoing OELN training for a cadre of Employment Specialists and Organizational Leaders, webinars, and face-to-face specialty trainings. The core of the plan was the design of OELN as a vehicle for delivering CSET training: working with both organizational leaders and Employment Specialists in separate but overlapping tracks with representatives from the same agencies in both tracks. This design assured that a core group of people and agencies would receive sufficient training and support to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to expand integrated community employment in their communities. In addition, it assured that Employment Specialists acquiring new skills and perspectives could expect to receive managerial support for implementing new methods.

For most CSET topics, the plan presented CSET content both via webinar and at in-person events (i.e., at the OELN series, at Specialty In-Person Trainings, and at the Meet at the Mountain II). Table 1 summarizes the formats planned for each CSET topic.

**Table 1. CSET Topics by Training Format**

	Webinar	OELN-Empl. Specialists	OELN-Org. Leaders	Specialty In-person	Meet at the Mountain
Introduction to supported employment	✓	✓	✓		
Discovery and career planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marketing and job development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Training (job analysis, systematic instruction)	✓	✓		✓	
On-going natural supports	✓	✓		✓	
Managing benefits	✓			✓	
Organizational change		✓	✓		✓
Self-employment	✓			✓	✓*
Technology and assistive technology	✓				✓

✓\* = not included in original plan, but this became a self-organized session at the Meet at the Mountain based on participant request and action.

The plan also expanded contract resources by including access to webinars sponsored by the State of Washington, coordinating seminars available to Oregon from the University of Washington's Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation, and accessing resources from Oregon's grant from the federal Office of Disability Employment Programs.

The plan was approved by ODDS as presented.

*Communication and Messaging to Stakeholders about Available CSET.* The Employment First Implementation Project Team developed an Employment First Training and Technical Assistance website at [www.employment-first.org](http://www.employment-first.org) to host the training calendar, post messages, store and access our Resources Inventory and database, and serve as the go-to place for training information and collaboration throughout the year. In addition, the project established a *Moodle.com* online classroom to coordinate classroom rosters, materials, assignments, and communications with members of OELN. The project used the software *Constant Contact* for messaging, event invitations, and event registration, and the *Webex* online webinar platform. Monthly messages included links to upcoming events. Each Monthly Billing Back-up report included information on the number or recipients of messages. Each month, beginning with the September 2012 report, Billing Back-up includes a table reporting statistics related to monthly messages. Between September and the end of May 2013, each message was sent to approximately 1000 recipients and the "open rate" improved across the year from a low of 17.8% in September to 27.7% for the May 2013 message.

Specifically, upcoming offerings appeared in the margin on the right in the newsletters, in stand-alone invitations sent monthly, and on the Employment First Training and Technical Assistance website calendar.

*Management of CSET Logistics Related to Sites, Trainers and Registration.* WISE and OTAC shared responsibility for finding low-cost sites (for example, OTAC was able to find a free site for holding three of OELN's four sessions) and coordinating with trainers. Oregonians wishing to register for an event, in most cases, were able to sign up through an on-line system. Only OELN required individuals to submit a written application for participation.

OELN sessions formed the core of CSET training offered by the project. [Click here to see the final version of the application](#) for OELN. Completed applications were due August 13, 2012. While the project anticipated including approximately 15-20 persons and a similar number of organizations in each OELN track, over 50 Employment Specialists and more than 30 Organizational Leaders applied. Rather than select only the number anticipated, the project decided to open the series to all applicants. One project mantra has been "Follow the energy" and the applications for OELN exhibited that energy. Although dramatically expanding the number of participants presented substantial logistical issues, the project

*Contractor will manage the statewide delivery of CSET as described in the CSET plan. Management of the CSET will include: (a) assuring timely communication and accurate messaging to stakeholders about available CSET; (b) management of the CSET logistics related to sites, trainers, and registration; and (c) evaluation of CSET events and reporting of evaluation results to DHS*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.b.(2)

felt it was important to support all who had shown interest in organizational change and in acquiring a core set of Employment Specialist skills. Over the course of the year, a total of 95 persons were included as "active" OELN participants—only five of whom dropped out of the series, usually due to leaving their position. For those who dropped out, organizations were allowed to send substitute participants.

*Evaluation of CSET Training and Reporting Results to DHS.* Either paper and pencil or on-line evaluation forms (via Survey Monkey) were provided for each event. Results of evaluations, by event, have been summarized and reported to DHS in the monthly Billing Back-up reports. Overall, participants were very pleased with the content, presenters, and logistics for all events, whichever format was used:

- The average level of satisfaction across webinars was 4.27 out of 5 possible points.
- The average level of satisfaction across OELN sessions, including the Meet at the Mountain II, was 4.24 out of 5 possible points.
- The average level of satisfaction across Specialty in-Person Trainings was 4.53 out of 5 possible points.

### (3) Overall Training and Technical Assistance Plan

*Contractor will submit an overall training and technical assistance strategic plan (TA Plan) to DHS for the delivery of the training and Technical Assistance activities described in Section 2.d. Contractor will submit a draft TA plan to DHS within 60 days of the Contract effective date for DHS' review and approval. Contractor will submit a final TA Plan within 90 days of the Contract effective date.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.b.(3)

Training events on CSET topics were included as part of the overall training and technical assistance plan submitted to DHS. The final approved set of events is available on the [employment-first.org](http://employment-first.org) website.

### (4) CSET Components and Technical Assistance Support Materials

*The CSET components and Technical Assistance support materials developed by the Contractor and the CSET strategies identified by Contractor under this Contract shall be available on a variety of media platforms, e.g., conference calls, web based courses, webinars, PowerPoint presentations, and in person presentations. Contractor shall choose the media platform for the CSET components and Technical Assistance support materials. CSET components and Technical Assistance materials will be made available by the Contractor in alternate formats upon request by DHS.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.b.(4)

*Media Platforms.* The Employment First Implementation Project Team developed an Employment First Training and Technical Assistance website at <http://www.employment-first.org> to host the training calendar, post messages, store and access our resources inventory and database, and serve as the go-to place for training information and collaboration throughout the year. In addition, the project established a *Moodle.com* online classroom to coordinate classroom rosters, materials, assignments, and communications with members of OELN. The Resources Inventory, described previously, includes many materials from sponsored events, as well as from other sources. The inventory can be accessed at <http://employment-first.org/resources/> and, in a more visual format, at <http://www.scoop.it/t/employment-resources/>. The Monthly Messages included information on topics relevant to Employment First, as well as links to materials, other websites, and upcoming events.

*Requests for alternate formats.* No requests were received from DHS for materials in alternate formats.

**c. CSET Communications****(1) Monthly Employment First Communications**

*Support and Contributions to DHS Web Page.* The Employment First Implementation Project Team has forwarded all messages to DHS for posting on the DHS Employment First website.

*Employment First Electronic Newsletter.* The project issued a monthly, and sometimes bi-monthly, newsletter highlighting relevant Employment First content and/or events. Topics included planned training and technical assistance available for 2012-13, job development, discovery and career planning, job coaching and natural supports, transition, the Governor's Executive Order on Employment First, and a summary of the Meet at the Mountain II. Messages are available on the Employment First website: <http://employment-first.org/messages/> and were provided to DHS for the DHS webpage and other targeted communication platforms. Each month, the message was sent to approximately 1000 recipients, with only around 6-7% bounces. The electronic newsletter had an open rate that grew over

*Contractor will maintain the Employment First communications by providing technological support and contributing to the content. The Employment First monthly communications will be provided to stakeholders across Oregon on the DHS web page and other targeted communication platforms.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.c.(1)

the project year from 17.8% to 27.7% of recipients. This open rate falls within the accepted industry standard for electronic communications.

**(2) Improving Stakeholder Utilization of Web Based Materials**

*Contractor will improve stakeholder utilization of web based materials through a series of activities to include: (a) providing user friendly links between the web materials located on the DHS Employment Support, Washington Initiative for Supported Employment, Oregon Technical Assistance Corporation, and Griffin Hammis web sites; and (b) expanding access to communications through the regular use of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.c.(2)

*User-friendly Links Provided.* Newsletters and other messages distributed to stakeholders include user-friendly links for accessing materials, websites, and registration for events, including links to DHS, WISE, OTAC and Griffin-Hammis websites.

On September 18, a representative of the Employment First Implementation Project Team joined a DHS cross-silo Communications Strategy Planning group with members from DHS Communications, OTAC,

WiSe, the Arc, and OCDD. The group discussed how to best reach all our audiences together, and allow DHS access to our user groups. The group discussed FaceBook in depth, and the ability of DHS to manage a FaceBook Communications page with all of the named groups feeding information to it. Various positives and negatives were discussed, including who would manage it. The group committed to meeting via phone once per month to develop communication strategies and to assist DHS with developing its annual Communications Plan. A date for a second meeting was set for October 2. However, to date, no further meetings have been held and the workgroup is not functioning.

*Use of Social Media Platforms.* WISE maintains an active, integrated social media platform. We have a presence on Facebook with several unique pages (WISE, School to Work, Assistive/Information Technology and Employer Outreach), Twitter (@Wisetraining), LinkedIn and YouTube (WiseMovies). Each month there is an integrated visual campaign representing a designated employment theme. Examples include features such as Disability Employment Awareness month, collaboration, partnerships, leadership, and employment success stories. Information is shared daily through our social media sites. We post information on training, resources, success stories and public policy. Our main objectives are to connect people, share important information and expand the conversation into the mainstream community conversation.

#### **d. Training and Technical Assistance Activities**

##### **(1) Scheduled Training Events**

*Contractor will directly provide, or complete the arrangements for, a minimum of 20 regularly scheduled training events. Contractor's provision or arrangement of the training events includes advertising, scheduling, leading or monitoring if provided by others, and evaluation of the events. The training events provided or arranged by the Contractor shall consist of the following: (a) Introduction to Supported Employment: A basic training on values, roles, and responsibilities made available to Provider agencies, Support Service Brokerages, Community Development (sic) Disability Programs, or communities without supported local Employment First teams and other stakeholders. (b) Core Supported Employment Training: Training for employment Providers and other employment personnel that addresses all of the core competencies with a mix of web based training and on-site training across all six regions of Oregon. (c) Statewide Employment Conference: CSET is integrated into a minimum of two statewide employment conferences or summits.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.d.(1)

*Arrangement of Training Events.* The Employment First Implementation Project Team arranged a total of 37 events, took part in conferences and events hosted by others, and hosted in-person specialty trainings. OELN forums, and the statewide Meet at the Mountain II Summit. Each event was either led or supported by one or more Employment First Implementation Project Team member(s). Events were advertised through Monthly Messages and special messages, as well as on the Employment First and other websites. Evaluation was conducted either by pencil and paper or on-line survey for events. The

Monthly Billing Back-up included counts of people who registered for and attended each event. The count of registrants and attendees for webinars underestimates the actual totals, due to the policy of encouraging multiple people to watch a webinar under a single registration.

*Training Content.* The project provided a webinar on Introduction to Supported Employment three times; offered many events that included topics identified as “Core Supported Employment Training” (see Table 1 in previous section); and sponsored or participated in four statewide employment conferences or summits. Table 2 summarizes the topics by event type, including the locations where in-person events occurred.

**Table 2. Event Types, Topics, and Locations Planned by the Employment First Implementation Team**

Event Type	# of Events	Topics	Locations	Notes
Webinars	23 sessions	Supporting People Who Communicate without Words; Negotiation and Conflict Resolution; Basic Job Development Series <sup>1</sup> ; IT/AT Apps for Employment (2) <sup>2</sup> ; Intro to Supported Employment (3); Discovering Personal Genius; The Hidden Job Market; Positive Behavior Support; Managing Benefits; Self-Employment; Job Retention; Marketing to Employers; Tools for Marketing Job Candidates; Nurturing Relationships with Employers; IEPs Leading to Employment; Autism in the Workplace; Autism in the Workplace: A Self-Advocate’s Story; Rotary Partners for Work	NA	<sup>1</sup> Included three 2-hour sessions <sup>2</sup> The number in parentheses indicates the number of times a session was presented, if more than once
Specialty In-Person Training Series	7	Discovering Personal Genius (4 events) <sup>3</sup> Job Development (2 events) Job Coaching (1 event)	Bend, Portland Metro, Eugene, Pendleton Medford, Pendleton Corvallis	<sup>3</sup> These Specialty Trainings were 2 days long
Oregon Employment Learning Network (OELN)	4 (ES) <sup>4</sup> 2 (OL) <sup>5</sup>	ES: National perspective; Developing jobs for persons with significant physical and/or intellectual disabilities; Marketing & Job	Salem, Beaverton (2 sessions), Eugene	<sup>4</sup> Employment Specialists <sup>5</sup> Organization Leaders

*The Contractor will respond to a minimum of ten individual agency or community-based Technical Assistance requests, as approved by ODDS. The stakeholders submitting the TA requests may include Provider agencies, Support Service Brokerages, Community Development (sic) Disability Programs, or communities without supported local Employment First teams. Contractor’s Technical Assistance provided in response to the requests from stakeholders will focus upon moving from non-work to integrated employment, overall organizational change, and addressing choice in self-directed environments*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.d.(2)

Event Type	# of Events	Topics	Locations	Notes
		Development; Discovery; Marketing using the Benevon Model; Task Design, Task Analysis, Systematic Instruction <sup>6</sup> OL: Developing a Blueprint for Change; Changing: Keepin’ on with Keepin’ on		<sup>6</sup> OL members attended joint sessions with ES for several of these topics. OELN members also attended the Statewide Forum as an additional event in the series
Statewide Forum	1	<i>Transition</i> (Rich Leucking), <i>Integrated Employment in Rural Areas</i> (Ellen Condon), <i>Changeover</i> (Chris Brandt), <i>21<sup>st</sup> Century Tools and Technology</i> (Marsha Threlkeld, Emily Harris), <i>Public Sector Employment</i> (Paula Johnson), <i>Discovery</i> (Norciva Schumpert)	The Welches <sup>7</sup>	<sup>7</sup> Attended by OELN members, Local Employment First Teams, and other interested persons
Other Statewide Conferences	3	Employment First principles and practices	Case Manager training OVRs In-service The Mega Conf.	

*Evaluation.* Summaries of evaluation results for events were included in each Monthly Billing Back-up.

**(2) Technical Assistance**

The Employment First Implementation Project Team recommended to ODDS that the OELN track for organization leaders would be a better avenue for supporting organizational change to integrated employment than providing ten separate technical assistance events. OELN provided managers and directors of employment services and alternative to employment services from all OELN participating organizations the opportunity to work together on barriers to and strategies for promoting organizational change. ODDS approved this change. Therefore, no individual agency Technical Assistance requests were solicited and none were carried out, outside of OELN events including the Meet at the Mountain. Twenty-five organizations, however, participated in OELN and received support for changing to integrated employment.

The project did become involved with issues generated by local Employment First Teams. One was related to Vocational Rehabilitation and Developmental Disability services, and involved facilitating an Employment First Team meeting on the topic and interviewing VR representatives. In addition, the project conducted interviews related to issues surrounding cross-agency collaboration and funding for transition. In one county, the project supported the development of a new employment service provider for Comprehensive Services (DD54).

### **(3) Approval by ODDS**

*The content of the training and Technical Assistance activities conducted by the Contractor will be approved by ODDS prior to implementation. The distribution of the number of training activities and the number of Technical Assistance activities to meet the required total of 30 may change with mutual consent of DHS and Contractor.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.d.(3)

All events were approved by ODDS prior to implementation. A total of 37 events were conducted, in addition to presentations at three conferences (Case Manager training, OVRS In-service and the Mega Conference.)

### **(4) Support for Training to Targeted Groups**

*Case Managers Training, July 2012.* ODDS and WISE presented at the Case Manager In-Service training in Corvallis on July 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> on Outreach and Implementation of Employment First. Two sessions were presented with approximately 30 attendees in each session.

*OVRs Statewide Staff Conference, August 2012.* A presentation was developed and delivered at the

*Contractor will respond to DHS' Contract Administrator approved Technical Assistance requests from stakeholder groups working to include Employment First within their training to targeted group(s). This Technical Assistance will include: (a) support to employment-focused training provided by ODDS to case managers in July 2012; (b) support for OVRs statewide staff conference in August 2012; and (c) support for the Association for Retarded Citizens Mega Conference in October 2012.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.d.(4)

OVRs In-Service, held in Salem on August 14 and 15. The presentation was a collaborative presentation with OVRs, ODDS, five Employment First teams and WISE. The session had approximately 50 attendees present.

*Mega Conference, October 2012.* Project staff presented two sessions. The first session highlighted Oregon employment agencies: their strategies and activities that are moving Employment First forward locally. In addition, staff shared information on strategies being used across the country to promote the Employment First agenda. The second session focused on Employment First and how state and local systems across the country implement the foundational values and philosophy by making employment services and supports available to individuals and families. The session emphasized aligning services and supports that offer integrated individual employment before other service options. While each state has their unique approach to Employment First, in each state, community employment leads policy and practices and is supported as the priority outcome. The session highlighted how the State of Oregon has approached the implementation of Employment First to support the development of community capacity to achieve quality.

**e. Community Capacity Building**

**(1) Existing Local Employment First Teams**

*Contractor will provide on-going support to the nine existing Local Employment First Teams during the term of this Contract. Contractor's support of the Local Employment First Teams will include: (a) Regular monthly support to existing teams located in Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Deschutes, Lane, Jackson, Tillamook, Yamhill, and Umatilla counties. (b) Evaluation and monitoring of the recently awarded small grants and the overall outcomes of existing teams.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.e.(1)

*Support to Existing Teams.* The Employment First Implementation Project Team provided support to all nine of the previously existing Local Employment First Teams. Support included attending meetings in-person or by phone, providing requested materials and advice, and other technical assistance. Information on teams was provided in the Monthly Billing Back-up. During the year, the Deschutes County Team asked to expand to include neighboring Jefferson and Crook counties—counties with which they regularly collaborate. The Employment First Implementation Project Team agreed with the shift. Now, the team has renamed itself the “Central Oregon Employment First Team.”

*Evaluation of Small Grants and Employment First Teams.* Project staff monitored the implementation of the small grants. Funded activities ranged quite broadly, including hiring a person to do preliminary interest assessments in community businesses in a rural county, purchasing weekly advertisement space in a local newspaper, and sponsoring person-centered employment plans. For several of the projects, it is difficult to directly tie job outcomes to the project, within a short period of time. Employment First team updates were provided to ODDS quarterly.

## **(2) New Employment First Teams**

*Contractor will expand the number of Employment First Teams existing as of the effective date of this Contract by a minimum of two teams. (a) By August 30, 2012, Contractor will work with ODDS to identify and screen potential counties interested in establishing and Employment First Team. (b) By November 30, 2012, Contractor will initiate support for the new Employment First Teams identified with ODDS. (c) During the term of the contract, Contractor will sponsor one face-to-face meeting with each of the new Employment First Teams identified with ODDS.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.e.(2)

*Screening and Selection of New Local Employment First Teams.* After receiving approval from ODDS for the draft application for new teams, the Employment First Implementation Project Team broadcast the application for new Local Employment First Teams in September, [click here to view it](#), with a deadline for submissions of October 5. One application was received by the end of September from the Hood River-Wasco County area. A second application was received in October from Josephine County. In

October, the project reviewed the applications with ODDS to determine if the project would support these new teams. As a result, two new Local Employment First Teams were accepted: the Mid-Columbia and the Josephine County Employment First Teams.

*Support for New Local Employment First Teams.* Support began over the phone on October 26. In November, the **Mid-Columbia Employment First Team** held their first meeting, facilitated by Employment First Implementation Project staff. This team has continued to receive support via phone and email. The team's initial focus was increasing public awareness. Josephine County chose to wait until after the holidays, and held their first meeting in January 2013. Project staff has either attended **Josephine County Employment First Team** meetings by phone or in person for most months under the contract. Their initial area of focus is transition. At the June meeting, they will complete a process map of transition with the support of project staff.

In addition to these two new teams, the project also received a call from **Union County** and gave them telephone support related to starting their own team. The total number of Local Employment Teams is now 11 official teams and one unofficial team (Union County).

*Face-to-face Meetings with New Local Employment First Teams.* As required by contract, staff members have attended at least one face-to-face meeting with each of the New Local Employment First Teams. Teams will continue to receive support through the end of June, including attendance at the Josephine County Employment First Team meeting on June 25, 2013.

**(3) Provide support to DHS for CSET innovation, demonstration and learning designed to improve collaboration and outcomes.**

*Contractor will provide support to DHS for CSET innovation, demonstration and learning designed to improve collaboration and outcomes. The content of the support will be developed in collaboration with DHS.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.e.(3)

Project staff planned a consistent weekly meeting schedule with DHS leadership to provide updates on the implementation of the CSET plan. Project staff and DHS leadership held a range of conversations with regard to the need for capacity building, organizational specialties, geographical differences and leadership development. Areas of emphasis were the OELN and the ongoing support to the Employment First teams. A key strategy offered this contract period was blending the Employment First teams with the OELN members at the Meet at the Mountain event. This strategy afforded the State of Oregon an opportunity to grow local capacity to deliver employment services and increase outcomes going forward.

*Contractor will meet at least two days per month in Salem to work with and advise ODDS, OVRS and other DHS leadership on strategic planning and implementation strategies. (1) The goal of the strategic planning and implementation strategy meetings shall be to further promote the Employment First policy and accomplish the employment outcome goals. (2) Conference calls between parties may substitute for Contractor's onsite presence in Salem if mutually agreed by the Contractor and DHS.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.f., 2.f.(1) and 2.f.(2)

#### **f. Advice to DHS Leadership**

*Scheduled and Completed Meetings.* Project staff worked with ODDS to present at the Case Manager In-Service in Corvallis on July 10 and 11 on Outreach and Implementation of Employment First. Two sessions were presented with approximately 30 attendees in each session. Project staff also developed and delivered a presentation at the OVRS In-Service in Salem on August 14 and 15. OVRS, ODDS, five Employment First teams and WISE collaborated on the presentation. This session had approximately 50 attendees present.

All required conference call and on-site meetings with DHS, ODDS, and OVRS were held unless cancelled at the request or necessity of Department staff.

*The dates for the meetings with DHS will be set quarterly. The specific agenda for monthly sessions will be developed jointly by the Contractor and designated ODDS staff at least one week prior to the meeting or work day. Standing agenda items shall include status updates and any needs in the following areas: (a) CSET alignment policy, data and funding structures and issues; (b) interagency service planning and monitoring; (c) status of Contractor's training and Technical Assistance activities and community capacity building; (d) expertise related to Employment First and non work services and projected activities that may need approval; (e) overall communication strategies; and (f) status and recommendations for Employment First and CSET innovation and sustainability .*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.f.(3)

*Strategic Planning and Implementation Strategies.* Discussion between project staff and DHS resulted in identification of a number of planning and implementation strategies for future consideration by the Department. These strategies are:

- General Strategic Considerations
  - Consider dedicating specific Department staff to implement the Employment First initiative.
  - Work on restructuring service rates should continue with a focus on supporting integrated employment options.
  - Consider changes in policies to better allow use of long-term funding for employment supports for students still engaged in school transition services.

- 
- Continue efforts to train provider organization staff with the outcome of enhancing the technical skills necessary to achieve integrated employment for the individuals they serve.
  - Continue efforts to align state policy, rules, and procedures especially as they relate to the relationship between OVRS and ODDS. This includes clarification of service funding responsibilities.
  - Further clarify how the concept of consumer choice relates to the advancement of improving integrated employment outcomes and produce procedures and training in support of the policy clarification.
  - Improve access to benefits counseling and planning. This also includes general information strategies to eliminate unnecessary fear or misunderstanding about the potential loss of benefits should employment be attained.
  - Perhaps in cooperation with OVRS, consider providing small grants to facility-based organizations to assist them with some of the excess costs of changing from facility-based services to integrated jobs in the community.
  - Continue efforts to work with the Oregon Department of Education to ensure that students leave school with a job and experience a seamless transition from school to adult life.
  - Consider providing support through Local Employment First Teams to develop a deeper level of collaboration across providers related to Employment First and, in particular, marketing and job development.
  - Consider developing either a statewide public sector or a private sector employer initiative, led by employers to gain their advice and support for finding appropriate community jobs for people with I/DD.
  - Ensure that the ODEP project and the Employment First Implementation Project are well-integrated, with joint planning.
  - Consider developing Assistive and Information Technology cohorts (Teachers, Employment agencies, Personal Agents, Service Coordinators and Families) that include technology companies as training partners.
- Considerations for Sustaining Training and Technical Assistance Capacity
    - Consider enhancing the resources available to support needed training and technical assistance activities. This includes consideration of pursuing related grant or other contract opportunities that may become available through Federal or other sources.
    - Maintain cooperative relationships with training and technical assistance providers and, if possible, expand the array/use of providers to provide these activities. This could include colleges or universities or other sources of expertise and information.
    - Coordinate associated training and technical assistance activities to assure that activities, such as training on Individual Support Plan development, complement and support the Employment First initiative.
    - Develop targeted relationships with families and businesses by providing information and education related to the benefit of employment

- Prioritize delivery to target audiences of the training and technical assistance activities to assure effective support for achieving strategic outcomes.
- Continue to provide both introductory and more advanced levels of training content to build the skills of service provider staff.

**g. ODEP**

*Contractor will assist DHS in implementing the specific project plan associated with the ODEP funds. This plan will be developed by the ODEP leadership team, of which the Contractor will be a consultant. Contractor may implement the project plan by directly engaging Contractor staff, subcontracting to qualified entities, or otherwise service as a broker of targeted ODEP funds.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.g.(1)

*Consultation Provided on ODEP Plan Development.* In August 2012, project staff provided support for planning around implementing activities on the ODEP grant strategic plan and community grant development. In September, staff reviewed project materials and set out current tasks and activities to move ODEP project activities forward and to coordinate with the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) associated with the project.

Work supporting ODEP grant plan activities included:

*Coordination of Visit by ODDS to Mentor State of Washington.* In September, the project began compiling information to assist with coordinating a visit to the mentor state of Washington. Project staff scheduled and assisted in coordinating the actual visit in January with the visit ultimately occurring in March.

*Long-Term Plan Development for Employment First Activities.* WISE executed a sub-contract with Tangible Systems in September to consolidate the existing plan with related documents to serve as a foundation for the development of a comprehensive long-term implementation plan for Employment First activities. WISE provided the contractor with existing strategic plans from multiple states. The contractor reviewed all materials and created a consolidated set of information for the state to review. In December, project staff reviewed a strategic plan document draft provided by the consultant, reviewed Oregon's ODEP state plan, and provided historical project information to lead staff. Project staff provided support in February to finalize the delivery of the strategic plan document.

*Organizational Transformation and Transition Projects.* The primary activities in January included sharing information on the organizational transformation project and the transition project that had previously been discussed by ODDS and the Employment First Implementation Project. In February, the project reviewed draft announcements for the Organizational Transformation and Transition projects. In addition, Project staff provided information to the ODDS Employment Specialist on scheduled and announced training events in close proximity to the planned launch event for the projects, in order to navigate the delivery of major events held in close date proximity. The following month, the project completed phone calls and emails to clarify the event logistical contract with OTAC, as well as discussing registration needs and recruitment needs with the ODDS Employment First Specialist. In April, when registration lagged below goals, the project provided support in phone meetings to develop strategies for recruitment to the April 22-23 event to launch the Transformation and Transition projects. In addition, the project supported the Subject Matter Experts and OTAC around clarifying information.

## **(2) Tracking, Reporting and Invoicing ODEP activities**

*Contractor will track, report, and invoice the ODEP activities (those funded by ODEP) separately from the training and Technical Assistance activities.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 2.g.(2)

Monthly Billing Back-ups included a separate section on ODEP activities. ODEP activities were invoiced separately from invoices for work performed under Contract #138724.

## **3. Evaluation of Overall Impact**

*The final report summarizing Contractor's activity, evaluating overall impact, and making recommendations for the sustainability of training and Technical Assistance capacity shall be submitted to DHS by the Contractor by June 15, 2013.*

Contract #138724 Statement of Work item 3.f.

## **Employment First Training and Technical Assistance Capacity**

The Employment First Implementation Team used two fundamental strategies related to increasing training and technical assistance capacity in Oregon:

- 1) Formed a strong partnership with OTAC to include project management; communications; development of Resources Inventory; training and TA survey development and distribution;

design and implementation of the training plan and, in particular, OELN; establishment of the Moodle.com site for managing OELN and Quickbase database; messaging; and participation with Local Employment First Teams. The purpose of the partnership was to ensure that Oregon develops a strong in-state resource for Employment First; one of the best ways to do that was to have OTAC staff work together with the experienced members from the Employment First Outreach Team. The partnership has been very successful. With the personnel changes occurring at OTAC, we believe it is important to continue this partnership as new staff come on board at OTAC.

- 2) Partnered with other organizations with resources that could be used to augment those in the contract. Thus, partnering with Griffin-Hammis, which is one of the identified ODEP SMEs assigned to Oregon, provided the opportunity to invest heavily in Discovery. Working with the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation assured that seminars that they could offer in Oregon were targeted to match needs identified related to Employment First. Coordinating with the State of Washington and individual counties in Washington offered a broader range of webinars than could have been provided within the Oregon contract alone and supported cost-sharing for out-of-area consultants who would work in both Oregon and Washington on the same trip. Finally, the project sought to coordinate its work with that of the ODEP project, so that ODEP-funded SMEs would support ongoing Employment First initiatives. Each of these partnerships extended the resources of the original Employment First project as contracted.

### **Evaluation of Overall Impact of the Employment First Implementation Project**

Given the one-year timeframe of the contract, there are limits to conducting a thorough evaluation of the outcomes and impact of the activities. It is possible, however, through process outputs and other measures to provide some indicators of overall impact.

- 1) Response to Training and Technical Assistance
  - Approximately 500 people attended in-person events across the year
  - Due to the policy of encouraging local download sites to register one person but have many attend a webinar, we do not have an accurate count of attendees. However, over 120 satisfaction surveys were completed.
  - Some of the comments from evaluation feedback related to training included:
    - “I feel rejuvenated...been doing it for a while but needed to hear new approaches/better ways to organize my work”
    - “A great cross section and cross pollination among peers, mentors and locations”
    - “Terrific topics & information. I really enjoyed the accessibility of the presenters for conversation beyond the presentations. Thank you!”

- “You took the time to answer difficult questions”
- “Hand outs were a great source of info as well”
- Participants in events were highly satisfied with the training offered, whichever format was used:
  - The average level of satisfaction across webinars was 4.27 out of 5 possible points.
  - The average level of satisfaction across OELN sessions, including the Meet at the Mountain II, was 4.24 out of 5 possible points.
  - The average level of satisfaction across Specialty in-Person Trainings was 4.53 out of 5 possible points.

## 2) Changes in OELN Participating Agencies and Communities with Local Employment First Teams

- Local Employment Teams are increasing the presence of Employment First in communities around Oregon. At the Meet at the Mountain II, Employment First Teams reported their accomplishments, including hosting events, finding jobs for job seekers, extending membership, and many other activities and accomplishments. [To see the full list, click here.](#)
- While no formal survey has been conducted, OELN participants have reported many changes that they have made in their agency as a result of participation in OELN:
  - Changed how they work with students transitioning out of high school, so these youth would not go into the sheltered workshop
  - Worked with other organizations to sponsor “Portraits of Competence” events to help job seekers develop identifying skills and experiences, develop resumes, and get connected with VR. Individuals left the event more confident in skills, and excited about getting jobs.
  - Developed community-based sites for assessments and training.
  - Added or expanded discovery processes to assist in better understanding possible work options for individuals they serve.
  - Supported individuals to develop their own businesses for self-employment.
- OELN members have made many comments about how OELN has affected them, for example:
  - “It lit a fire under our organization”
  - “Participating with OELN was such an influence on the road we are walking!”
  - “Being an active participant with OELN has made our journey less bumpy! The exchange of ideas among participants is amazing and helpful!”
  - “OELN set the stage and provided learning opportunities which inspired program development ideas at the home front.”
  - “Networking opportunities abound and provide great soundboards for new ideas and problem solving around old barriers!”

### 3) Overall Impact on Employment

- *Individual Service Planning includes Employment First Conversations.* No formal survey of counties has been conducted, but one Local Employment First Team reported that all ISPs conducted in their county in the past several months had included an employment conversation.
- *Increase in the percentage of individuals employed in integrated settings.* The most recent statewide data posted on the DHS website that includes both Comprehensive and Support Services data are from September 2012. While these do not allow an evaluation of change during the current year, they do document improvement since the beginning of the Employment First initiative. April 2010 data reported at the regional forums and orientations presented that year indicate that, statewide, 21.4% of individuals for whom data were reported were in integrated employment (i.e., independent competitive, individual supported employment, and group supported employment). The data reported in September 2012 show 24% in integrated employment—a 10.8% increase since April 2010.
- *Increased momentum for Employment First.* There are many indicators of increased momentum, including:
  - The number of Local Employment First Teams expanded, including one team that formed without formal project support. One team, Deschutes, expanded to include two neighboring counties. While size and membership of teams vary, there is at least a core group of individuals in these counties who are working together to strategize to expand Employment First.
  - Activities sponsored by Local Employment First Teams helped to raise both service system and community awareness of Employment First and the benefits of hiring persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Activities included employer forums, resource fairs, direct support to job-seekers, newspaper advertisements, brochure development—each of which brought a focus to Employment First.
  - There was an astonishing level of interest in the ongoing training series OELN. While originally designed to work with two groups of 20 or fewer individuals, more than 50 people applied for the Employment Specialist track, and over 30 applied for the Organizational Leader track. Turnover in the group was less than 10% across the 9-month series. OELN participants were eager, active, engaged learners, struggling with how to transform what they do—both as individuals and as organizations—to the new vision of Employment First.
  - Meet at the Mountain II was highly successful, with approximately 150 people registered and several who attended without registering. This was a substantial increase in attendance over the first Meet at the Mountain, in large part due to adding invitations to OELN members and other involved stakeholders, in addition to

Employment First Teams. The event overall received a satisfaction rating of 4.38 out of 5 possible points. Throughout the event, participants were active, engaged and positive about the future of Employment First in Oregon. The evaluation survey responses included:

- ✓ “Great positive energy! Inspirational!”
- ✓ “Positive, practical, informative”
- ✓ “Fun, friendly, great spot to meet”

## **Conclusion**

This report confirms and verifies that all requirements under above referenced contract have been met.