



Community Leadership for Employment First in Oregon

A Call to Action

THE EMPLOYMENT FIRST OUTREACH PROJECT

2010

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With contributions by the Oregon *Employment First* Outreach Team,
State personnel, and stakeholders from throughout Oregon
who participated in the 2010 *Employment First* Outreach Events

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Community Leadership for Employment First in Oregon

A Call to Action



We Believe . . .

1. Everyone can work and there is a job for everyone. Our job is to be creative and tenacious in providing support.
2. Not working should be the exception. All individuals, schools, families and businesses must raise their expectations.
3. People will be hired because of their ability not because they have a disability.
4. Communities embrace people who contribute.
5. Everyone has something to contribute and needs to contribute.
6. People are healthier, safer and happiest with meaningful work.
7. True employment is not a social service.
8. Employment is a win/win for everybody.

Created by a group of stakeholder leaders from throughout Oregon at
the *Employment First* Policy Summit, Silver Falls Conference Center,
September 2, 2010

Introduction

On September 1-2 2010, over 50 stakeholders representing service providers, Community Developmental Disabilities Programs (CDDP), Support Services Brokerages, schools, the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRS), Seniors and People with Disabilities' (SPD) Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS), statewide organizations, families/advocates and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities came together at Oregon's Silver Falls Conference Center for the *Employment First Summit*, the kick-off event for the *Employment First* Outreach Project. Brought together as a group of "believers," participants began the conversation that will lead to implementation of SPD's *Employment First* policy (Appendix 1) and full employment for working age adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oregon. As a group, these leaders were ready to begin to struggle with the tough public policy and implementation questions that are inherent in the *Employment First* policy.

Between September and December, 2010, ODDS, OVRS, and OCDD cosponsored 14 events for a broad range of integrated employment stakeholders. Guided by a statewide Advisory Committee and entitled "*Employment First* Outreach," OVRS, after issuing a request for proposals, contracted with the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WiSe) to plan and lead stakeholder forums, orientations for Personal Agents from Support Services Brokerages ("Support Services Waiver") and Services Coordinators from CDDPs ("Comprehensive Waiver"), and a presentation at a statewide provider conference. At least

From the very start of the project, the team's fundamental strategy was to identify local leaders and support them to organize community efforts toward *Employment First*.

500 participants attended these events. The purpose of the events was to initiate a statewide conversation on the *Employment First* policy that would generate the initial momentum for creating an *Employment First* culture in Oregon. At these events, state personnel, team members, and local leaders provided: 1) background presentations on *Employment First*, some of which are summarized here; 2) tools to assist communities to implement *Employment First*; and 3) support to local teams to identify first steps in community action planning.

As part of the goal of generating momentum, the event staff sought to listen to the important perspectives provided by stakeholders. From the very start of the project, the team's fundamental strategy was to identify local leaders and support them to organize community efforts toward *Employment First*. Thus, the project endeavored to support local teams to engage in the goal, be passionate about it, and, after leaving the events, achieve

more than they ever believed they could do. This paper summarizes recommendations from the WiSe Team that arose based on this work.

The Need for an *Employment First* Policy in Oregon

The Issue

Both the *Employment First* policy and Summit came as a result of a growing level of frustration experienced by advocates and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities due to continuing unacceptable rates of unemployment among Oregonians with disabilities. In the 1980s, Oregon was a national leader in defining and growing supported employment. The University of Oregon's (UO) *Specialized Training Program* (now renamed *Educational and Community Supports*) conducted research and demonstration projects, published a lengthy list of articles, book chapters, books, and guides (e.g., Albin, 1992; Bellamy, Rhodes, Mank, & Albin, 1988; Buckley, Mank, and Sandow, 1990; Rhodes & Valenta, 1985); presented numerous seminars on integrated employment; presented at local, state, national and international conferences; and coordinated both the state and national technical assistance centers on supported employment. Along with universities in other states, the UO's early work led to a federal definition of supported employment in 1984 (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 1984; 34 CFR, Part 373). Around the same time, the U.S. Department of Education began to issue a series of state systems change grants designed to support states all over the country to design statewide strategies to changeover existing sheltered employment, work activities, and day habilitation services with real jobs for real work.

In the 1980s, Oregon was a national leader in defining and growing supported employment.

During its two state systems change grants spanning eight years starting in 1986, Oregon was able to expand the number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in paid, integrated employment settings that met the federal definition of supported employment. A state report on the second quarter of 1988 reported: "About 29% of the 2,225 persons receiving employment services were working in supported employment situations" (DD Program Office, 1988, p.iii). By the end of the first state grant in 1991, which focused entirely on individuals in developmental disability services, approximately 50% of the roughly 2300 persons on the Comprehensive Services Waiver at that time were in supported employment. However, the growth in supported employment for individuals experiencing disabilities that occurred between the mid-1980's and 1990's not only stalled, but returned to pre-systems change grant levels. As of April, 2010, it is reported that of the 10,109 persons with data available, 21.4% of individuals served through either the

Comprehensive Waiver (services offering 24-hour supports) or by the Support Services Waiver (an entitlement service for individuals living on their own or with family that offers limited funding that is directed by the individuals) combined were in paid, individual or group integrated employment. Data also indicate that at that time, statewide 1635 individuals served through the Support Services Waiver and 658 youth still in school expressed the desire to gain employment in a community job.

Oregon Results within the National Perspective

Based on data collected in FY2008 for a national study, Oregon ranked 16th of 39 states reporting on integrated employment (Butterworth, Smith, Cohen Hall, & Winsor, 2010). In this study, state agencies serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities reported outcomes ranging from 4.5% to 87.5% of individuals served in integrated community jobs in FY2008. Also based on that report, 71% of Oregonians with disabilities were in facility-based programs, supporting the claim that a majority of working age adults with significant disabilities are supported today in programs that offer segregation and long-term dependency regardless of cost.

As the population receiving funded adult developmental disability employment and day services nationally has expanded to an estimated half a million persons the growth in services

Based on current Oregon data, approximately 78.8% of individuals in the Comprehensive Services system are served in "alternatives to employment" for at least part of their day, and 42% are served in sheltered, facility-based employment.

has largely been in non-work programs (Butterworth et al., 2010). This result is paralleled in Oregon. Based on current Oregon data, approximately 78.8% of individuals in the Comprehensive Services system are served in "alternatives to employment" for at least part of their day, and 42% are served in sheltered, facility-based employment. A total of 12.3% of those served by Brokerages are in sheltered employment. It is estimated that about 60% of those served through Brokerages are not in a job and are not receiving employment-related support services.

Both nationally and at a state level, there has been a huge loss of momentum from previous employment efforts. As a result, over the last 15-20 years, there has been an increase in dependency on state services and a growing acceptance of a culture of poverty for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The loss of momentum for supported employment in Oregon has been due to a variety of reasons: conclusion of the federal financial support for state systems change; an unstable

budget that began with significant budget cuts based on a property tax limitation measure passed by voters in 1990 ("Measure 5"); a focus on downsizing and ultimately closing its two state residential institutions for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Fairview Hospital and Training Center was closed in 2000 and Eastern Oregon Hospital and Training Center in 2009); and the development of the Support Services Waiver Brokerage system in response to the December 2000 court settlement in *Staley v. Kitzhaber*. Concurrent with funding losses, ODDS' budget for training and technical assistance dwindled to nearly nothing as of 2006. As a state, Oregon has been very busy in several arenas, unfortunately at the cost of a loss of focus on employment. During this period, as well—including during institutional downsizing efforts—the focus was on increasing the capacity of *the service system* to serve people with disabilities rather than increasing the capacity of *natural communities* to be able to support their own.

As a state, Oregon has been very busy in several arenas, unfortunately at the cost of a loss of focus on employment.

What is *Employment First*?

Despite the current global economic downturn, or perhaps because of it, approximately half of the states have adopted or are considering some form of *Employment First* policies. Oregon's *Employment First* policy (see Appendix 1) requires that employment in fully integrated work settings be the first and priority option explored in the service planning for working age adults with developmental disabilities. Established with a stakeholder group in 2008, the policy states that:

- Integrated employment is more valued than non-employment, segregated employment, facility-based employment, or day habilitation in terms of employment outcomes.
- Employment services shall be specifically addressed in the Individual Support Plan.
- For individuals already employed in an integrated setting, future service planning must focus on maintaining employment as well as considering additional career or advancement opportunities.
- Employment services shall be considered and provided using person-centered planning concepts, based on informed choice, and consistent with the philosophy of self-determination.
- Minimum or competitive wages and benefits shall be the goal of integrated employment.
- All natural as well as paid supports will be considered in service planning.

- Employment supports will be provided outside of the individual's living environment unless necessary for a self-employment plan or for the individual's medical or safety needs.

At the *Employment First* Outreach Project events, ODDS staff discussed the meaning of the policy and the need for:

- Supporting an individual on a path to employment to pursue a career matching the individual's interests and skills.
- Personal Agents and Service Coordinators to hold at least an annual conversation about employment with the individual and their family and/or other team members.
- The annual Individual Support Plan (ISP) to identify the individual's place on a path to employment, and to list clearly defined activities to move closer to an employment outcome or an improved outcome.
- Measuring the impact of *Employment First* at an individual level through the semi-annual review of plan, services, programs, and outcomes using information available from the Employment Outcomes System (EOS), eXPRS payment system, site visits, and other documentation.

ODDS staff presented four paths to employment at these events:

- 1) Individuals already in an integrated community job who may need support for job improvement (e.g., wages, hours or tasks) or career advancement;
- 2) Individuals who indicate, "I want a job" but are not now in one, and may reasonably achieve a job within a year;
- 3) Individuals who say, "Maybe" but don't have a clear vision about the kind of job they might have. These individuals may need to engage in a discovery process and may be on a path longer than one year.
- 4) Individuals or their guardians who indicate, "No, I don't want to work."

Staff asked Services Coordinators and Personal Agents to review their caseloads to select five to ten individuals who are on one of the first three paths and focus on getting them a plan that will lead to employment or improved employment. As a sign of their agency's commitment, ODDS has told the governor the state will achieve an increase of at least 5% each year in integrated employment. Although

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Why *Employment First*?

The *Employment First* policy is grounded in a framework of Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules which identify increased productivity, integration, and independence as the desired outcomes of services and supports for adults with developmental disabilities. The policy also is in alignment with the stated goals of the Oregon Department of Human Services:

- People are healthy
- People are living as independently as possible
- People are safe
- People are able to support themselves and their families¹.

These goals emphasize the importance of being a part of the workforce, contributing to the economy, and becoming as self-sufficient as possible. Services Coordinators, Personal Agents, families and service providers together try to plan for and provide supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to help them achieve these goals and a meaningful and purposeful life.

Behind the *Employment First* policy is a fundamental belief that employment is the key to full citizenship.

Behind the *Employment First* policy is a fundamental belief that employment is the key to full citizenship. A job can dramatically change the dynamics of an individual's life—providing a structure to the day, a paycheck that can be used for purchasing goods and services, an identity as a contributing member of the community, an increase in personal self-esteem, expanded choices, and opportunities to develop

friends and relationships. In short, employment is an avenue to a richer and fuller life. Employment is a key to becoming a valued member of our society. It is the position of ODDS and the *Employment First* Outreach Project that all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities should be provided the opportunity to work and gain these benefits; to not live in the shadow as marginalized citizens, but to be embraced fully by their community.

¹ Drawn from <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/aboutdhs/mission.shtml> on December 21, 2010.

The service system, however, cannot use public funds to help people buy a valued lifestyle. The responsibility of the system is to support the conditions by which a valued lifestyle can be achieved. Supporting working age adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to get and maintain meaningful work is Oregon's key strategy for achieving this goal.

Everyone has the right to work, as confirmed by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948². As early as 1986, self-advocates in Oregon's *People First* movement developed a Bill of Rights that included:

- We have the right to a job in the community.
- We want to work regardless of productivity.
- We have the right to be respected on the job.
- We do not want to live in poverty.
- We want to work for fair wages.

Despite these statements, developed 25 years ago, people with disabilities as a class are impoverished. The *Employment First* policy seeks to address this issue. The policy is rooted in the belief that meaningful employment for working age adults plays a major role in maximizing personal choices, achieving economic self-sufficiency, and contributing to the sustainability of our communities.

Why *Employment First* Now?

Beyond values-based reasons for *Employment First*, research data show that the cumulative costs generated by sheltered employees may be as much as three times higher than the cumulative costs generated by supported employees—\$19,388 versus \$6,618 (Cimera, 2008). Even in good economic times, it is the responsibility of public services to be good stewards of public funds. Thus, a shift from sheltered employment to support for integrated employment makes good sense from the perspective of public funding.

Over the last two years, Oregon, along with other states, has been affected dramatically by a global economic downturn. High unemployment rates have reduced taxes paid to the state resulting in substantial budget cuts or elimination of service programs. States are struggling with maintaining

With public sentiment shouting "cut taxes" growing across the country, it is clear that the balance of personal versus public responsibility for needed supports is shifting.

² United Nations General Assembly, December 10, 1948, [General Assembly resolution 217 A \(III\)](http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/043/88/IMG/NR004388.pdf?OpenElement), Article 23. <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/043/88/IMG/NR004388.pdf?OpenElement>

necessary supports for vulnerable individuals with disabilities (Hoff, Holsapple, Lizotte, & Moseley, 2009).

With public sentiment shouting "cut taxes" growing across the country, it is clear that the balance of personal versus public responsibility for needed supports is shifting. Families and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities can no longer depend on state funds to support their choices. As funding for programs decreases, states across the country are having to make difficult decisions regarding how to allocate their reduced budgets. In Oregon, for example, ODDS has had to eliminate its rent subsidy program, which assisted individuals to live in a home of their choosing. Now, if individuals want to live on their own, they and their teams will likely need to figure out the money to do that. The locus of responsibility has shifted. Taxpayers expect that individuals with disabilities will be able to fund their own supports to some extent. One way that can happen is by helping them to have jobs.

We can expect that, over time, the economy will improve. As the economy recovers, we can anticipate that the first jobs will grow in the private sector. As that occurs, it is important that our service system is supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to be in the front of the line for those jobs, to take advantage of the economic recovery.

Beyond the economy, funding, and federal grants, however, if we believe employment is a fundamental human right and is a key to full citizenship, we must ask, "If not now, when?"

Now also is a critical time because extra resources are available in the state to support implementation of *Employment First*, through the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant on competitive employment held by OVRs. That project has already funded a substantial portion of the first phase of the *Employment First* Outreach Project and is expected to fund its second phase as well. However, no funds have been identified to continue to provide technical assistance, training, and other support to *Employment First* implementation after that federal grant project ends.

Beyond the economy, funding, and federal grants, however, if we believe employment is a fundamental human right and is a key to full citizenship, we must ask, "If not now, when?"

A Call to Action: Strategic Recommendations for Making *Employment First* a Reality

Oregon cannot rely on increased federal or state funding to support implementing *Employment First*. Instead, both the involved state agencies and community stakeholders will need to find ways to shift resources and energy to support growth of this initiative at the community level. To that end, the WiSe *Employment First* Outreach Team has developed a set of recommendations that build on Stevely's 2005 paper on supported employment, but are grounded in our belief that the best hope for the future of *Employment First* lies in Oregon's communities and neighborhoods. The team's fundamental strategy continues to be to identify and support local leaders who will organize community efforts around *Employment First*, be zealous advocates for it, and find ways to engage other community stakeholders to make *Employment First* a reality for all working age Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The WiSe Team's recommendations listed below are organized under four major goals that together will support full implementation of *Employment First*:

- The Statewide Infrastructure is in Alignment with and Promotes *Employment First*
- Communities Have the Capacity to Implement *Employment First*
- Individuals with Disabilities and their Family Members Promote *Employment First*
- Communities Implement *Employment First*

Goal: The Statewide Infrastructure is in Alignment with and Promotes *Employment First*

While implementation of this policy must grow one person at a time, state agencies have both a critical voice that must be heard and the power to restructure state infrastructures to promote *Employment First*.

- ***Provide consistent and strong state leadership toward a common vision for employment for all persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*** State leadership will be critical as this initiative proceeds. Communicating this vision clearly across time will help all stakeholders to work in alignment, improving the effectiveness of individual and group actions. After focusing on growing supported employment for several years during the 1980s and 1990s, ODDS turned its attention to other priorities, leading communities to focus elsewhere as well. This cannot happen again, as many stakeholders already view this initiative with an attitude of "this, too, shall pass." Further, this state leadership must be visible at the highest levels of ODDS, OVRS, ODE and OCDD,

as champions for employment, as well as from staff at all levels, demonstrating collaboration across these state agency silos.

- **Develop a definition of "integrated employment."** ODDS has long used a definition of employment that recognizes group models (i.e., mobile crews and enclaves), pay based on subminimum wages, and jobs that are arranged as a contract from the business to the rehabilitation organization. But typical jobs are established for individuals to fill, pay in most businesses for regular employees is at least at minimum wage, and temp agencies are usually the only

other community organizations that contract with employers for filling jobs. It is time that ODDS challenge communities to employ Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities in jobs that place these individuals with typical co-workers rather than in groups of people with disabilities, that pay a living wage, and in which they are employed directly by the community business. Other arrangements promote a commitment by the business to the rehabilitation organization over the individuals employed and perpetuate poverty for Oregonians with disabilities. Some of these arrangements may be appropriate interim activities on the path to employment, but they are no longer the goal of employment services. It is important to set the standard for people with disabilities as the same as for everyone else, if we are to transform the experience of Oregonians with disabilities and their communities. Changing the definition of integrated employment to accepting only individual jobs likely will reduce the current reported "success rate" from 21.4% to less than 7%, but presents a vision that supports real lives in real jobs and true community membership.

It is time that ODDS challenge communities to employ Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities in jobs that place these individuals with typical co-workers rather than in groups of people with disabilities, that pay a living wage, and in which they are employed directly by the community business.

- **Assure that everyone who receives state funding for services—whether they are funded through the Comprehensive or Support Services Waiver—has an allocation that is dedicated to supports for gaining, maintaining, or improving employment outcomes.** Currently, Support Services funds may be used within any of 15 different types of services defined in the waiver. Under the Comprehensive Waiver, individuals receiving funds identified as "DD54" for employment services may be used for ongoing alternatives to employment, i.e., non-work services, rather than to gain or maintain employment. An allocation dedicated to employment support would give individuals and their

teams resources to move along a path to obtain and maintain employment. For example, these funds could be used for job exploration, job development, job support, or even to address needs like establishing a communication system. Individuals and their teams would have a choice to either use the employment support allocation or not use it, if they choose not to pursue employment. However, dedicating the funding for paths to employment clarifies the state's position on the primacy of team conversations on *Employment First* and aligns funding in both sides of the service system with state policy.

- **By the end of 2011, implement a funding model that prioritizes and rewards quality employment outcomes.** Integrated employment providers are frustrated with the existing funding model that does not recognize the very different nature of developing and supporting individualized community-integrated jobs as compared with alternatives to employment or facility-based work services. While the ODDS Restructuring Budgets and Rates (ReBAR) Program has completed substantial work toward designing a new funding model for the Comprehensive Services system, no employment services rate model has yet been implemented. This must be a priority. Shifting the funding model now will give a clear message to communities about ODDS' view of the immediacy of the need for *Employment First* implementation.
- **Update state policy and administrative rules.** Policy and rules related to employment on both sides of the service system require substantial change to be in alignment with the values of *Employment First* to increase motivation of providers to embrace the policy. As a result of the revised rules, licensing must adjust to the new direction and learn how to assess provider systems for health and safety support in

"One does not have the ability under the law to choose anything one wishes. Some options are excluded or forbidden, either in the interest of the community's overall welfare or as a result of governmental authority to set priorities and allocate its resources." (Ferleger, 1995)

community businesses without interfering with business operations or bringing "social services" into natural settings. ODDS, OVRS, and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) also must consider their position on the future of sheltered workshops and alternatives to employment, and the degree to which those agencies will support ongoing placements in these programs. Because these services rely on public funding, the formal system may choose which options may be offered. As David Ferleger (1995) states in an excellent chapter exploring choice, "One does not have the ability under the law to choose anything one wishes.

Some options are excluded or forbidden, either in the interest of the community's overall welfare or as a result of governmental authority to set priorities and allocate its resources."

- **Define a new service that provides for the discovery process and employment-related day activities.** Sheltered workshops and alternatives to employment, although a part of the history of day services in Oregon and elsewhere, need to transform and retool into services that support and focus on the paths to employment and economic self-sufficiency. Identifying how congregate facilities and day activities may be used under the new system, as well as renaming, redefining, and rebranding this service will help communities to achieve the transformation. ODDS may choose to address this recommendation by involving key stakeholders to work collaboratively to design and develop the new service and its implementation plan.
- **Ensure that employment is promoted in the ISP system.** As currently implemented, ISPs focus on residential supports, health and safety in the Comprehensive system, and on self-determination and choice in the Support Services system. ISP teams need both tools and support to strengthen the employment focus of this system. Tools for assessing an individual's employment possibilities, strategies for gaining work experience, and a format that insists on planning for *Employment First* are needed to help Services Coordinators, Personal Agents, and ISP teams to become expert at helping individuals to get and maintain meaningful employment in integrated settings.
- **Develop agreements between ODDS and ODE's Special Education Unit.** These agreements must address strategies for imbedding the expectation for work from an early age, improving the process and outcomes of transition services, and establishing relationships in local communities. Schools are an important part of the equation for success and they will need leadership from ODE to shift what they are doing to work in alignment with *Employment First*. Changing the experience and expectations of youth (and their families) who are entering the adult service system may be the state's best hope for large-scale system transformation.

Changing the experience and expectations of youth (and their families) who are entering the adult service system may be the state's best hope for large-scale system transformation.

- **Continue work between ODDS and OVRS.** ODDS and OVRS are already working together to improve the statewide consistency, availability, and effectiveness of OVRS services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, increase the compatibility of OVRS services with services funded through ODDS, and clarify/streamline interagency procedures. This work must continue so that all Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience effective supports through both of these agencies.
- **Collect, publish, and use performance data at a statewide, county and provider level.** It is often said that people will do what is measured. While ODDS has collected data since at least the late 1980s from the Comprehensive Services side, it has not taken advantage of the full power of the data system. The recent addition of an employment outcomes measurement system for Brokerages and compiling and reporting regional-level data for both systems are excellent first steps. In addition, ODDS should: 1) Review both the Comprehensive and Support System measures to verify that the right things are being collected that will support evaluating progress at multiple levels; 2) Take steps to ensure that the data reported are valid (actually measure what is meant to be measured) and reliable (accurate across time or across reporters); 3) Compile and publicly report performance information at the county and provider levels in addition to current state- and regional-level reports; 4) Increase to quarterly the frequency of collecting and reporting data to make data more useful; 5) Present data across time, within a context, so that reports can be most informative; and 6) Use the data for decision-making at state, regional, county, Brokerage and provider organization levels. An improved information system can be a powerful tool for both current and emerging leaders at both local and state levels.

An improved information system can be a powerful tool for both current and emerging leaders at both local and state levels.
- **Establish statewide public and private sector employer initiatives, including working with the Oregon Business Development Department ("Business Oregon").** At the state level, ODDS is able to promote public policy that encourages the public sector as well as the private sector to employ people with developmental disabilities. Governmental jurisdictions in other states have issued policy orders asking state, county or city agencies to hire a target percentage of individuals with disabilities. ODDS also can work with the state's Business Development Department to support private sector employer development, e.g., through developing relationships with large private employers with multiple locations seeking their

support for *Employment First* throughout their companies or by bringing together an employer leadership group to guide *Employment First* efforts with employers.

Goal: Communities Have the Capacity to Implement *Employment First*

Central to full implementation of *Employment First* will be finding ways to support communities to build their capacity to implement the policy.

- ***Develop emerging leaders for the future.*** As current state and local leadership approaches (and passes) retirement age, it is critical that Oregon invest in supporting emerging leaders to share in conversations, offer ideas, take risks, lead by example, and to continue learning. These bright, energetic and committed young professionals and parents bring great hope for the future if we can support them to do that.
- ***Find ways to support high quality employment-focused training and technical assistance.*** To make employment a reality for all who desire it, ODDS must make training and technical assistance available and functioning as part of the delivery of employment services. Technical assistance and training are necessary to improve community-level skills for: 1) developing jobs based on individual interests and skills, 2) providing training and support to both employers and individuals supported in jobs, and 3) developing natural supports. If ODDS establishes a new definition of employment, as described above, it will need to help communities and service providers to transition to achieving it.

Over the last two decades, service providers have lost touch with systematic training skills and best practice strategies for engaging employers and their employees. The current model for job development approved by OVRs, for example, uses traditional techniques, and while these may be appropriate for some individuals, a more person-centered approach is needed to gain employment for all working age adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. ODDS needs to seek resources for supporting continued training and technical assistance that promotes best practices, including regional training, on-site technical assistance, and annual statewide *Employment First* conferences. However, whether or not state general funds are available for training and technical assistance, ODDS and OVRs should be able to research and make available information on best practices; coordinate with training and technical assistance providers to ensure effective training programs are available across the state with the support of a mixture of funding from ODDS and/or other sources; and target bringing together stakeholders such as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors, schools personnel, rehabilitation providers, Brokerage and CDDP

staff, individuals and family members in joint events to support common vision and skills, as well as relationship development.

- ***Find a way to invest in ongoing research, development and innovation.*** Oregon was a leader of supported employment and can again lead the national *Employment First* movement. However, there is still much to be learned. Supporting research, development and innovation by establishing collaborations with university-based research programs and training and technical assistance providers to develop innovations that can be disseminated to communities will breathe life into *Employment First*, discovering ways to solve the most difficult implementation issues and to improve the quality of employment outcomes achieved.
- ***Expand the use of technology to support the message of Employment First.*** Given the limited resources available, current technologies offer a great resource for promoting *Employment First*. The Employment Support website replete with resources and links, communications/marketing software for managing frequent mass communications with stakeholders, use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, regular teleconferences for discussing issues and successful strategies, on-line courses, and interactive video-conferencing, for example, all offer low-cost avenues for keeping the message alive all over Oregon.

Goal: Individuals with Disabilities and their Family Members Promote Employment First

State agencies, state associations, and local organizations will need to play a role in helping individuals and families to fully participate in *Employment First*. OVRs, ODDS, and OCDD each have an important role, along with local schools, Services Coordinators, Personal Agents, integrated employment providers, and rehabilitation programs. Certainly, Self-Advocates as Leaders (SAAL), People First, The Arc, and Oregon Parent Training and Information should hold an important role in achieving this goal.

- ***Provide training and support to self-advocates and family members to elevate their voice in the state conversation about Employment First.*** Training should help family members and self-advocates understand and advocate for access to integrated employment, as well as address fears related to employment in an integrated job in a typical community business. Self-advocates must have the ability to advocate for their own employment within their ISPs. Self-advocates, family members, and others also should learn about *Employment First* so they can provide leadership both within their communities and in state and local forums,

including the legislature or state conferences. VR counselors, adult service providers, Services Coordinators, and Personal Agents will be driven by demand that can only be created by individuals and their families.

- **Help individuals, family members, and representative payees to complete benefits planning related to employment.** Work incentives are complex and

While *Employment First* success will require the support of a statewide infrastructure, the real work of this initiative must be done locally, community by community, recognizing the unique perspectives that vary by locality and with differing ethnic and minority groups.

vary by the type of income support received by individuals. Probably the best strategy will be to ensure that individuals, families and representative payees access the Work Incentives Network (WIN) so that they understand the work incentives available to them, how to avoid or deal with an overpayment, and overcome existing fears and myths about employment. Achieving this will require that Oregon has good benefits planning available beyond the life of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. Advocates at state and local levels must, therefore, support the OVRs legislative initiative to assure WIN's continuation.

Goal: Communities Implement *Employment First*

While *Employment First* success will require the support of a statewide infrastructure, the real work of this initiative must be done locally, community by community, recognizing the unique perspectives that vary by locality and with differing ethnic and minority groups. Without additional funding—and likely with further cuts to existing funding before the end of this economic downturn—communities must assume responsibility for changing the way they think about what is an appropriate outcome for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are supported with public funding, and the methods they use to achieve those outcomes. Therefore, the following recommendations are directed to community stakeholders, as well as to state leadership.

- **Believe in *Employment First*.** Achieving this change will require that state and local leaders firmly believe in the *Employment First* policy, in the right of people with disabilities to work, and in the ability of people with disabilities to work. The belief is fundamental. As Margaret Wheatley

Advocates at state and local levels must, therefore, support the OVRs legislative initiative to assure WIN's continuation.

states, "There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."³

- **Build and support leadership within communities to promote**

Employment First. The *Employment First Outreach Project* worked to establish regional leadership for this initiative, including inviting regional leadership teams representing a variety of

One of the most effective strategies to begin the effort is simply to talk about it.

stakeholders to the Silver Falls *Employment First Summit*. While understanding that local leadership is critical, the project quickly learned through the forums and orientations that in most cases, "region" was not a viable geographic unit for leadership teams. As the project continued, we encouraged participants to sit together in community-level groups for joint planning activities at these events. We left "community" to be defined by participants—whatever geographic area or subgroup that just made sense. Although working at a more local level, the communities still need a leadership group that helps to: 1) communicate the state's vision, 2) recruit stakeholders to participate, 3) share best practices, 4) promote collaboration across agencies, and 5) coordinate community activities based on an informal plan for "what it will take" locally to expand *Employment First*. These leadership teams will need some level of support and communication—website, video and teleconferences, and even face-to-face forums and conferences—to maintain their momentum and share information on successful strategies.

- **Hold conversations about Employment First.** Changing the experience of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to include employment will require a substantial cultural and attitudinal shift across the state. One of the most effective strategies to begin the effort is simply to talk about it. "Believers" must talk about *Employment First* in staff meetings, in meetings with other organizations, at ISP meetings, in community meetings, with schools, with employers, with staff, with family members, and with individuals. These conversations must include talking about success stories, about the dream, and about how communities can work together to achieve the dream. Services Coordinators and Personal Agents sit in a vital position to hold conversations with individuals and families to support their shift to expecting to work. They must act as strong advocates for *Employment First*, even in uncomfortable situations.

³ Drawn from: <http://www.thecommunitycafe.com/> on December 21, 2010

- **Build relationships with media, community leadership, and others who can help to build a public awareness of the capacity of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to work and contribute to their communities.** Those involved with *Employment First* must use a planful, strategic approach to public messaging about people with disabilities. Relationships are needed at the national, state and local levels that ensure that opinion leaders,

All children should be asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" so that at an early age they begin to develop the expectation to work.

print, and electronic media portray positive images of people with disabilities, so individuals and their families can see people like them successfully working and participating as contributing citizens, and so the general community can as well. Oregon must take full advantage of national programs such as "Think Beyond the Label," but take state and local action as well.

- **Expand and improve local relationships with schools, Educational Service Districts, and OVRs to work together as a team for Employment First.** All children should be asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" so that at an early age they begin to develop the expectation to work. In most communities, schools could improve by adopting integrated employment as a goal for all students, including students with disabilities in typical places and routines of the school, and advancing inclusion within their communities. By establishing effective programming that assists students to be successful at home, in the community, and at workplaces, schools can ensure a successful transition to adult services. OVRs transition-focused projects need to expand and include all students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Expanded relationships between the adult systems and schools can support these shifts.
- **Ensure that individuals have relevant preparation for work.** This will require that individuals have opportunities for work exploration to identify preferences for future jobs; develop personal networks and social skills that will support job finding and success at work; and be included in their communities in many different ways. This will require most schools and adult service providers, including those providing alternatives to employment, to retool to ensure that at all times what they do is relevant to supporting community inclusion and employment.
- **Restructure local relationships around collaboration rather than competition.** One challenge faced by *Employment First* is that it must rely on existing relationships, as well as new ones. Unfortunately, in some communities, service

providers compete with each other rather than cooperate, and in some cases even draw boundaries around employers that they "own."

"Collaboration" is a well-worn term. However, it reflects a level of working together that goes well beyond coordination and cooperation among stakeholders. According to Pollard (2005) the following features are critical to collaborative partnerships:

" Collaboration entails finding the right group of people (skills, personalities, knowledge, work-styles, and chemistry), ensuring they share commitment to the collaboration task at hand, and providing them with an environment, tools, knowledge, training, process and facilitation to ensure they work together effectively."

(Pollard, 2005, p.1)

For true local collaborations, according to Pollard, as opposed to lower-level partnership models (i.e., coordination or cooperation), *Employment First* must bring together at the community level:

1. Partners with a history of working in cooperative and collaborative projects.
2. Partners whose purpose is to achieve collective results in complex environments and systems that they understand would not be possible by working alone.
3. Partners who work in alignment around a common vision, core values, and shared goals, objectives and plans. Through a dynamic process to articulate their shared vision, values and goals, they can build on mutual trust and respect and practice sharing open communication.
4. Partners who agree to work interdependently in designing and carrying out the work plan.
5. Partners who bring diverse but complementary skills and knowledge to the project and are able to work together.
6. Powerful leadership to ensure the partners stay focused and work together most effectively.
7. Partners with a sense of urgency and commitment about achieving the vision of *Employment First*.
8. Partners who are committed to achieving the desired outcome efficiently, realizing savings in time and cost, while seeking innovative, extraordinary, breakthrough results, and collective "we did that!" accomplishment.
9. Partners who understand that there must be individual latitude in carrying out the agreed-upon design, because the implementation work is necessarily more improvisational than highly structured.

- **Build and use personal networks to support *Employment First*.** One very successful job-finding strategy is to use personal networks. Often a job may be found through the serendipity of talking with one person who talks with another who knows about a job opening. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities can find jobs in the same way. Communities must work to build the personal networks of people with disabilities and explore the networks of their family members and friends, as well as those of program staff. Someone in those networks will be able to help support *Employment First*. Everyone is a job developer.

Communities must work to build the personal networks of people with disabilities and explore the networks of their family members and friends, as well as those of program staff.

- **Change the language used around non-work programs.** At one of the events, participants indicated that when an individual attends a non-work alternative to employment program, both residential and program staff refer to it as "going to work." This is a great disservice to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities—confusing them about the difference between non-work activities and real work. Conversations about *Employment First* will be more meaningful to individuals and their families if "work" is reserved to mean "real work" and other activities are called what they really are.
- **Develop relationships with employers based on the benefits to businesses of hiring people with disabilities.** Videos available through the Oregon *Employment First* Outreach Project document business people from around the Northwest describing why hiring people with disabilities makes good business sense. We need to include employers in discussions as we look for ways to expand employment opportunities, as they know their businesses—and other businesses in the community—very well.

Challenges

The *Employment First* policy will face many challenges over the next few years. Some of the most critical of these—those to which all involved state agencies and local leaders must pay attention—are reflected here.

Opposition to Employment First. The *Employment First* Outreach Project purposely began by bringing together "believers." As Oregon implements this initiative in communities across the state, those who oppose the change for any of a variety of reasons will come forward, impeding progress at both the local and state levels. However, addressing opposition is not the first priority. The project team continues to sense that working with

With limited resources and energy, our first work should continue to be focused on stakeholders who believe, and on individuals with disabilities who think they want to go to work.

believers is where our work both at the state and local levels should continue. With limited resources and energy, our first work should continue to be focused on stakeholders who believe, and on individuals with disabilities who think they want to go to work. Addressing naysayers now will diminish the project's ability to make change. Working with believers first will help Oregon to reach a "tipping point" where the *Employment First* movement will gain momentum of its own.

Despite this stand, ODDS will need to address Brokerages and CDDPs that did not send representatives to the project forums and orientations. Because Services Coordinators and Personal Agents play such a critical role in planning and supporting individuals to achieve positive futures, their participation in *Employment First* is vital.

Budget cuts that already have been implemented with more to come over at least the next two to four years will severely test both state and local commitment to *Employment First*. Helping communities and service providers to view *Employment First* as an opportunity, rather than a demand, is an important challenge that needs to be addressed by this initiative.

The culture around employment. Oregon has allowed employment to ebb for over a decade. With less than 25% of Oregonians with disabilities working in integrated jobs, employment has faded from the statewide—and local—conversation. Now, however, Oregon needs to create a culture of employment in the developmental disability services system so everyone expects they will go to work. A significant piece of creating that culture will be to get people to believe in the purpose,

At multiple levels, Oregon needs to change the perception that employment is an option for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities to an understanding that employment is an expectation.

function, outcome *and possibility* of employment. *Employment First* is about raising expectations of all stakeholders that people, regardless of their barriers to employment, must be given an opportunity to work. At multiple levels, Oregon needs to change the perception that employment is an option for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities to an understanding that employment is an expectation.

Self-determination and choice. An unexpected challenge within the developmental disabilities system will be to address the issue of choice and integrated employment. As the Brokerage system and person-centered planning have grown in Oregon, self-determination and choice have led service planning within the constraints of waiver-approved services. Over time, "self-determination" has been interpreted to mean "nearly anything you want." However, in reality, all choices have boundaries. The issue for *Employment First* is to determine what are reasonable boundaries and how will they be identified and described. Choice must reflect ongoing trade-offs that yield a balance between what is important to and important for each individual. In addition, informed choice requires that individuals have an opportunity to explore and have experience with different options to develop preferences. It is not sufficient to say "Fred doesn't want to work" if Fred has never experienced work that matches his interests outside of a sheltered setting, or if Fred's only understanding of the word "work" is attending an alternatives to employment program. As *Employment First* unfolds, both state and local stakeholders will need to be clear about how to negotiate the many sides of choice. (See, for example, Smull, 1995; Ferleger, 1995; Callahan & Mank, 1998.)

As *Employment First* unfolds, both state and local stakeholders will need to be clear about how to negotiate the many sides of choice.

OVRs ability to partner in *Employment First*. OVRs also faces significant challenges to: 1) adjust their systems and procedures (including the approved job development model) to better serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; 2) improve the skills of VR counselors related to working with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and 3) make sure that individuals with individual and developmental disabilities are welcomed by and receive equal access to and support from all OVRs offices, consistently, across the state.

Existing roles and relationships within communities. Because *Employment First* must grow as a grassroots movement, existing relationships among service providers, between service providers and employers, and among all stakeholders must shift. There is great inertia associated with "how we have done things in the past" and maintaining momentum

for change will require forming new or improving partnerships, and overcoming the inertia of what is.

Learning to support organizing by local communities while providing needed training and technical assistance on best practices for developing integrated employment. Traditional training and technical assistance roles center on increasing the capacity and skills of the formal service system.

However, *Employment First* implementation must proceed even as federal and state funding for services shrinks. The local nature of this effort calls for future projects designed to support *Employment First* implementation maintaining a careful balance between being welcoming to diverse strategies and opinions of local community stakeholders and promoting best practices. In addition, these projects also must build on the strengths of businesses and communities to expand capacity beyond the formal service system, for it is through their efforts that *Employment First* will achieve its dream.

The local nature of this effort calls for future projects designed to support *Employment First* implementation maintaining a careful balance between being welcoming to diverse strategies and opinions of local community stakeholders and promoting best practices.

Closing

Making the change to integrated employment with diminishing funding, and at first, with a state infrastructure—including a funding system, administrative rules, definitions, and

In the very least, the *Employment First* initiative must create a culture of possibility, supporting local leaders full of tenacity, persistence, and joy about the possibility of *Employment First*.

licensing, for example—that does not value integrated individual jobs over group or facility-based sheltered employment or alternatives to employment presents a formidable mountain to climb. Issues at the community level about relationships, skills, focus, and fears also present tremendous barriers. It is critical that *Employment First*, while acknowledging barriers, not become mired in addressing barriers, but rather be opportunistic in growing *Employment First*. The limited resource and energy available for *Employment First* could be quickly overtaxed if the strategy were to address identified barriers. Instead, stakeholders at all levels need to find strengths, build on them, and move forward.

We also need to understand that moving forward with *Employment First* is largely about business development, economic self-sufficiency for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and maximizing the independence of individuals while minimizing their reliance on the social services system.

The tasks are not easy. In the very least, the *Employment First* initiative must create a culture of possibility, supporting local leaders full of tenacity, persistence, and joy about the possibility of *Employment First*. *Employment First* is very much like the effort launched four decades ago to go to the moon. In a 1962 speech, President John F. Kennedy spoke eloquently of the reasons for taking on such an unbelievable goal at that time and the challenges in achieving it. (See Appendix 2 for the full text of the speech.) His references to both the place where he spoke (Rice University in Houston, Texas) and the vision for space exploration for which he provided powerful leadership serve as apt analogies for Oregon and for the vision for *Employment First*.

We meet at a college noted for knowledge, in a city noted for progress, in a State noted for strength, and we stand in need of all three, for we meet in an hour of change and challenge, in a decade of hope and fear, in an age of both knowledge and ignorance. The greater our knowledge increases, the greater our ignorance unfolds...

So it is not surprising that some would have us stay where we are a little longer to rest, to wait. But this city of Houston, this State of Texas, this country of the United States was not built by those who waited and rested and wished to look behind them. This country was conquered by those who moved forward--and so will space.

William Bradford, speaking in 1630 of the founding of the Plymouth Bay Colony, said that all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties, and both must be enterprised and overcome with answerable courage... We set sail on this new sea because there is new

"We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win..."

(John F. Kennedy, September 12, 1962)

knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people...

But why, some say, the moon? Why choose this as our goal? And they may well ask why climb the highest mountain? Why, 35 years ago, fly the Atlantic? Why does Rice play Texas?

We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win...⁴

⁴ Drawn from: <http://er.jsc.nasa.gov/seh/ricetalk.htm> on December 21, 2010.

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Appendices

1. *Employment First Policy* (2008)
2. John F. Kennedy Moon Speech - Rice Stadium, September 12, 1962: Full text.

Appendix 1

Office of Developmental Disability Services State Policy on: Employment for Working Age Individuals (9-18-08)

Policy Framework

1. Oregon Revised Statutes identify increased productivity, integration and independence as the desired outcomes resulting from provision of services and supports for adults with developmental disabilities.
2. The Oregon Department of Human Services, in order to implement its mission, has several stated goals. Among the goals are:
 - a. People are living as independently as possible; and
 - b. People are able to support themselves and their families.
3. It is important for Oregon that working age adults, including individuals with developmental disabilities:
 - a. Contribute to our economy;
 - b. Become part of our workforce; and
 - c. Become as self-sufficient as possible.
4. Individuals with developmental disabilities have a right to the opportunity for meaningful work and:
 - a. A vast majority want to pursue employment opportunities; and
 - b. Meaningful work can be accomplished regardless of disability; and
 - c. Partnerships, vision, and creativity are necessary to overcome perceived or real barriers to employment.
5. The benefits of meaningful work have significance and importance to all working age adults, including individuals with developmental disabilities. Benefits include the:
 - a. Ability to earn and keep meaningful wages;
 - b. Development and expansion of relationships;
 - c. Identity as a contributing member to one's community;
 - d. Increase in personal self-esteem; and
 - e. Pursuit of desired lifestyles.

Policy Statement

In order to achieve the intent outlined in the framework of this policy, employment opportunities in fully integrated work settings shall be the first and priority option explored in the service planning for working age adults with developmental disabilities. While all options are important and valued, integrated employment is more valued than non-employment, segregated employment, facility-based employment, or day habilitation in terms of employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.

For those who successfully achieve the goal of employment in an integrated setting, future service planning must focus on maintaining employment as well as the consideration of additional career or advancement opportunities. For those not yet achieving employment, annual service planning must include and reflect employment opportunities as the first and priority service explored.

Key Procedures and Principles

Implementation of this policy shall be based on the following procedures and principles:

1. Employment services shall be specifically addressed in the Individual Support Plan
2. Employment services shall be considered and provided using person-centered planning concepts, based on informed choice, and consistent with the philosophy of self-determination;
3. Minimum or competitive wages and benefits shall be the goal of integrated employment;
4. All natural as well as paid supports will be considered in service planning; and
5. Employment supports will be provided outside of the individual's living environment unless necessary for a self-employment plan or for the individual's medical or safety needs.

This policy statement will be accompanied by a more thorough implementation statement that further details definitions, desired outcomes, and operational procedures.

Appendix 2

John F. Kennedy Moon Speech - Rice Stadium



September 12, 1962

TEXT OF PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY'S RICE STADIUM MOON SPEECH

President Pitzer, Mr. Vice President, Governor, Congressman Thomas, Senator Wiley, and Congressman Miller, Mr. Webb, Mr. Bell, scientists, distinguished guests, and ladies and gentlemen:

I appreciate your president having made me an honorary visiting professor, and I will assure you that my first lecture will be very brief.

I am delighted to be here, and I'm particularly delighted to be here on this occasion.

We meet at a college noted for knowledge, in a city noted for progress, in a State noted for strength, and we stand in need of all three, for we meet in an hour of change and challenge, in a decade of hope and fear, in an age of both knowledge and ignorance. The greater our knowledge increases, the greater our ignorance unfolds.

Despite the striking fact that most of the scientists that the world has ever known are alive and working today, despite the fact that this Nation's own scientific manpower is doubling every 12 years in a rate of growth more than three times that of our population as a whole, despite that, the vast stretches of the unknown and the unanswered and the unfinished still far outstrip our collective comprehension.

No man can fully grasp how far and how fast we have come, but condense, if you will, the 50,000 years of man's recorded history in a time span of but a half-century. Stated in these terms, we know very little about the first 40 years, except at the end of them advanced man had learned to use the skins of animals to cover them. Then about 10 years ago, under this standard, man emerged from his caves to construct other kinds of shelter. Only five years ago man learned to write and use a cart with wheels. Christianity began less than two years ago. The printing press came this year, and then less than two months ago, during this whole 50-year span of human history, the steam engine provided a new source of power.

Newton explored the meaning of gravity. Last month electric lights and telephones and automobiles and airplanes became available. Only last week did we develop penicillin and television and nuclear power, and now if America's new spacecraft succeeds in reaching Venus, we will have literally reached the stars before midnight tonight.

This is a breathtaking pace, and such a pace cannot help but create new ills as it dispels old, new ignorance, new problems, new dangers. Surely the opening vistas of space promise high costs and hardships, as well as high reward.

So it is not surprising that some would have us stay where we are a little longer to rest, to wait. But this city of Houston, this State of Texas, this country of the United States was not built by those who waited and rested and wished to look behind them. This country was conquered by those who moved forward--and so will space.

William Bradford, speaking in 1630 of the founding of the Plymouth Bay Colony, said that all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties, and both must be enterprised and overcome with answerable courage.

If this capsule history of our progress teaches us anything, it is that man, in his quest for knowledge and progress, is determined and cannot be deterred. The exploration of space will go ahead, whether we join in it or not, and it is one of the great adventures of all time, and no nation which expects to be the leader of other nations can expect to stay behind in the race for space.

Those who came before us made certain that this country rode the first waves of the industrial revolutions, the first waves of modern invention, and the first wave of nuclear power, and this generation does not intend to founder in the backwash of the coming age of space. We mean to be a part of it--we mean to lead it. For the eyes of the world now look into space, to the moon and to the planets beyond, and we have vowed that we shall not see it governed by a hostile flag of conquest, but by a banner of freedom and peace. We have vowed that we shall not see space filled with weapons of mass destruction, but with instruments of knowledge and understanding.

Yet the vows of this Nation can only be fulfilled if we in this Nation are first, and, therefore, we intend to be first. In short, our leadership in science and in industry, our hopes for peace and security, our obligations to ourselves as well as others, all require us to make this effort, to solve these mysteries, to solve them for the good of all men, and to become the world's leading space-faring nation.

We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people. For space science, like nuclear science and all technology, has no conscience of its own. Whether it will become a force for good or ill depends on man, and only if the United States occupies a position of pre-eminence can we help decide whether this new ocean will be a sea of peace or a new terrifying theater of war. I do not say that we should or will go unprotected against the hostile misuse of space any more than we go unprotected against the hostile use of land or sea, but I do say that space can be explored and mastered without feeding the fires of war, without repeating the mistakes that man has made in extending his writ around this globe of ours.

There is no strife, no prejudice, no national conflict in outer space as yet. Its hazards are hostile to us all. Its conquest deserves the best of all mankind, and its opportunity for peaceful cooperation many never come again. But why, some say, the moon? Why choose this as our goal? And they may well ask why climb the highest mountain? Why, 35 years ago, fly the Atlantic? Why does Rice play Texas?

We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.

It is for these reasons that I regard the decision last year to shift our efforts in space from low to high gear as among the most important decisions that will be made during my incumbency in the office of the Presidency.

In the last 24 hours we have seen facilities now being created for the greatest and most complex exploration in man's history. We have felt the ground shake and the air shattered by the testing of a Saturn C-1 booster rocket, many times as powerful as the Atlas which launched John Glenn, generating power equivalent to 10,000 automobiles with their accelerators on the floor. We have seen the site where the F-1 rocket engines, each one as powerful as all eight engines of the Saturn combined, will be clustered together to make the advanced Saturn missile, assembled in a new building to be built at Cape Canaveral as tall as a 48 story structure, as wide as a city block, and as long as two lengths of this field.

Within these last 19 months at least 45 satellites have circled the earth. Some 40 of them were "made in the United States of America" and they were far more sophisticated and supplied far more knowledge to the people of the world than those of the Soviet Union.

The Mariner spacecraft now on its way to Venus is the most intricate instrument in the history of space science. The accuracy of that shot is comparable to firing a missile from Cape Canaveral and dropping it in this stadium between the 40-yard lines.

Transit satellites are helping our ships at sea to steer a safer course. Tiros satellites have given us unprecedented warnings of hurricanes and storms, and will do the same for forest fires and icebergs.

We have had our failures, but so have others, even if they do not admit them. And they may be less public.

To be sure, we are behind, and will be behind for some time in manned flight. But we do not intend to stay behind, and in this decade, we shall make up and move ahead.

The growth of our science and education will be enriched by new knowledge of our universe and environment, by new techniques of learning and mapping and observation, by new tools and computers for industry, medicine, the home as well as the school. Technical institutions, such as Rice, will reap the harvest of these gains.

And finally, the space effort itself, while still in its infancy, has already created a great number of new companies, and tens of thousands of new jobs. Space and related industries are generating new demands in investment and skilled personnel, and this city and this State, and this region, will share greatly in this growth. What was once the furthest outpost on the old frontier of the West will be the furthest outpost on the new frontier of science and space. Houston, your City of Houston, with its Manned Spacecraft Center, will become the heart of a large scientific and engineering community. During the next 5 years the National Aeronautics and Space Administration expects to double the number of scientists and engineers in this area, to increase its outlays for salaries and expenses to \$60 million a year; to invest some \$200 million in plant and laboratory facilities; and to direct or contract for new space efforts over \$1 billion from this Center in this City.

To be sure, all this costs us all a good deal of money. This year's space budget is three times what it was in January 1961, and it is greater than the space budget of the previous eight years combined. That budget now stands at \$5,400 million a year--a staggering sum, though somewhat less than we pay for cigarettes and cigars every year. Space expenditures will soon rise some more, from 40 cents per person per week to more than 50 cents a week for every man, woman and child in the United States, for we have given this program a high national priority--even though I realize that this is in some measure an act of faith and vision, for we do not now know what benefits await us.

But if I were to say, my fellow citizens, that we shall send to the moon, 240,000 miles away from the control station in Houston, a giant rocket more than 300 feet tall, the length of this football field, made of new metal alloys, some of which have not yet been invented, capable of standing heat and stresses several times more than have ever been experienced, fitted together with a precision better than the finest watch, carrying all the equipment needed for propulsion, guidance, control, communications, food and survival, on an untried mission, to an unknown celestial body, and then return it safely to earth, re-entering the atmosphere at speeds of over 25,000 miles per hour, causing heat about half that of the temperature of the sun--almost as hot as it is here today--and do all this, and do it right, and do it first before this decade is out--then we must be bold.

I'm the one who is doing all the work, so we just want you to stay cool for a minute. [laughter]

However, I think we're going to do it, and I think that we must pay what needs to be paid. I don't think we ought to waste any money, but I think we ought to do the job. And this will be done in the decade of the sixties. It may be done while some of you are still here at school at this college and university. It will be done during the term of office of some of the people who sit here on this platform. But it will be done. And it will be done before the end of this decade.

I am delighted that this university is playing a part in putting a man on the moon as part of a great national effort of the United States of America.

Many years ago the great British explorer George Mallory, who was to die on Mount Everest, was asked why did he want to climb it. He said, "Because it is there."

Well, space is there, and we're going to climb it, and the moon and the planets are there, and new hopes for knowledge and peace are there. And, therefore, as we set sail we ask God's blessing on the most hazardous and dangerous and greatest adventure on which man has ever embarked.

Thank you.

Drawn from: <http://er.jsc.nasa.gov/seh/ricetalk.htm> December 21, 2010.