

January 2011 Volume 4, Issue1

The Rehab Council Connection: A Quarterly e-Newsletter

Bug on top of page 1:*If you thrive on caffeine and are employed by DVR in Area 2, see how from the WSRC staff on Pg. 3

Left Sidebar page 1

Our Volunteer Members

Jeffrey Abe-Gunter of Spokane

Andres Aguirre, Interim DVR Director Ex-Officio of Olympia

Valerie Arnold of Elma

Don Brandon of Mountlake Terrace

Sandra Carr of Spokane

Vickie Foster of Seattle

Jana Finkbonner of Bellingham

Rudy Hernandez of Burien

Michael Hudson of Bellingham

Jerry Johnsen of Seattle

Susan Kautzman of Grandview

Jim Larson of Olympia

Vanessa Lewis of Tacoma

Martin McCallum of Olympia

Leandro Razo of Grandview

Hudson to Chair Council in 2011

On January 21, Mike Hudson was elected to serve as the 2011 Chair of the Washington State Rehabilitation Council. Hudson, of Bellingham, has represented business and industry on the Council for a year and a half. He brings a depth of experience, enthusiasm, and a fresh perspective to the role of Council Chair.

Mike Hudson was born and raised in Longview. He joined the Washington Army National Guard straight out of high school. While serving in the Army he had an assignment with an artillery unit before working as a radio and TV officer. He also worked in radio in civilian life, and later in marketing. Hudson entered the next phase of his career working with credit unions. This work took him from Washington State to Michigan, and then to Wisconsin. He developed marketing materials used widely by various credit unions before moving into a management role. Mike Hudson returned to Washington to be President CEO of North Coast Credit Union.

Hudson now works for the Association of Washington Business Institute. The institute is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Association of Washington Business (AWB) which is our state's chamber of commerce. AWB is a membership driven organization representing 2,500 employers that range in size from Weyerhaeuser to the mom and pop shop down the street. The non-profit institute that Mike Hudson works for cultivates partnerships and focuses on workforce development issues.

Hudson is knowledgeable about workforce development issues that extend beyond DVR's scope. Since being appointed to the WSRC he has invested a great deal of time and personal energy to thinking about employment for people with disabilities. Some of his interest in the topic may be attributed to his firsthand experience with Bipolar Disorder, but it is also fueled by an ongoing interest in helping employers access untapped talent. Outside of work Mike and his wife Fran have two daughters, Emily and Kate.

Hudson brings a curiosity about how social media might be used by people with disabilities to bolster contemporary job searches to his Council service. We look forward to Mike Hudson's leadership in 2011.

Right Sidebar Info Page 1:

Next Quarterly Meeting: April 28-29, 2011

All activities are open to the public and will be held at:

Best Western Lakeway Inn & Conference Center

714 Lakeway Dr. Bellingham, WA 98229

Customer Forum: April 28 3:00-5:00pm ASL Interpretation provided

Reasonable accommodation will be happily provided upon request by contacting JoAnne Lang at: langjk@dshs.wa.gov or by calling 360-725-3692

Left Sidebar Page 2:

COUNCIL PRIORITIES FOR 2011

- Developing a shared understanding with DVR about which data points and other information will guide our dialogue about program evaluation and improvement for 12-18 months;
- Educating decision makers about the important role comparable benefits, particularly community-based mental health services, play in achieving rehabilitation;
- Conducting a survey to obtain customer input about how to improve VR services and;
- Advocating for the budgetary and programmatic integrity of DVR.

National Disability Rights Network's Board President- Elect, Addresses WSRC

Michael T. Bailey of Portland Oregon is the President-Elect of NDRN. He is the author of Special Education: a Parent's Guide for Children's Success

Michael T. Bailey is the first to admit he knew next to nothing about disability before the birth of his first daughter, Eleanor, 21 years ago. That changed as he navigated a maze of service systems to support her success. Bailey, then a practicing defense attorney began to notice that the biggest barriers people with disabilities face are not created by their health. It is discrimination that poses the biggest barrier.

Michael Bailey is no stranger to political activism or to struggles for civil rights. He was involved with the American Indian Movement at Pine Ridge in the 1970s. The barriers facing people with disabilities that Bailey finds most troubling are not the ones that many people are comfortable acknowledging. For example: social isolation and segregation, the way that the potential of people with disabilities is often underestimated, and the pervasive policy and social presumption that disability is unnatural and ought to be fixed. These barriers reveal more about the dominant view of people with disabilities than about the people themselves.

Now a veteran of disability systems advocacy, Michael Bailey was recently elected to serve as the next Board President of the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN). NDRN is the national arm of the Protection and Advocacy System which has a presence in each state and the territories. NDRN pursues litigation to secure remedies for instances when the civil rights of people with disabilities are violated. It also lobbies at a federal level for more progressive policies regarding housing, education, and employment for people with disabilities.

The WSRC invited Michael Bailey to help us achieve a key objective during our January quarterly meeting. We wanted to assess how well our work links to core values. Listening to Bailey explore how he arrived at the principles that guide his policy advocacy invited us to reflect on our own experiences and values. Bailey's moral compass regarding disability advocacy is centered on breaking down social isolation and segregation, challenging low expectations, and the notion that disability is unnatural. He

doesn't mince words. Bailey stated, "If a policy does any of those three things, it should be condemned."

Although Michael Bailey possesses high ideals he is not idealistic. He understands that the nation's budget crisis is not easily solved and recognizes that it drives decision making at the federal and state level. Still, he argued in favor of projecting a progressive vision for what we hope to accomplish in the next phase of the movement for civil rights for people with disabilities. The WSRC appreciates Michael Bailey's insights and the gift of his time.

Right Sidebar Page 2:

The National Disability Rights Network just released a report entitled Segregated & Exploited: the Failure of the Disability Service System to Provide Quality Work. The report calls for: an end to segregated and subminimum wage employment; increased labor protection

and enforcement, and; the promotion and facilitation of integrated employment.

To read the full report visit:

<http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Segregated-and-Exploited.pdf>

Washington Access Fund Makes Independence More Affordable

Unfortunately some DVR customers are living on next to nothing. And nothing is shrinking all the time. If DVR is unable to purchase equipment for a customer, there may be an alternative. The Washington Access Fund may be a support to acquire what is needed.

Washington Access Fund (WAF) is a non-profit organization promoting access to technology and economic opportunity for Washingtonians with disabilities. They offer a range of services including: low interest loans for home or vehicle modifications; low interest loans for equipment needed to start or expand a business or to work from home, and; matched savings or individual development accounts or purchase assistive technology to facilitate work or education intended to lead to work. WAF also makes long-term, low cost loans of Closed Circuit TV Magnifiers available to people with vision loss.

WAF is recognized by the U.S. Department of Treasury as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). CDFI's provide loans and other financing services to low income individuals and communities. WAF has made over 270 loans since its inception-- lending approximately \$975,000. Most WAF clients are low income. Nearly 70% fall below 80% of the statewide median income. Nevertheless, 98% of the money lent is repaid.

Right Sidebar Page 3

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WASHINGTON ACCESS FUND visit:
<http://www.washingtonaccessfund.org>

Voice: 206.328.5116 Toll Free: 877-428-5116
TTY: 1.888.808.8942 info@washingtonaccessfund.org

Learn more about our work in 2010 by visiting:

<http://wastrehabcouncil.org/annualReports.html>

Offer of coffee from WSRC staff still available to 1st DVR Area 2
staffer who comments on annual report

WELCOME TO OUR RECENTLY APPOINTED MEMBERS

Please join continuing members and staff to the WSRC as we
welcome our recently appointed colleagues:

Jana Finkbonner of Bellingham representing Tribal Vocational
Rehabilitation, and Leandro Razo of Grandview representing
current or former customers of Vocational Rehabilitation.