

2004 Disability Program Navigator Training

“Building Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities”



Moving from Disability Novice to Disability Expert: Tips from States and Locals that have made the Transition.

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Byron Zuidema: Good morning and welcome to Chicago. My name is Byron Zuidema. I am the Regional Administrator for the Department of Labor here in Chicago. It is a pleasure to welcome all of you here this morning.

I want to start somewhat unusually with an apology and an explanation. A number of people are trying to still come into the conference who have not yet registered. Registration cut off last Thursday, because this room is set up to accommodate a number of people. All the breakout rooms are set up to accommodate a number of people. For all of you who registered on time, we owe you the space that we promised you when you registered. For all the people who did not get registered in time, I apologize if we underplanned our conference, but I cannot just now magically expand it.

We have asked some people to come in and join us for this opening session. We are accommodating that to the extent we can in this room here in this room. But we will not issue you a badge, and you will probably not be able to participate in the rest of the conference. Next year you can plan a little earlier, we will plan a little larger. **[Laughter]**

Again, welcome to Chicago. It is really a pleasure to see all of you here and to sense the phenomenal interest in our topic of the day. I want to thank the Rehab Services Administration and our state partners who are here today, the national office and the regional office, Employment and Training Administration staff, who have worked so hard on these issues and in particular to make this conference happen.

Right now today, in March of 2004 in the 21st century, there are 54 million people with disabilities in this country. Over 70 percent of them are not employed and that is unacceptable, and that is why we are here. Elaine Chao, the Secretary of Labor, said recently, "America works better when all Americans can work." Emily DeRocco, the Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration, has made the integration and access of services, particularly for people with disabilities, as one of the highest ETA priorities, in terms of getting people access to our One-Stop services across this country.

We have come here together to learn. This is one thing we all have in common. We are all able to do some things. We are all unable to do some things. To reflect on that and to speak in their own words, let us hear from some of our experts. **[Showing Film]**

Female Speaker in Film: I do not think we treat everybody else as humanly as we could. I think there is society now, even though we are more educated, I think we still limit by our prejudice.

Female Speaker in Film: It is really important for people with disabilities to have their self-esteem bolstered so that they can look, if they are not already comfortable with that disability, it is really important that the interaction that happens between people with disabilities and people without disabilities is positive and not at all condescending. I think the condescension is what bothers people with disabilities the most.

Male Speaker: There is no magic formula. I do not think. There is no magic formula. How would I like to be treated, how would the other person like to be treated.

Female Speaker: I do want you to treat me like anybody else, that is, that is real. And to tell you what that means is also very hard.

Female Speaker: Whatever you are like, on a day to day basis, however you interact with anyone else that you would meet, that you would not change your demeanor, when you come in contact with me or one of my friends with disabilities, one of your employees. Do not change the way that you speak, the way that you interact.

Female Speaker: Treat me as somebody who is a peer rather than somebody who needs help or to be taken care of. And by that I mean, do not be patronizing, do not call me honey, or sweetie. Do not change your tone of voice when you talk to me. A big common mistake is that people talk louder to somebody who cannot see. It is very insulting and real patronizing.

Female Speaker: If you are having a conversation with me and you say something that offends me, and I know that you did not mean it, because I know you, I know that you are a good person and we work together before. I am just going to say, "You know there is a better way to say that." And I am going to say that, "do not use the word handicapped, it can be offensive to some. Use the word person with a disability." And then the conversation will just move on. So it is just that level of respect that is important. The same level you would give to anybody else. [End of video]

Byron Zuidema: Treat me like you treat everyone else. I want to be seen as a whole person. I want to focus on my ability. It seems so profoundly simple and yet it is so easily missed. When you look at me, please see my ability. I think that is the message loud and clear, this morning and for the next couple of days.

A few months ago Lynn Kinzer, from the staff in the regional office here in Chicago came and talked to me and said, "I have this idea, we should pull together a few people, you know we will get the Navigators together, a few other people who are interested in this topic of working on access for people with disabilities, and it is not really a conference, Byron, it is just kind of, you know, a meeting. Maybe be a hundred people or so." Well, Lynn engaged the services of the Event Connection, Denise Donahue, who I also want to thank this morning and I want to introduce you now to Lynn Kinzer, who had this small idea of putting a few people together and talking about the subject of disability. So Lynn, I give you your conference, your overflowing conference, for you to now manage. Thank you, Lynn Kinzer. [Applause]

Lynn Kinzer: Thank you and good morning. Even though we did plan this on a little smaller scale, we are all thrilled that you are here. I am thrilled that you are here, even though I have not slept much the past couple weeks, still great to see you all.

Actually, before we start our opening panel I am going to turn it over to Pam Bouallegue [microphone feedback] okay, for just a couple of minutes and she is going to go through some housekeeping items. Thank you, Pam. And for those of you who do not know Pam, she is out of

our Kansas City office. She covers a lot of Work Incentive Grants, Navigator grants and just has been a tremendous help putting this together so, I really do appreciate it. Thank you very much Pam. Also, thank you to Rose Alvarado, who has also been a tremendous help and she is sitting up here as well.

Okay, we will go ahead and get started with our first panel. When we were putting this together and as, I think, our attendance list started to grow; we realized that we were going to have a really varied group of people attending this conference. We were going to have people at all different levels and expertise with this topic. And we know some of you are still dealing with physical accessibility challenges in your centers. Some of you maybe are beyond that, and you are focusing more on service integration, Universal Design, those kinds of things. And some of you are somewhere in the middle and you are dealing with both. But given that, we knew that all of this is really challenging. And we wanted to give you some hope and let you know that it can be done. And we have three people up here who really have done it. They are still dealing with different challenges. But they are representing three states that really have produced systems that for the most part provide high quality services for people with disabilities. They are going to talk about the different successes they have had. The different challenges they have faced. But they are also going to try and provide you some strategies that you can use to deal with those different challenges and tips for overcoming them.

So, I am going to go ahead and introduce all three of them now. And then they will go ahead. And if you could hold your questions until the end, we are going to try and leave a significant portion of time for that. And we will have people roaming around the room with mics that can take your questions. So just raise your hand. Okay, our first speaker, Howard Glad. Howard Glad was instrumental in the development of the Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and its implementation in Minnesota. He currently serves as the state director for rehabilitation services, a position he has held since 1999.

Following Howard, we are going to have Doug Keast. Doug Keast has 25 years of experience in employment and disability services at the local and state level in Iowa. He has worked with county officials to develop supported employment services and with regional boards and partners to implement WIA.

And then finally we will have Glenn Olsen, who in his own words is really nobody special. We beg to differ, Glenn. He is a lowly program and planning analyst for the State of Wisconsin and has no decision-making authority. **[Laughter]** His role in Wisconsin is to serve as the high risk population specialist and develop tools and strategies for the One-Stop System to serve offenders, older workers, noncustodial parents, limited English proficiencies, and of course job seekers with disabilities.

And these short bios do not really capture how great it has been for us at the regional level to work with all three of these people. They have been participating in a working group with us, they have provided a lot of input into putting the agenda together for this training forum and we really appreciate it. So, I will turn it over to Howard.

Howard Glad: Thank you. Good morning. I aspire to Glenn's position. **[Laughter]** Perhaps we can talk later?

I think it is a real testimony to Byron's magnetism and the importance of the subject at hand that during a time when we all have very, very limited resources and getting out-of-state travel approved is like pulling teeth, that we would be able to fill a room like this, so good luck to us, to us all in the meeting the challenges at hand. Byron asked me to do two things in coming here today. To look for models, programs, projects, initiatives, or philosophies that we could share with you and hearing the word philosophies, there was no doubt in my mind as to which way I was going to go because there is as an area where there is no right or wrong answer and I can argue either side of the table all day long. So, but I am going to be held at bay, because we have time cards. But, what I am going to do is lay out a philosophy that Minnesota entered into for creating its One-Stop System some nine short years ago.

The second thing that Byron admonished me was to catch up with and enter into the age of technology. So Byron, I want you to know that I followed your admonition here and I have all of my slides on a disk. So, **[Laughter at a computer disk on overhead]**, I hope you will remember that the next time I apply for a technology grant. **[Laughter]**

Actually, when we set out to design the state's One-Stop System, we set out not to design a system that also serves people with disabilities, we set out to design a system that serves everybody, including, and you can fill in that blank space, one of our bigger challenges today is including people who also have a disability. We have, as you well know, other challenges out there as well. But there is a subtle difference between building a system that also serves people with disabilities, and building a system that serves everybody, including people with disabilities. So we wanted that assumption to be the responsibility of everybody in the system.

We are a statewide system, and we cover 16 Workforce service areas, which range everything from municipal, high density downtown areas to very, very rural areas of the state. The partnership brings together all entities, private, not-for-profit and for-profit, state employees, and other agencies co-located under the same roof. And we will get into more than just the co-location in a moment. And importantly the system receives input and provides input to the state Workforce Investment Board, in Minnesota we call that the Governor's Workforce Development Council, and the local WIBs, and that has been a very, very important link, both up and down. And if you are not there, you need to take strides to ensure that the disability communities' needs, aspirations, and challenges are fully included in the State's Economic and Workforce Development Plan. And assumedly, the focus point for that state plan rests with your state Workforce Investment Board. So that is extremely important.

I will run very briefly through the credentialing or the criteria for our One-Stops. Some of them are pretty obvious; others are a little bit more subtle. First of all, in 1996, when I came aboard, we were in 223 locations across the state. That is just those services that were provided by our department of economic security; or all of the employment-related services, 223 leases.

We said, one, in order to be in a One-Stop, the demographics have to support it. You need to demonstrate that you are where your customers are, and we laid out a criteria that, we would have a One-Stop within at least 35 driving miles of 96 percent of the population of the state.

That the One-Stops must provide all of the services associated with the partners. That means that if you walk into a One-Stop in downtown St. Paul, you receive the same services that you would receive if you walked into a One-Stop in Thief River Falls, or Marshall, or anyplace else in the state. I used to use the McDonald's analogy. McDonald's restaurant, and I said McDonald's now three times, and I am sure in the back of your mind you can picture that menu board and list off everything on that menu board, and probably have tried it. It is the same analogy. You should be aware of what the menu of services are that you can expect to find in any of the One-Stops across the state. And we did that by putting together a services matrix, which is an agreement among all the partners as to what services were going to be provided. And who is responsible for providing those services. And each of those services had to be addressed within their annual plan. And if you do not hear me use the word program throughout my presentation, it is not by accident. Because one of the basic tenets of this system is that we provide services, we do not provide programs.

We insisted that the providers must be co-located. Not all of the providers have sufficient staff or resources to staff each of the 53 One-Stops. In order not to be there, you must then be able to demonstrate that you can provide the services in a seamless and timely fashion from wherever those providers happen to be located. And I was especially addressing our State Services for the Blind, who have limited number of providers out there, and certainly not enough to cover all 53 One-Stops. Not just bringing four, five, or six, you should pardon the expression, programs under one roof. But co-located in the spirit of what has become the Workforce Investment Act, to collaborate, to cooperate, to coordinate the delivery of services to avoid duplication.

A single administrative lease. The order priority for siting a One-Stop was, if appropriate, on the campus of a technical or community college; two, in another government facility; and then three, in a privately held lease. And the words "where appropriate" are operative here. Because we had some opportunities to locate on college campuses, and in county buildings, which were not the most appropriate locations to serve our consumers.

The spaces must be contiguous. Cannot have one service provider on the 5th floor and another service provider on the 2nd floor and, you know, how that goes. A common reception area, up front. No multiple doors, literally, to the One-Stops. A common upfront resource area, which has become the hallmark of the system, by the way. And more than half of the consumers that utilize services of the system are not unemployed.

A functional floor plan, if you have placement people, for instance, you may have three providers in the same One-Stop, all of whom participate in a placement service. We want to have them situated close to each other, so that they can coordinate efforts. Joint planning and staff cross-training, now I got to tell you that I have more stab wound scars from the words cross-training than any other two words I have spoken in the past eight years. Cross training, bear that in mind, we will talk about it here in a moment.

Integrated use of common spaces. What are your real needs? How often do you use the spaces and for what purposes? Common signage, every one of our One-Stops has the same color scheme, the same comfortable, safe, secure, identifiable feel, touch, and smell. And the same sign over the door. We have brand recognition that, quite frankly, the business community envies. More than half of the businesses in the state recognize the Minnesota Workforce Center logo and know what it is, and we guard that jealously.

Common telephone system. Amazing, 223 offices, we ended up with about 80 different phone systems. Even before we co-located, we would have people in the same location on two different phone systems, could not talk to each other, could not transfer a call from one side of the office to the other side of the office, and it gets worse. The local technology plan that deals with shared data lines.

And last but not least, each of the One-Stops has to conform not only to the letter but the spirit of the ADA. Some of the subtle nuances that you overlook are very important. We can all take out a type measure and look for obvious signs, but are you locating your One-Stop on a bus route? Are you going to rent a space and then make a capital investment in that space, which the landlord should have taken care of before he is able to put it on the market for rent? And I could go on and on with that. Next slide please.

Okay. I will run through this real quick. Some of the good stuff, it is statewide, one look, one feel. It is the state's employment services delivery system, that was a major challenge to overcome, because now we have legislative support, and the other agencies in Minnesota state government recognize that this is the state's employment, and now economic development service delivery point. It is the focus.

We started out with four mandated partners. Voc Rehab, SSB, State Services for the Blind, Job Service and all of the WIA Title I and other training providers. There are many, many other providers. Right now 50 One-Stops out there, 3700 employees, of which, about 1600 are state employees. So the great majority of folks who deliver services from within the One-Stop System are not state employees, they are other partners.

Go to the next slide, please.

One of my favorite expressions, "and the road to hell is paved with good intentions." And we have provided several of the paving blocks. **[Laughter]** Fear, hell, no, we will not go. Now, most of you are thinking hell, no, we will not go, state employees, VR, especially, do not want to go in anything that is a One-Stop, one-size fits all, next in line, take a number please, you have probably heard them all. But the hell, no, we will not go challenge is there, but also with people with disabilities who do not want to go to a One-Stop. We have a tremendous challenge to make sure that everybody is comfortable, safe, and secure, and has access to services not as a bolt-on, but from the very beginning of the design of the One-Stop.

It will cost us a fortune. It does not. You need to know what you are paying for and what the value is. On the table out in the entryway, there is a cost allocation guideline hand out. It is dated 1997, do not let that fool you. What it means is that it is stood the test of merit for going

on seven years now. Very simple ways to do cost allocations at a very local level, so that you know what it is you are entering into an agreement to pay for.

I have got a two minute warning here so I will go by.

It is not my job. And it is not your job. And what about my job when we run out of welfare cases? All three challenges, I do not want you serving the people that only I am able to serve. And the other side of that is I am not going to do your job, I, that is not what I came into this employment to do. Let me tell you, that is not the message here, folks, and this is where cross training comes in. Perish the thought; it is not cross training to do somebody else's job. It is cross-understanding of what all of the other specialists do in serving their customers. Some of whom, which are also your customers, and your customers. And hopefully you will be able to visit with some of our customers later on in the day and find out how they feel about this.

Literally one of the major challenges we had with partnering with our state TANF providers, the welfare folks, this was also the spin-down and we are going to get rid of the waiting lists for welfare, what about my job when we run out of welfare cases. Let me tell you we have been doing this for six years now there is no shortage of work for county Social Service Providers, they certainly are not a threat to our Voc Rehab providers, and vice versa. What is it you do anyway? This is key to it, literally Understanding 101, sit down at a table and share what you do, and who you serve, and how you do it. It sounds basic, it almost sounds trite, it is the basic building block, you got to do it.

You cannot tell my people what to do. I use what I call the three-legged stool, or come from dairy country, cannot stand that stool on two legs; the three legs are leadership, management and supervision. Everybody is a leader; everybody is expected to use the five magic words which are the goal of our entire system: How may I help you? That is leadership. No matter who pays you, that is leadership.

Then we have management, everybody can manage a One-Stop. And in the cost allocation agreements and in the Workforce Investment Act, you can and should appoint somebody for the day-to-day operations of your One-Stops. Who pays the rent? Who takes care of the, dealing with the building landlord or owner, et cetera? What you cannot do is universally supervise. That is very clearly laid out in law and regulations and especially in the VR community. Well, you can do leadership jointly, you can do management jointly, but you have to do supervision service-by-service.

We cannot pay for that. Yes, you can pay for that. In the cost allocation agreements, and we will get to that at some other session or I will be here for the next two days, if you would like to sit down and we can discuss who can pay for that. I am sure Chuck Lindsel, will help me address the subject. And if you have not met Charles, he is an invaluable resource on what we can and what we should not be paying for. But the magic words here are: Is there a value for the people who I serve? And if the answer is yes, then you need to find a way to pay for it.

Last but not least is, the presumption we make when we see somebody with a disability that they are looking for Rehab Services. No, that is what we are all about. The magic words: How may I help you? Do not make any presumptions.

And then the great B.S., I do not know where your mind is running, but B.S. is the great Big Secret. It is you cannot look at my screen, you cannot hear what I am talking about, you do not have the right to know anything about my clients and customers. I thank Messrs. Bensen and Bensen, whose material I stole and is on a handout there, and it talks about the key concepts that you need to get into, are we talking about privacy, are we talking about confidentiality, are we talking about privilege communication? Just what is it you are talking about? And when you find out what it is you are talking about, I guarantee you that your state laws give you the guidance that you need in order to share necessary information between providers, with the consumer in mind. And I apologize for running over. Thank you. **[Applause]**

Doug Keast: I cannot tell you how much pleasure it gives me to be able to meet all of you folks, and talk with you. The next couple days with, over the fine agenda that we have here today, I know we all have a great opportunity to look at tools, to look at ideas, to make new friends. And just in the short period of time I have been had to meet with Glenn and Howard, I hope I can speak for them as much as for myself. With the short amount of time we have to cover many things we are excited about, we hope we can talk with you in more detail, in more depth over the next couple of days, because we all like talking about this stuff.

I appreciated your quote, Howard. I have got another one for you I just picked up the other day. "It is all things truly wicked begin in innocence." And I cannot remember where I picked that one up from, and I do not know, I hope that does not apply to us, but I do not think we are innocent anymore either. As we talk about these topics and talk about these opportunities that we have been given, I realize in Iowa we have been incredibly blessed with the investment from our federal agencies in a number of initiatives, that I will kind of fly through a little later in my presentation. But as we talk to each other, we will recognize that there is many ways that we are alike. But in talking about that we will talk about how we are different, and when we talk about how we are different, we will identify the ways that we are alike also. As I talk about what is going on in Iowa, I am not going to try to present us as wonderful or perfect. I think that puts too much pressure on us to be right. And I think when you have a lot of pressure to be right, that gets in the way of us trying to get to the goals. It is helped us a lot in the last few years to be open and objective in looking at what our challenges and what our barriers are. And I hope to join you folks in helping us do that.

Okay. I got it. I got it. This is my state and the state of a few other folks in this room. This is what it looks like to the Workforce Development Center System. And there is not much to say, but as we were talking about implementing the Workforce Investment Grant, we talked about doing some comparisons between urban regions and rural regions, and while we kind of threw that idea out. It is kind of looking at rural regions and not quite so rural regions as we work in Iowa. And that is all I have to say about that.

It is important to remember for us, the Workforce Investment Act is an incredible systems change legislation. And I know when you talk to folks like me sometimes; you get a little bit of

a sermon. People who know me have heard this from me before, but I will say it again for those of you who do not know me. If we had been successful in meeting the vision of the Workforce Investment Act in its implementation, we would not need the Work Incentive Grants, and we would not need the Navigators, and we would not need many of these other great tools that we are working on developing, because all folks seeking work would have access to the same products and services just by walking through the door of the center. But at the same time we are very excited to be able to be engaging in this process of developing these products and tools. As we have looked at how policy and accountability impacts customer service, we have looked a lot at the local level and visited with boards and talked about that.

I am going to try to give you a little bit of a historical perspective on the development of this process in Iowa. In 1989 then Governor Branstad developed a targeted alliance made up of representatives of business, labor and government to look at the service system in Iowa. And in '89 and '90 they looked specifically at the employment services system and made some recommendations. Came back in the report, and they voiced a lot of concern over the fragmentation of services. In fact even one person on that target alliance stated how can somebody possibly make their way through this maze to find the services that they need?

A lot of the information that was generated from this created the foundation for Iowa state agencies to apply to pilot the One-Stop System with the Department of Labor. And in 1994 Iowa was identified as one of six states that would pilot the One-Stop System. And as a result of that project in 1996, Iowa created its own reform legislation codifying the One-Stop System in Iowa. Now we did not go as far as consolidating agencies or programs and services. All of the agencies and programs still kept their identity. But we did have a lot of focus on co-location and developing a comprehensive service system.

And then of course, 1998 WIA Reauthorization. I like to tell people, I started working for Iowa Workforce Development on August 7th, 1998, the day that President Clinton signed the Workforce Investment Act, that was significant, but it was also the first day of a pay period. **[Laughter]** Iowa receives two state partner initiatives also in 1998, one from the Social Security Administration and one from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This really kind of got us going with the, I think a deeper collaboration of state agencies and exploring what it is that works, what are good indicators of collaborative working relationships locally and what is not, what is a barrier. And then in 2000 we also were very fortunate to get three semi-related projects released at the same time that related to the Ticket to Work from the Department of Labor, Social Security Administration, and what was then HCFA, or the Healthcare Financing Administration.

I think the best and the worst thing of trying to go through a systems change initiative, such as this is the number, the incredible number of people that you need to work with to make it work. It is best to have this kind of partnership because if you are going to make an impact in communities, you need to have all of these agencies working together at the same rate. If you do not have that, your chances of having something or creating a change that is lasting is difficult. Of course the difficult thing is meeting with this many people and developing a plan that works with everybody.

Defining collaboration was very important. In the process of implementing the Workforce Investment Act, I do not know how many of you folks have had this experience, but in meeting with variety of communities and local offices, I have yet to run into a community where the partners say they do not collaborate. Oh, sure, we collaborate, we work very closely together. Through the RSA Systems Change Grant that we are connected with, we had a consultant go and meet with staff in many of our One-Stop Centers and talk about collaboration. And she came back with a report to our Governance Board, which is the directors of our state agencies and said, well, what she saw was a lot of evidence of cooperation, folks will get together and meet and have coffee and talk once in a while and maybe present to each other what their services are. And to a lesser degree see saw evidence of coordination. Where, maybe they would talk about where one service would impact the community in connection with maybe another service going in different direction or how that would all work. But very rarely did she see evidence of collaboration, where the agencies at the local level would actively share resources and share customers and share information. And this was a report given a couple of years ago. And I think it has been very helpful to us in working with the local boards and partners.

Our statewide focus of our grants, we have felt that it is very important to take the blueprint of the Workforce Investment Act and really focus on the local boards and the local partner networks, to learn with them what they recognize as barriers, and to use grant initiatives to try things to address those barriers, and share with other regions what we are learning and what we are doing. The state agencies through the Work Incentive Grant created a resource team, which was a representative from all of those agencies that I showed on an earlier slide. And they would go out and work along with the local boards and partner groups, as a partner, to do focus groups, and strategic planning, and learn together what the barriers to collaboration are.

On a state partner level, the people that really wrote the grants would continue to meet to make sure that they were responsive in doing the things that we said we would do. And at a policy level, the RSA Grant created the Governance Board, which we have expanded a little bit. And the directors and policy makers are available through this group to, excuse me, where is the person that holds the time cards? Okay. How am I doing? Oh, okay. Okay. They are **[Laughter]** actually I have got a lot more. So I am going to hurry up. Their role is to, if we identify a barrier that is created by policy that gets in the way of agencies and staff working together it is their job to solve that problem.

I am going to just speed through this. This is an example of the different grants, and what the focus of each of those grants are, and if you would like to talk in more detail about those, I would be happy to do that with you. There is a copy of this presentation in your books.

One thing that we identified in local focus groups, we did local focus groups through a mixture of these different initiatives with people with disabilities. Some, who have used the Workforce Center System, some have not. Howard made some excellent points that we saw also. And we did focus groups of staff; we did focus groups of business. And some common themes that were identified and reported to our State Workforce Board included, the standards for accessibility do not translate evenly from region to region.

Staff in the Workforce Centers do not, or did not yet at that time and probably do not now yet, see themselves as agents of a larger system. Programs use different tools, forms and language. Sharing is not a rewarded activity or seen as a rewarded activity at the local level. There is questions about disclosure of disability for customers. And regions prefer to learn what other regions have done and have the state provide their expertise and consultation. As we thought about these things and talked about it, there are some other considerations that we made that we threw into the mix. That the more the barriers are removed, the better customers may serve themselves.

Universal Accessibility, as Lynn had talked about it earlier, really does help all job-seekers. The information that came from the focus groups, especially with the people with disabilities, they identified the easy things like physical accessibility and technological accessibility, but things that, and I am sorry, I do not mean to say that is easy. But those are things that we talk a lot about. But things that also presented themselves as incredible barriers were, barriers to customer service. The system's confusing, it is hard to navigate. And that is a situation that all of our customers face. And I think by addressing this, in looking at a universally designed system, we are able to address how the system serves all of our customers. When programs are working together to develop services to make them easier to use, they make them easier to use. When they are easier to use, outcomes improve. And programs using common tools will make them universally accessible. And using more technology improves Universal Access.

Local direction for us is really seen as the key. Working with the local boards, working at the local partners, I think in the past our history has been I think what I call compliance thinking. When we send out all the rules and send them out to the regions, it is up to them to figure out how to do it and then we will come out to see if they are in compliance, we are losing an incredible opportunity and we are not using the thoughts, talents and skills in the best way possible to address those local opportunities. And if there is anything we can do to change that, it is important for us to do that.

Key outcomes of our various initiatives, I think it is been our demonstration of a variety of projects and the opportunity to share them through conferences, through the state resource team folks. There has been really stronger state-level coordination. I am, I will stop at the collaboration. I think we are doing a good job at coordinating right now, and we are growing closer all the time. The Governance Board has been very active. The collaboration and technical assistance, we have created a, what we call the A-team or the assistive technology team. And they have gone out and looked at all of our comprehensive regional centers, met with the partners, made recommendations for addressing barriers that might be addressed by assistive technology and other access questions.

One thing that is fairly recent, it is a result of all of this work, not just through the Work Incentive Grant, but through the planning of the RSA Grant and the SSA Grants, the Governance Board has reviewed reports on the focus groups. One in particular came back from the staff. And in this collection of information from the focus groups, staff said they could only get this close together in working together and then they always came up to a barrier that was created by policy, their direction from the state agency or another related state agency, that kept them from fully collaborating.

And the directors on our Governance Board said, well, you know we have kind of heard things like this before. I think it is about time that we do something about this. And they developed a team of representatives from all of their agencies and said, we want recommendations to us, on policy, so we can remove these barriers. The really interesting thing was, as we sat down and looked at all of these things, we realized that there is incredible flexibility with the system that is not recognized at the local level. There are many things that can be done. And we struggle that we had a hard time coming up with policy recommendations. I think what we needed to do, was together, the combined agencies communicate to the local offices all at the same time, using the same language, what the flexibility is, in the areas of sharing customers, sharing resources and sharing information.

And through that process we developed this Memorandum of Agreement that was released on a statewide ICN just a few months ago. And signed by the directors of the state agencies, and released by the Governor. And this is not direction. This is not saying this is what you are going to do. While a few regions wanted that, a few would not have. What it does do is it outlines their flexibility. And if there is some impact that comes from this, it will not be anything that this tells folks that they have to do. It will be from the questions that come back from the regional partners in looking at where this presents opportunities for them. There is a website on back that really, the official document can be downloaded from the Web. I do have 50 copies, not enough for everybody to have one. But if you are interested in this kind of thing, there is a stack of them outside the door. And if you could share them, that would be great. I have a secret stash too, so let me know.

And real quickly, now on tap, looking for more opportunities, wanting to look at some tools that might fill in some of the gaps that we have not addressed very well. And thank you. **[Applause]**
[Laughter]

While Glenn's doing it, I guess I will just wrap up. Oh, Okay, he is back.

Glenn Olsen: Can you get that out? Oh, Good. God, I have not sat so long. It has been really hard for me.

Hi, I am Glenn Olsen, I am from the State of Wisconsin, I am the high risk population specialist there. I work with, as Lynn said, Lynn wrote that bio, I did not write that by the way, that was not me. But again, I had the opportunity to work with older workers, people with disabilities, offenders, English as a Second Language. So, it is a real fun job.

And then I would just like to say I would like to thank my WIA with my JTBA, with my IDEA, I will take an IPE, I love sign language interpreters, and she did not even blink. She is sitting there just going along, going along. Sign language interpreters hate me, though, because I start getting faster and faster. So if you can help me slow, slow in sign language is like this, it is like slow down Glenn.

Real interesting, Howard was talking about having the second floor going with the fifth floor. And I am like a fifth floor. That is a sky scraper in Wisconsin. **[Laughter]** And the worst part

is I am last. I get to go last here. And I could just go ditto to what these guys said. And Doug sent me his presentation and I was like, oh my god, there is my presentation. So I got to do something completely different. And as the folks in Wisconsin know, I am pretty good at that, so. **[Laughter]** So, just want to jump right in here.

And just so folks know, the first job center in Wisconsin, came from Wisconsin. Lynn, can I get a witness? I brought pictures. I have got pictures to prove it. I know that people want to argue about that. We look at, what I look at is the evolution of it, as Howard was talking about, is that they did not just wave a magic wand there and all of a sudden boom, we have got Universal Access. It took seven, would you say seven, eight years? And that is kind of the same boat that we are in. It was an evolutionary process. So, what I would like to do is take a short moment here and take you through that evolutionary process. So hang on.

[Audio cuts out during presentation.]

Like I said, it is bear with me. It is now for something completely different. And see there Lynn, there was proof. There finally was the proof there. So you can steal that presentation and show them that. But one of the biggest things these guys were talking about, they were talking about other agencies, agencies, community-based organizations, job service, V.R., all these things. And what they need to have and what you should be here for is a common goal, and to me that is increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Is that why you are here? It should be. It should be. And the thing is, that is my job. If that is my job, then why do I care what these guys are doing over there? Why am I fighting with them all the time? We should sit there and go back to focus on the people with disabilities and increased opportunities.

The other thing that I did not get to say in the beginning too is that, I am nobody, I am nobody. I have no ability to make a decision in my state, none, zero, zilch, none. So when you are sitting there in your seats going, wow yeah, that would be okay in my state, but I cannot do this, and I cannot do that. I am nobody, and I have made a big difference in my state. I have impacted my state. I have made that difference through a lot of what we call advocacy, and we will make the water hole accessible and to do that. So when you are sitting in there going I am just a Navigator, I am just a Program and Planning Analyst, I am just this, no you are not just that, you have the ability to impact change and make system change, out there.

The barriers that we looked at again, and this is kind of the same things as you guys went through, the architectural, the programmatic, the attitudinal, the legal, systemic, and probably the biggest one, communications. Our take on Universal Access, and again, this is the hard part about going last is it sounds very much like what these two guys said, but it is. It is a Universal Access is a basic tenant of the Workforce Investment Act, it is talking about serving the masses. It is both physical and as Howard talked about, is the programmatic, accessibility. Does that mean that we get rid of DVR? No, no. We still need individualized approaches and technical assistance that is out there.

The other thing that I wanted to talk about, because I cringed when I saw the sessions. They were like experts and they were going to put me up there, oh an expert, and so I said what could I do? Oh, I know, I can shoot down experts, that is what I am really good at. **[Laughter]**

Going back, you hear this a lot, the medical model, the medical model. You hear this all of the time. What was the medical model? You go back to the 30's, 40's, 50's, 60's what you saw was Johnny was a person with a disability, and who came sweeping in? The experts, the experts came in. And the problem was Johnny was that person with the condition, and the person in control was the experts, because they are the ones that can help Johnny. They would sit there and they are going to fix and heal and change Johnny. What we saw in '80s, '90s, was change of reintegration to the community. And what we did was we came back to the community and said you are actually the experts. But there is a problem with that, and I will get to that in just a second, of why that is a big issue.

And again, like I said, I saw your slides. And I am looking at co-location, communication, coordination, collaboration. So, I can go through these pretty quick. I like PowerPoint. I can have fun with this stuff. **[Laughter]**

But we will start with co-location. And I know it is a painful probably in a lot of states, if you could hold this, I still have more fun. Could you hold that just for a second? Hold it up to here.

Computer: Open the pod bay doors, HAL. I'm sorry, Dave. I'm afraid I cannot do that.

[Laughter]

Glenn Olsen: We are not going to open your doors for you. You like that? **[Laughter]** The co-location, again, it is painful. I remember Manuel was back there, we were talking; I did work for VR for quite a few years. I left VR, leaving VR is like losing religion, it was like an Amish outing, cause like, for two years they would not talk to me. It was like he does not exist, I had to shave my beard, and everything. But we were locked in a room for seven weeks, three days a week, to sit there and figure out issues about co-location and what our program would look like in Wisconsin. And we were talking about how we cheated too. We would rate everything. And in order to get our stuff in. We would rate everybody else as zero. Just so that we can, cause there is like 15 of them and just the two of us, so we did a lot of, a lot of cheating.

However, I would never, never, never say if you are in co-location and you are in a moral dilemma, do not co-locate into a place that is not accessible. We were talking about this yesterday. It is not that hard folks. And you know what? Those folks, whoever, whatever services they are doing, they have been funded, by the Rehab Act of 1973; they are supposed to be in an accessible place. And if they are not, then, I cannot believe I am going to say this. All right, I am always at the mediation and doing the right thing or the nicest thing. And when I started my new job I was in, I think I was a little patronized, because it was like, do those things with people with disabilities. And I had never talked to my Deputy Administrator ever, ever. She would not even say hello to me. And the day that we got sued by the ACLU about disabilities and she came flying into my cube. So litigation sometimes does get attention, so.

Can you see what is wrong? This is kind of dark. Can you see what is wrong with this picture? **[Audience is making noise]** You know what happened here? What the issue was? Experts, experts, experts came in, and they probably got some consultants together too, to sit there and

say here is where we are going to co-locate to. And for folks that cannot see it is really dark, there is a ramp there going up, there is some stairs that come before that. **[Laughter]**

Oh, five minutes, now I got to go really fast.

Communication, again, we are co-located in Wisconsin for the most part. You remember WKRP and Les Nessman, there was tape, there were walls there. I mean, that is what goes on in a lot of our job centers. There is like these walls there. They are not there, and they are imaginary. And a lot of it is about communication. Several things to do is, and it goes beyond just the brown bags and things like that. It is knowing what is going on on the other side on a constant basis. You do not just come in one day and say here is our brown bag lunch and say oh, we have communicated with them. We have reached over to the other side.

Actually I had another clip there from 2001, but for some reason it would not download. It was Hal saying, Dave arguing with Hal saying; open the pod bay door, Hal. And Hal says, this communication no longer serves a purpose. **[Laughter]** And that is what we run into a lot of time. Again, going back to coordination, again, this it just makes sense. It is going to save you time.

And the other message that I came here with too is, what the experts is, get over your arrogance too. What do people with disabilities want the most? They do not want to be on the short bus anymore. Get them off; they do not want the special piece, for the special people, in the special corner. They do not want that. They want to be, they told us this. But the experts are not listening, because only the experts can take care of people with disabilities. The experts need to learn to let go of that. If you want a job in Wisconsin, the mainstream vehicle to get a job in Wisconsin is through our job center. So why should not people with disabilities be going there? It should be a welcoming place for people with disabilities. And the experts, I am looking in the back there, the Centers on Independent Living, the phantom menaces, we are talking to each other, we are getting along, we are doing much better. But they have got to sit there and let go and stop saying we are the experts and we are the only one that can work with Johnny.

Collaboration and again I am going to go back to these guys. These guys said much, much, much better than I can. And just a couple quick things that are happening in Wisconsin, because I am getting my two minutes and I like to keep people on time, and I still like to have fun with PowerPoint. **[Screeching tires]**. Come on, through that wall, man, breaking down those barriers. This is what the One-Stop System looks like to anybody. Imagine it. **[Applause]** Imagine it. Imagine it. Imagine it as, you are a person with a disability now. And what is so exciting is the Department of Labor, Social Security getting together, to give us our Disability Navigator Program. How many Navigators are here? I would imagine there is quite a few. Yeah. Raise the roof, man. You guys right side going to have a blast, because again in a meeting that we had yesterday, my comments to the Department of Labor was, we have been over told what to do every time we get a dollar, this is what you will do, this is what you will do. With the Navigator Program, it came without instructions. And so I call it, and folks from Wisconsin know this, my running with scissors project. **[Laughter]** Or as Randy, where is Randy at? She rolls, Randy rolls with scissors. So, thanks. But again, that is a very, very exciting project and, because we can define what we want to do. In Wisconsin, and I do describe myself as the Disability

Program Navigator Overlord. However, I however, do not, have not told them, or dictated to them, you do, you define your project, you run with scissors, and you make it happen and you come back and tell me. We just had a quarterly meeting last week that was so exciting and how great they are doing.

Other things that we have done real quick. We have done job line, we have got a video relay system and remote interpreting system in eight of our job centers. We have got 30 accessible work stations, and as I was telling Doug yesterday, is that we are looking at different smaller versions of it. So we have got 'work stations lite' coming out. It does the same thing but it is like half the calories, and I am checking on the Atkins aspect of it, I guess I never thought about that. Next Talk is a TTY software that we run through our PCs. Think about this, do you allow your job seekers to make a phone call to an employer for free? How would a person who is deaf and hard of hearing do that in your job center? And we started with that. Next Talk, we have that in all of our accessible work station. A person can go up and they can just make that call through Next Talk.

Operation One Stop, I am going to go either really fast, our staff at Physical and Programmatic Accessibility, we developed our own survey tool. We, because that is what we do, we disagreed with the folks that were doing the Checklist. We think that checklists do not work. Our tool is of course better than everybody else's. And it is for sale in the lobby, and no, it is not, we would give it to you for free. But actually Operation One-Stop was our opportunity to engage the Centers on Independent Living and, John is sitting there nodding, is to, we ordained them to say you are now our experts. And it has done so much to build relationships in Wisconsin.

Real quick that is our work station. I am just going to go through and, I am done here. I am really upset with this, because this is my last one. And what is supposed to happen. [Applause] She is supposed to sign for you, thank you. But she is not able to do that. Thanks for the time. Enjoy the rest of the conference, and of course have fun, and beware of the experts. [Applause]

Lynn Kinzer: Okay. Alright, I think I am on now. We have about 15 minutes for questions. If you want to just raise your hand. We have a couple of people back of the room with microphones. There is one right there.

Female Participant: I had a question for the person from Iowa. And you had mentioned about the local focus groups. What is your, what suggestions would you have for people to appreciate a reward, so to speak, for working together? You had said that people do not perceive that they are getting rewarded for the collaboration. Do you have tangible examples of how a state or regionally people could be so-called rewarded for that?

Doug Keast: I think a lot of that is the result of the work culture we have had in the past and the direction that our local offices have received from our, from us. I mean, it is really our fault at the state level. Our focus on compliance and our communication with local offices really has been largely, in terms of what you cannot do. And rather than encourage folks to do things like share customers, and share resources, and plan together on how they can impact the entire community rather than focus just on their program, we have really been largely program focused. What we are working on doing, the Memorandum of Agreement is actually our first

step, in trying to encourage that and make that type of activity look like something that could be recognized as rewarded activity.

I wanted to mention too, I apologize, because I did not talk very much about specific types of products that we have that we are very excited about like the Navigator Program, whom we have got some excellent leaders as Navigators here present today also. I just want to throw one more plug. I am sorry.

Lynn Kinzer: Anybody else? No other questions?

Glenn Olsen: Bueller? Bueller? Anyone? Anyone? [Laughter]

Lynn Kinzer: Yeah, right over here.

Female Participant: I am pretty well insulated back here. At this table there was a question about what is a Navigator. And I thought, Doug, if you could tell just what is a Navigator?

Doug Keast: Well, I will give my, I think you have heard a lot what Glenn thinks, and what he says is exactly right, as far as the implementation, and he may have some things to add too.

The job description we got to look at from the feds, we did get some pretty specific direction in some regards. And it is an incredible, incredible job description, many, many, many things. And as our state partners sat down and looked at that, you know, we thought that people do not exist that can do all of those things, the amount of expertise and knowledge about the Social Security Administration things. It is basically a position created to have people that can be readily accessible by all of the service programs within the One-Stop Center System, and all customers to be their resource, to answer questions about Social Security, about accessibility, ADA compliance, program eligibility, and the variety of programs available throughout the Workforce Center System. And I think what we are going to find is that expertise will develop by knowing who the experts are and finding ways to streamline the process so you do not have to say, well, you know what? That is a good question. I am going to have you talk to Bob next Thursday at two o'clock, can you come back? Finding ways to really focus on the customer service; to get those questions answered as quickly as possible.

Now, each of the regions in Iowa are unique to each other, in where gaps exist and where recognized focuses are. And we have to, in the implementation, look for opportunities to be flexible, in order to be successful in each of those regions, so in some ways, and I know this does not sound very good, but they are kind of a crack-filler also. And we are looking for ways in which we can enhance that system, that customer service design, by filling in those gaps for those particular regions. So Darcy in Waterloo, may take work with a business group and take a largely business focus. Where Jimmy in Sioux City, may look at developing the Workforce Center System as an Employment Network under Ticket-to-Work. In addition to many of the other things, but those might be specific focuses that they have an opportunity in that region to address.

Lynn Kinzer: We also have a session this afternoon from four to five p.m. on the Disability Program Navigator. And on that panel will be someone who is serving as a Navigator right now. So you can ask additional questions then.

Female Participant: I have a quick question. Do we have women Navigators? Do we have Latino Navigators? I do not, I am a person with a disability myself, and I do not really understand this. I know we are promoting individualized approaches and we should not get rid of VR, but to me it seems like separate and unequal service still to this day. And the number one barrier I see is discrimination. And where are the approaches to dealing with discrimination?

Glenn Olsen: Wisconsin Navigators, you want to raise your hands? Gender? You want to talk to Dana about gender? I mean, we and Dana have dropped gloves a couple of times. But also, and I have struck her in the meeting too. One of the things that came out of our last meeting is that we also recognizing culture is that we have a Hmong Navigator, who really opened our eyes I think at the last meeting of the difference between what she needs to go through culturally, just culturally, versus what Jane or John has to do over there, totally different. Which all of a sudden we were thinking about oh, we need to go back to DOL and get a Statewide Hmong, because she is only in one area, she is only serving in one area. We need somebody statewide on this issue. Which then all of a sudden, like what are we doing about the Native Americans and then too, we have three of what was called the 121 grants. And it is the Native American Rehab programs. Very, makes a lot of sense to start looking at the Native Americans. So you are bringing up a great point of yeah, we need to look at more than just disability in order to serve folks. Because there are more, because that is not them, their disability does not define them. Thanks..

Doug Keast: We have got one here. And Paula has got a question too, but in I might ask her, when she asks her question, if she might comment on that question also, because I know she has got some thoughts. Oh okay. But there are many kinds of diversity. And I agree that the approach that we need to be thinking continuously, we have the opportunity, because of the disability focused types of initiatives to address Universal Access, which means access for everybody. And I think there are common barriers, even though not exactly the same that all of our job seekers in Iowa face. And there is a lot of thought of diversity in hiring. The way we address that in the hiring process was, to work with our state partners with the Centers for Independent Living, and the DD Council, and other advocacy groups, to let them know what the Navigators were in making the information about the positions available as we hired.

Howard Glad: Let me just key on to that. Perhaps one of the more difficult tasks that I have ever seen anybody lay out, is what the Navigators face. To your question of diversity, there are tremendous challenges out there. A recent meeting on how are we going to meet the challenges of a community that has 37 different languages spoken, as a primary language in their school system, and I am not talking about a metropolitan city either, I am talking about a rural city. And all kinds of discussion about, well, we need to get translators to put this publication in this language and that language and that language. And after a great debate, somebody very astutely in the back of the room said, it does not make a difference if you publish them in 118 languages, if they cannot read; you have not really attacked the problem. So as far as providing services for people with disabilities, we have cultures that do not even recognize or have a word

in the language for disability. So there is a great, great challenge in understanding different cultures and different needs of different diversities. It is very, very complex. And I am afraid that we are hardly keeping pace with the challenge, so I appreciate your comments.

Male Participant: Yes, good morning. First question is I wonder what Glenn has in his coffee. [Laughter] No I am just kidding, Glenn.

The question I had is, Howard, you spoke about the Workforce Investment Board at the state level, the state board. And I think Glenn and Doug talked about A-teams and other groups you formed at the state level. At the end of the day, we are all going to try and change policy at the state level. And so I am wondering what role the State Workforce Board plays in what you are doing in your state, in terms of the Navigators and inclusion of people with disabilities. Is it even on their radar screen?

Howard Glad: Alright. Thank you. Yes, I will start with the latter. It is on their radar screen. Because we have some very specific biases in Minnesota.

One, the baby boomers, and this is a different tack, but I will show you where I am coming from. Things go on people's radar screens for different reasons, for different agendas. Our challenge in Minnesota is to build a flexible workforce, so that we can stay competitive in a global economy. Well we have got baby boomers that are going to be retiring at a rate that exceeds the number of new workers entering the workforce. We cannot meet that challenge unless we identify sufficient skilled, motivated workers to fill the jobs that are coming and that are going to be developed and that we will be developing to stay competitive. So we need to get every worker that we can into the workforce.

The state enjoys the highest percentage of women in the workforce, the highest percentage of older workers in the workforce, the highest percentage of people with two incomes in the nation. We do not have a heck of a lot of new places to go to for new workers. We have a disability community that, whose employment rate is lower than the employment rate for the non-disabled community, the great untapped resource. And we have new Americans coming in. So there are some very selfish reasons as to why we have got to both push and pull people with disabilities into the workforce. How do we do that?

Well, the state board, the Governor's Workforce Development Council, had on it a member, who also happened to be the chair of the State Rehabilitation Council. And I think I just lost my mic, but if you want to go into the Rehab Act, there is language in there that says, after consultation with the State Workforce Investment Board, and after consultation with the State Rehab Council. So there has to be by definition a consultative process between the State Board and the State Rehab Council. So you can go to that if you need to fall back on that. I would rather go the other way. In that this is a viable resource that we have to tap in order to stay competitive in a global economy.

The local boards, a lot more difficult to get involved in, not involved in, but to get the message across. Because there is such a great variety of local boards out there. Some of them are still

PICs, as a matter of fact some of them are still CETA. Some of them, and do not worry if you are not been around long enough. And I have not been around long enough either. **[Laughter]**

Glenn Olsen: Experts again. Experts at work..

Howard Glad: The more informed local boards recognize that in order to develop regional prosperity, they have got to employ the resources of all of the funding sources that they have available to them, including federal Vocational Rehabilitation funds. So I am not saying that they have the control to use those funds, but they have to be able to address how they bring those resources to bear to meet regional goals. So they are the smart ones, that is the message you have to convey, that we pump a lot of money into the community to help people with disabilities gain entry to and remain in the workforce. That is the message.

Glenn Olsen: Just real quick, just really quick. The boards play a huge role, a huge, huge role. We run our Navigator program through the boards. And as nobody and trying to influence boards of Dick, Len, raise your hands, have nothing to do with working with people with disabilities, they are from the Workforce Development boards, but they are here. And I encourage you to and hook up with them. **[Applause]** Hook up with them later on and we will talk. And they are not experts either, though. So they are cool.

Lynn Kinzer: All right. I think we are going to have to wrap it up right there.