

EMPLOYMENT FIRST



Every Person. Every Talent. Every Opportunity.

December 2014

Dear Employment First Partners,

Keep up to date on Employment First news in Ohio. Don't forget to [contact us](#) if you need a speaker or visit the [Community Employment Resource Map](#) for local Employment First news.

If you have a story you would like for us to share, would like to give us feedback, or you need Employment First support, please contact us at employmentfirst@dodd.ohio.gov.

Ohio Selected as Core State



In November, the Employment First Taskforce was informed that the State of Ohio had been selected to participate in the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy's (ODEP's) Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP). Ohio will work with subject matter experts to continue its efforts to build capacity in effective practices and assist providers with transformation. The Taskforce will receive guidance in implementing workforce development more effectively in its Employment First framework.

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

Ohio's Path to Employment First

A summary of Ohio's Employment First Initiative and Future Plans

See Ohio's current plan to support the ongoing implementation of Employment First.

Access the [online archive](#) for previous issues of the *Employment First Update*.

Quick Links

[Employment First Website](#)

[DODD Website](#)

Upcoming Trainings & Events



[Click Here!](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

Project STIR™ Training for Job Seekers & Families



Statewide trainings continue in December and January for job seekers and families. Self-advocates will learn tools to advocate, connect with others in advocacy, and gain leadership experience that can help them move forward on the path to community employment. Register by visiting the [event calendar](#) on the Employment First Website.

**Assistive Technology Webinar - January 26,
Noon - 1:00p**

[Click Here to Register](#)

Dr. Theresa Berner, MOT, OTR/L, ATP and Dr. Carmen DiGiovine, PhD, ATP, RET from the Ohio State University will discuss how augmentative communication devices can support employment for individuals with communication difficulties and can aid those individuals in obtaining and maintaining employment.

The Employment First Team

Kristen Helling



Community Advisor/Employment First Lead

1.614.466.6612

Kristen.Helling@dodd.ohio.gov

Joe Kowalski



Project:Transformation
Employment First Partnership

1.614.728.8468

Joseph.Kowalski@dodd.ohio.gov

Stacy Collins



Local Leaders
Family & Job-Seeker Support
Provider Support

1.614.728.5811

Stacy.Collins@dodd.ohio.gov

Save the Date: May 13-14, 2015



This two-day technology conference will build on last year's successful event that focused only on tablets. Tech II will present all types of assistive technology that can help people with disabilities get or keep a job- and will emphasize evaluation, funding and training. The conference is sponsored by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council and the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council. Registration will be available after January 1, 2015.

Outcome Tracking System: Roll-Out to Providers



Since the launch of the Employment First Outcome Tracking System in Spring 2014, county boards have entered records for more than 9,000 unique individuals. Thank you for making this such a priority. We are now beginning the process to roll-out the application to private providers. The Employment First team is working with county boards to outline the process and will reach out to private providers in December 2014.

Courtney Frantz



Policy Intern

1.614.466.1689

Courtney.Frantz@dodd.ohio.gov

Good Life Network Community Project



Thirteen person-centered teams from across Ohio are meeting with experts in community integration and employment in three focus areas: Working in My Community (Allan I. Bergman and Meg O'Connell); Living in My Community (Patti Scott and Dave Hasbury) and Connecting with My Community (Al Condeluci). Teams will engage in training until May 2015. Look for future information on the [Employment First website](#).

Local Leaders in Action



Local Leaders teams across Ohio are working diligently to engage employers, families, and job seekers to raise awareness of Employment First and community collaboration. Montgomery, Greene and Warren Counties engaged over 300 attendees by hosting two successful employer engagement events and six family informational sessions. Stark County held a two-day transition conference that focused on engaging students, families, and professionals. Lucas County [urged community employers](#) to focus on the many benefits of hiring people with developmental disabilities

Speak Up, Don't Wait



Above: Alex at work.

After a long job search, Alex Caldwell began working with the Franklin County Board of DD and found employment at the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities as a Clerk. Some of Alex's primary job responsibilities are to greet visitors to the 12th floor and ensure that orders for no-cost [Employment First materials](#) are promptly filled.

Alex, who has been employed at DODD since February 2014, enjoys his work and the independence his paycheck provides, including enough money to pay for his own condo. Finding a job that matched Alex's skills and interests may have taken a long time, but he believes that by advocating for himself, he is enjoying personal success. He encourages others to speak up as well.

Sincerely,

**EMPLOYMENT
FIRST** 

The logo for Employment First, featuring the words "EMPLOYMENT" and "FIRST" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized pennant flag with a blue field containing a white circle with a red dot, and red and white stripes.