





# Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Grant Alaska Workforce Investment Board May 9, 2012

#### **Grant Summary:**

On September 29, 2010 the AWIB was awarded a Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Training Administration in the amount of \$2,727,000 to improve education, training and employment opportunities and outcomes of adults who are unemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits (SSI and SSDI). Partner agencies include the Employment Security Division (ESD), One Stop Job Centers, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Division of Public Assistance (DPA) and Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education.

## Disability Employment Initiative Update

- Project Primary Goals
  - Train all Job Center staff in best practices in serving customers with Disabilities
  - Increase number of customers with disabilities by 20% over the life of the grant
  - Job Centers across the state will become Employment Networks to serve SSI and SSDI beneficiaries under the Ticket To Work program
  - Increase the use and implementation of promising practices (Asset building, Customized Employment, Integrated Resource Teams, Partnerships and Collaboration with agencies and service providers of individuals with disabilities, benefits planning)

## Job Center Staff Training

- ♣ Staff Training
  - 55 Job Center staff trained as Disability Resource Coordinators I's (DRC's)
  - 9 of the 55 trained as Disability Resource Coordinator II's
    - Serve as local and regional lead DRC's
    - Serve SSI and SSDI customers under the Ticket to Work
    - Continue to receive additional training through 2013
  - Now connected to Microsoft Lync so staff can participate in regular "webinar" based trainings on all disability topics starting in the summer
  - Training topics include Ticket to Work, Asset Building, Partnerships and Collaboration, Integrated Resource Teams, Accessibility in Job Centers, Customized Employment, effectively serving customers with disabilities (one webinar per disability type)

## **Asset Building**

- ♣ Financial Literacy
  - Money Smart (online training) available to all job center customers
  - Financial literacy classes now operating at 3 job centers with 2 beginning this quarter
  - EITC AARP Free Tax Prep efforts from the Anchorage area
  - 3 Super Saturday events held in Anchorage this tax season providing info and free tax preparation through the AARP
  - Trained over 50 tax preparers across the state in Disability Awareness in January

Final results of the AARP tax efforts (excluding military returns) as of 4/17 show a total of 3,578 returns with \$4,441,349 in refunds and a total of \$1,104,166 in Earned Income Tax Credits for the Anchorage area.

## Individual Development Accounts

 Anchorage Financial Partnership shifting to promoting and developing a new IDA program that serves individuals across the state. This will be the primary topic we focus on following the tax season.

## Partnerships

 Holding Asset Building meeting in Juneau on May 8th to begin new Financial Partnership Network in Southeast that is similar to the Anchorage Financial Partnership Network (United Way, Consumer Credit Counseling, Wells Fargo, AARP Tax Aides, Job Center, Catholic Social Services, LOVE Inc.,)

#### Accessibility

- Physical Accessibility
  - Met with State ADA Coordinator and shared results from physical access checklists for follow up on needed fixes
- Programmatic Accessibility
  - Final assistive technology reviews done at all job centers by DRC's to ensure correctness prior to ordering of new equipment and software
  - Proposal submitted to Juneau for purchase
  - Contract with ATLA submitted to Juneau to provide technical assistance and develop video for staff on how to use that will be posted on internal staff training website

#### **Outcomes**

- ♣ DRC weekly reports include all grant areas with outcomes
- ♣ New national data gathering system developed and awaiting OMB approval to implement (targeted for September by national data collection team)
- New data gathering pieces will be integrated into Employment Security's data collection system for future reporting

## Ticket To Work

- ♣ MatSu opening date as Employment Network Scheduled for September
- Anchorage job centers to open as Employment Networks in October (Disability Employment Awareness month) with marketing campaign
- ₩ISE events to be held monthly at Juneau job center for outreach
- ♣ Beneficiary outreach CD now being sent to compare those signed in to our ALEXSys online job search system to identify potential SS beneficiaries who may want to use their tickets this should bring up numbers being served significantly