

Jobs Funding Restored

Job services for people with disabilities received a major boost when the New Jersey budget was finalized, passed and signed on July 1, averting the threat of a state shutdown. The spending plan included \$5 million for the Extended Employment program that was part of previous budgets but that Governor Murphy had not included it in the one he proposed to the Legislature early in the year. Senate President Stephen Sweeney sponsored a bill reinstating the money and the Governor agreed to it during negotiations between the two branches of

government.

Senator Sweeney campaigned vigorously for the funds, including a visit to our member organization Abilities Solutions, where he observed its programs for workers with disabilities and spoke forcefully about the need for the \$5 million. "These people feel a sense of purpose and pride, and they want to be employed," he said. "They want to be part of the economy. They don't want to be sitting at home. They want to be able to do something with their lives."

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Congressional Trip Yields Results

Our second annual Day on Capitol Hill, July 19, was a great success. Five members of New Jersey's delegation in the House of Representatives (Donald Payne, Leonard Lance, Bonnie Watson-Coleman, Chris Smith, and Albio Sires) and staff members of two other Representatives (Tom MacArthur and Rodney Frelinghuysen) and the state's two U.S. Senators (Robert Menendez and Cory Booker) met with us and spoke to our group. All voiced support for our efforts to protect jobs and job choices for people with disabilities.

Leaders, managers, consumers and family from

five of our CRPs (Abilities Solutions, Center for Vocational Rehabilitation, Inroads to Opportunities, OTC Burlington and InspiriTec) participated in the event. President & CEO Mohsen Badran, Government Relations VP Floyd Nesse and Communications Director Sal Coppola represented ACCSES NJ.

The main effort this year was to gain support and cosponsors for H.R. 5658, The Workplace Choice and Flexibility for Individuals with Disabilities Act. H.R. 5658 continues to gain momentum in Congress, and the morning of our event we were notified that

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A large part of our group enjoyed a tour of the Capitol and then stopped for this shot on the Capitol steps.

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General Membership
October 16, 2018
at STAR Conference

2nd Annual STAR Conference
October 16 & 17, 2018

Business Development
November 8, 2018

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MESSAGE

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

By Mark Boyd

I am very pleased with the extensive number of activities being conducted by our Association and its members. Many of the happenings are reflected in CEO Mohsen Badran's weekly information summaries, which I hope all of you read. Whether it is a major event or a modest one, all of these actions contribute to enhancing our shared mission and/or your individual goals. The activities paint a picture of a dynamic organization pursuing its objectives through diverse means.

I find it very encouraging that we are continuing to strengthen relationships with our state government partners. Mohsen and our team in Trenton have been meeting and communicating with various levels of government regarding our operation of the State Use Program, which falls under the Department of Human Services, and the Extended and Supported Employment programs that are overseen by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The meetings have included LWD Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo and Paul Aronsohn, head of the NJ Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families, and new members of the NJ Commodities and Services Council. They also have spoken to other state officials when they appear at meetings of influential organizations like the NJ Chamber of Commerce, mostly notably State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio. This outreach builds strong partnerships and is essential to our success.

We are making progress on the commercial business front, as summarized in a page 4 article. This endeavor, which we launched in mid-2017, is critical to our Association's growth. While our sales through the State Set-Aside program have been strong, state government budgetary restraints indicate that we cannot anticipate unlimited expansion of this program. That means we must establish a vigorous and ongoing lineup of commercial business. Our team in Trenton stands ready to work with you to attract commercial accounts to your organizations and develop new jobs for individuals with disabilities.

To achieve our goals as an Association, it is necessary for us to spend productive time together. One of the best means we have devised for doing so is the 2nd annual ACCSES NJ STAR Conference in Atlantic City. Details of the two-day October event are covered in another page 4 article. I urge all of you to join us for this happening, which offers significant benefits for your organizations, and I hope to see you there.



Mark Boyd

**The Mission of ACCSES New Jersey is to
provide leadership and support to members
who advocate for and serve persons with
disabilities through community-based
programs located throughout New Jersey.**

M E S S A G E

FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Mohsen Badran

While our Association has continued to undertake a wide range of activities in recent months, we also have established two new executive positions that added to the strength of our organizational infrastructure. I appointed Dan Noble as Chief Financial Officer on May 1, and many of you have interacted with him since then. He already has made strides at streamlining financial transactions between ACCSES NJ and our member organizations. I recently announced the appointment of David Schoch as Vice President of Business Development. His background includes over fifteen years of service as an executive for Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey, which gave him experience working with ACCSES NJ to create job opportunities for people with disabilities. Creation of this post is part of our effort, begun over a year ago, to build sales and develop jobs in the commercial arena.

The most significant news development for us this year was the restoration of \$5 million to the New Jersey fiscal year 2019 state budget for Extended Employment jobs for individuals with disabilities. Details are in the page 1 article. Recovering these funds was a team effort, as many of you spoke to legislators and sent e-mails. Thank you for these efforts. I urge you to maintain your communications with government officials to the greatest extent possible throughout the year.

Our major activity this summer was the second-annual ACCSES NJ Day on the Hill in Washington, D.C., July 18 and 19, which we organized with support from ACCSES national and the Porter Group. You can read more about it in the other page 1 article. I am gratified by the participation from five of our CRPs and proud of how well they represented themselves in remarks to members of the state's

congressional delegation and their staffs. This face-to-face communication is critical in achieving our goal of influencing federal legislation and regulations in the direction of protecting comprehensive job choices for people with disabilities.

We had a favorable outcome with the DHS-ordered audit of our operation of the State Use Program for the period of January 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017. The comments noted that we had initiated procedures to improve our record-keeping process before the audit's conclusion. The draft report stated that ACCSES NJ's management of the program is efficient and effective.

We are continuing our extensive training series, with offerings on many Thursdays. The sessions include in-person and online participation for your convenience. The topics cover a variety of disability and business issues aimed at improving skills.

I believe that, in the aggregate, the initiatives we are implementing will make us a more effective Association.

I will be continuing my visits to your organizations and look forward to seeing you there or at one of our upcoming membership meetings.



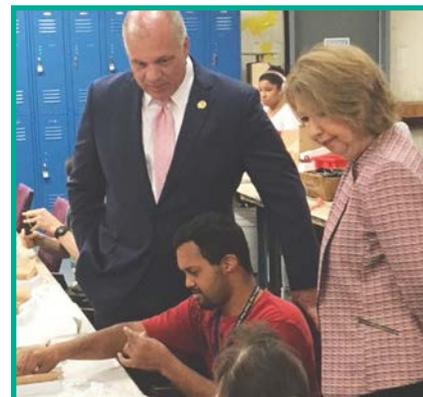
Mohsen Badran

Funding

Continued from page 1

Susan Perron, Abilities Solutions' President and CEO, represented us earlier in the year when she testified before the Legislature's budget and appropriations committee about the funding's benefits. ACCSES NJ President and CEO Mohsen Badran said: "We owe a special thanks to Ms. Perron for her efforts to win back this funding for some of the state's neediest citizens, and also to Mark Stephenson, Jeff Haines, Joe Brown, Russell Anderson and Karen Elliott for participating in meetings with key legislators. We also thank the membership and grass roots advocates for the thousands of e-mails sent to legislators and the Governor's office during our campaign to restore the funds. Over 3,000 emails were sent from our Action Alerts.

Every job for workers with disabilities saves the state some \$4,700 in entitlements reduced and taxes paid each year, plus other positive impacts to New Jersey's economy.



Senate President Sweeney and Susan Perron are pictured here with Abilities Solutions consumers.

STAR Conference

Final preparations are underway for the 2nd annual ACCSES NJ STAR Conference, being held at Bally's Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City October 16 and 17. The event features extensive training opportunities for all CRP leadership and staff, government and rehabilitation professionals, showcases the achievements of New Jersey citizens with disabilities, and provides valuable networking opportunities.

This year's conference offers an expanded five-track training agenda: Rehabilitation Professional Development, Business Development and Operations, Leadership and Communications, Government Professional Development, and Policy and Advocacy. Other highlights include:

- CEU workshops for government and rehabilitation professional certifications.
- ACCSES NJ Annual Membership Meeting.
- Exhibitors from our Community Rehabilitation Programs and our

Corporate partners who provide goods and services that are available on NJ State Contract.

The keynote address at our opening session is the team of Mark and John Cronin of John's Crazy Socks. John is a young man with Down syndrome. The business hires people with disabilities and has built its workforce around them. They want to show the world what people with differing abilities can do when given a chance and spread happiness through Socks.

You can enter this link in your browser for online Hotel Registration: <https://aws.passkey.com/go/SB10NJ8>. If you prefer to register for a room by phone, use the conference name and code: ACCSES NJ Conference, SB10NJ8. Call 1-888-426-9179. Use the following link to register for all activities at the two-day event: <http://www.cvent.com/d/btq6y4/1Q?RefID=Invite>.

State Use Program Adds Jobs

Janitorial Services has added to its leading position in the State Use Program for people with disabilities that ACCSES operates for New Jersey. The unit recently began service to the following customers, in partnership with our affiliate agencies noted in parentheses: Montgomery Township - six workers (HCE); Salem County Improvement Authority - three jobs (ARC Salem); Phillipsburg Housing Authority - five or six workers (Family Guidance Center); Maurice Township - two jobs (Jersey Cape); Holmdel - four workers (CVR).

The program also expanded commodities sales to new customers: Newark Public Schools, East Windsor Regional Schools and Central Regional Schools (Bayville) for HVAC Filters; Queen City Academy Charter School (Plainfield) and Washington MUA (Morris County) for Records management.

A proposal is pending to DMAVA to provide laundry services to the National Guard for sleeping bag and parkas when the troops return from deployment. The work has the potential of adding three or four people to our current laundry service, which is provided by Care Plus.



Our Building Services/Compliance team conducted a training session for new janitorial equipment and carpet-cleaning techniques at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Holmdel. John Ganley, Jim Manton and Garth Hutchinson provided the training for five employees of CVR, our agency that provides the service. CVR supervisor Bill Ireland is shown below using the new carpet cleaner.

Commercial Business

ACCSES New Jersey's Commercial Business unit is now providing janitorial services for a new customer -- the Greater Newark Conservancy. This is an exciting organization that works to improve the quality of life in New Jersey's urban communities. Our affiliate agency, Hudson Community Enterprises (HCE), provides the work crew.

The Conservancy's Executive Director, Robin Dougherty, has been so thrilled with our services that she decided to feature ACCSES NJ in the Conservancy's e-newsletter. The headline was "A Win-Win Partnership!"

and included this testimonial: "My personal history involves working with children with special needs, so I was excited to hear about the important work being done by ACCSES NJ and their member organizations. We understand that, sometimes, all it takes for someone to succeed is for someone else to give them a chance."

The Conservancy article noted that the Education Building "is in tip top shape" and featured a link to our website. The Conservancy is eager to help our CRPs find employees.

Congressional Trip

Continued from page 1

Rep. Lance signed on as a co-sponsor of the bill. We thank him for signing on and visiting our event and hearing the stories from our advocates. Rep. Frank LoBiondo had agreed to sponsor the bill earlier.

We will follow-up the Washington, D.C. visit by continuing to work with national ACCSES and the Porter Group for passage of H.R. 5658.



Rep Donald Payne (center) and ACCSES NJ President Mohsen Badran (2nd from left) with representatives of Abilities Solutions, InspiriTec and Inroads to Opportunities.



Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (2nd from left) with Mr. Badran and representatives of InspiriTec and Inroads to Opportunities.



Congressman Lance (standing center) addressed our group after announcing support for HR 5658.



Rep. Chris Smith (2nd from right) and Mr. Badran with CVR program participants who are part of the New Jersey A-Team.

SUCCESS STORIES

Opportunity Project



DaVante Gordon on the job at Home Depot

DaVante Gordon was a plumber and volunteer firefighter for two years after graduating high school. He loved his life and was working towards a goal of eventually starting his own plumbing business. He was in a motor vehicle accident in 2012, suffered a traumatic brain injury and went through surgery as well as intensive inpatient and outpatient therapy. In March 2015, DaVante became a Member of Opportunity Project (OP), a Clubhouse for adults with brain injuries. OP values Home Depot as a top tier Employment Partner that supports adults with disabilities.

OP and Home Depot have partnered to put DaVante back on the journey to achieving his goal of becoming a licensed plumber. OP's Vocational Counselor, Tom, helped him

secure a part-time job in the plumbing aisle of Home Depot and serves as his job coach. DaVante recently passed Home Depot's intensive online education and testing program and received their official Plumbing Certification.

Based on his work at Home Depot, the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is sending DaVante back to plumbing school. His social worker at OP, Melissa, helped him open an ABLÉ investment account for people with disabilities, so he can save money for his truck and plumbing tools.

DaVante feels fortunate to have a team of caring, devoted and knowledgeable people from OP and Home Depot supporting him. His advice to anyone who feels like giving up is: "No matter how hard life seems, keep pushing forward to achieve your dreams."

InspiriTec

Vince Tainatongo grew up around the military. His grandfather, father, uncles, and sister all retired from military service as he did. As a veteran, finding employment in the civilian world can be difficult; especially when you have a disability. Vince joined InspiriTec in October 2012 because they are an affirmative employer of Veterans and people with disabilities.

His first job was with InspiriTec's Ft Knox, Kentucky team where he served in a call center that assisted soldiers requesting assistance with updates to personnel file information. Because of some difficult personal situations, he had to leave Kentucky to be closer to family. InspiriTec operates in multiple locations and went out of their way to make sure his move to Newark was a smooth transition, which included ensuring the proper accommodations were in place at his new worksite there.

His new assignment was as a Customer Service Representative (CSR) at InspiriTec's Department of Consumer Affairs call center, handling phone calls from licensees and applicants for the Nursing and Homemaker-Home Health Aide professions. He was then promoted to become the Nursing Team Lead, and Drug Control Unit/Pharmacy Lead. Most recently, he was promoted again to a Team Lead position where he is now responsible for seven CSRs and the quality of customer service they provide.

"InspiriTec has allowed me to grow in my career," Vince said. "They value my military experience and allowed me to grow professionally and personally."



Vince at his Division of Consumer Affairs Call Center work station.

The Arc of Somerset County

Adam has been a hard-working member of The Arc of Somerset County's Supported Employment and Adult Training Center for many years. He has had various community jobs since 1998 when he began working at Muhlenberg Hospital for the Courier News. He was excited to have been hired during the past year at a fairly-new eating establishment called Arooga's Grill and Sports Bar in Plainfield. The manager was so impressed by Adam's confidence, that he hired him on the spot.

Adam started off training at Arooga's with a job coach, wrapping silverware in preparation for the lunch and dinner crowds. Within weeks, Arooga's management

felt confident and had him help out washing dishes. Adam was able to work independently without a job coach in a matter of weeks. He integrated easily into the Arooga's team and work flow.

Adam has achieved success at all of his previous jobs and is known to make his workplace a more positive place. The Arc of Somerset congratulates him.

Arooga's received The Arc of Somerset County 2018 "Employer of the Year" award in appreciation for their commitment to inclusive employment opportunities for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in Somerset County.



Adam (center, holding plaque) looks at award, joined by other Arooga workers.

Agency Hosts Senate Contingent

Inroads to Opportunities hosted New Jersey U.S. Senator Corey Booker’s advisors for an educational tour of the agency’s programs and services. The Senator’s State Director George Helmy, Project Director Zach McCue and Project Specialist Gary Williams met with members of the Program Participant Advisory Committee: Eric P., Tommy M., Debby Z, Constance T and Sara F. They explained how Inroads has benefited their lives and why it is so important that its work center remains an option for those who need the support.

“We would like places like Inroads to stay open because we like to work and we also enjoy attending the events here. Otherwise we will be home bored,” stated program participant Debby Z.

Inroads President Michele Ford and Director of Vocational Services Cyndy Walsh Rintzler explained the unintended consequences of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act and how it has affected the organization’s Transition services. The Time Act and Raise the Wage Act were also major topics of conversation because they directly affect the work center model. Booker’s staff asked questions about Assembly Services and how Inroads acquires work. They were impressed by the agency’s operations

Because of organized opposition to the work center model, including some in Congress, Inroads believes it is vital for them to defend it as an option for people with disabilities who need the support to maintain employment. If this option is eliminated, tens of thousands of workers with disabilities across New Jersey will be unemployed. Inroads is optimistic that Senator Booker’s team will be able to report a fresh perspective on this subject, which will be key when decisions are made regarding upcoming legislation.



Aides to Senator Cory Booker (three at right) and program participants at Inroads tour.

State Recognition for Arc Team



Arc Mercer Director of Janitorial Mary White is shown at the right with John Tucker, head of the janitorial crew, as the team shows off the certificates.

The Arc of Mercer’s janitorial crew was honored by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Health and Safety Committee of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) for its work at the Ashby Building on South Broad Street in Trenton. Arc Mercer provides the service in partnership with ACCSES NJ under the State Use program for people with disabilities.

The CWA Committee conducts regular health and safety inspections of state buildings and found the Ashby site to be in excellent condition. The Arc workers received achievement certificates for outstanding work and dedication in maintaining a clean and healthy workplace at Ashby.

The Arc of Salem County Celebrates National Hot Dog Day

National Hot Dog Day was July 18 and The Arc of Salem County’s hot dog cart celebrated with its usual \$3.00 value meal, which attracted over 100 customers. The proceeds are used to support programs for individuals with disabilities. The hot dog cart is a big attraction in Salem County. Last summer The Arc was invited to set it up at the Habitat for Humanity and it has continued to operate at that Carneys Point location every Tuesday during the summer season.



Arc Ocean Participant Scores Win

Robert Beard was awarded a proclamation by the Borough of Ship Bottom for his achievement of winning a Gold Medal at the 2018 New Jersey Spring Sports Festival in bowling. He plays on The Arc’s Ocean Rollers bowling team and works for The Arc’s Cleaning Services, a vocational program that provides janitorial services to local businesses and communities, including the Borough of Ship Bottom. The Arc Ocean County Chapter provides vocational services to 500 individuals with disabilities in Ocean County, offering job training, employment opportunities, and transportation.



Robert Beard (right) with his Cleaning Services Crew Chief, John McKeon, receives proclamation from the Township of Ship Bottom.



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