



## DRC Spotlight Series



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### **A little bit about me...**

**The three words to best describe me are**

Passionate, Proactive, and Knowledgeable.

**When I was little I wanted to be a** Veterinarian.

**My role model in life is** my dad – he was a very kind and generous man who you could always count on being there when you needed him.

**My favorite food is** watermelon.

**My favorite childhood memory is** spending two weeks in Ocean City, MD every summer; swimming in the ocean and walking on the boardwalk.

**If I could visit anywhere in the world tomorrow, I would visit** New Zealand.

### **What this work means to me...**

**I feel the greatest impact I have made as a DRC is I** create lasting relationships with all the community disability providers, exposing and connecting them to the services and resources of the American Job Center.

**The best thing about being a DRC is that I** get to be involved in facilitating the efforts of creating system change within the AJC thus strengthening the service delivery model utilized when assisting customers.

**I enjoy supporting the mission of the DEI because I** strongly believe that every person who desires to work should be afforded access to all the services and support available, to ensure they are successful in their efforts.

**Being a workforce Employment Network to support the Ticket to Work program has allowed my American Job Center to** expand our ability to connect with individuals with disabilities. Through our Partnership Plus agreement with the Division of Rehabilitation Services, we are able to assist them with providing immediate services to the individuals who are placed on their delayed status list.

**Using an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) approach has enabled** us to collaborate more effectively when providing assistance to customers. This partnership approach allows us to braid and blend resources, services and funding sources thus ensuring that we are not duplicating efforts and are providing the most cost-effective support to our shared clients.

### **Making an Impact / Systems Change**

Our DEI project focuses on serving individuals with significant disabilities. I am most proud of our work to make our American Job Center fully accessible for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD). While our region has been committed to providing equal access to everyone, I observed at the start of this grant that we were most challenged in serving those with I/DD. We turned things around by engaging this community at every level. Through the DEI, we formed a Cohesive Resource Committee (CRC) consisting of leadership from agencies under MD's Developmental Disabilities Administration's umbrella. These meetings created buy-in, and members directed staff to bring customers with I/DD to our AJC. The CRC also helped me learn the access needs and supports needed to help the I/DD population be successful. I used this information to educate WIOA Title I case managers, who in the past considered most of these customers not suitable for enrollment. Time spent listening and learning from each other paid off. Our region has enrolled eight job seekers with I/DD under WIOA Title I. Our AJC and the CRC also partnered to develop job readiness classes and a Reverse Job Fair. More job seekers with I/DD and their job coaches are utilizing our center than ever before, and the goal is to have that continue long after our DEI project ends.