

**CAC MINUTES**  
**Friday, March 31, 2017**  
**10:00 a.m. Univ Pittsburgh Bradford**

Welcome & Introductions: Bob Mecca, LIFT, ran the CAC meeting today. Those in attendance were: Carma Horner, Pitt Bradford; Chris Palmer, OVR; Mark Morelli, PA Link; Jess Dineen, OVR; and Mark Flacinski, parent advocate.

Review of Minutes: No changes needed to minutes from January meeting.

**Member Updates**

**Bob Mecca, LIFT** updated that LIFT is doing a Disability Seminar Resources Expo this year on Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup> at Edgewood Hall in St. Marys on the anniversary of the ADA. If anyone would like a table at the expo, call the LIFT office now. They will be sending out invitations.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, LIFT is having their 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Conference. The conference will be held at the IU building in Smethport. LIFT is planning with Brett Lasko as well as Missy Franklin from OVR. Kate Smith will be the guest speaker. In the morning there will be mock interviews with discussion, afternoon will be a breakout with round table discussions - groups of employers and educators both.

LIFT staffing changes: Currently looking for an Independent Living Coordinator, 30 hours a week. They are looking for summer help and hoping for an intern. Would like them to work on their Disability Awareness program. Carma will talk to UPB Internship Coordinator and give the coordinator Bob's contact information.

**Mark Morelli, PA Link** stated that they just finished up their housing seminars having 32 and 38 people attending the two seminars. On Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at North Central they are having a meeting seeking to create a Regional Hoarding Task Force and on May 16<sup>th</sup> there is a Dementia Seminar. Mark provided handouts which are attached. Bob Mecca, LIFT, indicated that Hope and Sheila from LIFT went the one of the housing seminars and got a ton of good information.

**Jess Dineen, OVR** had no updates.

**Carma Horner, PITT Bradford** spoke about a grant "Year of Diversity". They had a program for students which included some simulators on learning disabilities to help them gain understanding of what it is like for a student. About 140 students came through and they got good feedback from the students. Some examples of the simulators included answering questions mirroring dyslexia, color block testing with distractions, matching exercises with pressure and perspective activities. Carma said that LIFT's technology coordinator Sheila was great and very helpful.

Last year there was a woman at UPMC who did a study on health issues on campuses. Title 9 looking at sexual assault on campus. They are finding that students with disabilities are more at risk. Talking

about supports on campus -- there has been much inclusion as the study grows. Bob Mecca stated that if LIFT can coordinate at all, for Carma to let them know.

Carma stated that April 30<sup>th</sup> is graduation. They have ASL interpreters at graduation. Carma thinks it may be of benefit for captioning. She is wondering who may be able to help with captioning tech supports. Bob stated that he is on three statewide groups that all do captioning. He will get information to Carma. Chris Palmer, OVR, also noted that ODHH through OVR's website may be able to assist.

Mark Flacinski, parent advocate, asked Carma how many kids have been able to graduate due to Disability Services. Carma stated that in the 12 years she has been there, probably 5 significant hearing loss students using ASL or C Print. Mark then asked about LD students. Carma stated that her caseload this year is 100. Of them, about 50% have a learning disability. 75% of the learning disability students will graduate. Mark stated that success builds success and just that extra support really makes the difference. Carma noted that there is a bigger push in K-12 now to go on to college – that “you can do this”. Pitt is a really good fit here because it is small and has more personal attention. It was noted that Edinboro is great for mobility issues as they can handle high level care that may be required.

**Mark Flacinski, Parent Advocate** stated that his daughter will be 21 and has maxed out of age in school. She is currently looking for a job; OVR is helping. She had an assessment with Dickinson that went really well. She was very apprehensive the first day of work, but came out saying she loved going to work and was so happy. It was a real positive thing. Her assessment is over and now they are looking ahead. She could volunteer at Elk Haven; there is nothing in the budget to pay her at this time. Supporting her is not the issue -- her having a feeling of self-worth is what matters. She is excited that they are going to Disney for her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

As Elk/Cameron Special Olympics Coordinator, Mark sees a lot of adults in the community with jobs in and around town. They are so proud of their jobs; several individuals work in the fast food places. They are working hard and doing a good job. Mark is hoping to see some positions come open with employers as they network with each other. Eric Wolfe from Horizon Technologies has been a great asset. Wonderful things are happening. The quality of life is so much better today. Mark stated as a parent, it is tough, but there is a lot more help out there. OVR has been a good help. Jen Pace is guiding them – OVR is there to help see what is right for these individuals – Mark applauded Jen Pace on her ability to do all that she is doing. He is very happy. Carma noted that the students that she has with Jen Pace -- that is working well.

**Chris Palmer, OVR** spoke about WIOA implementation moving along. With PETS we have started to hold provider meetings with Christy Patterson, Mike Jacobson and Missy Franklin. Agencies that we have doing PETS include:

- Goodwill of Falls Creek
- Seneca Highlands IU9 (WBLE and job shadowing)
- LIFT (Independent Living, Work Readiness and Self Advocacy)
- Elcam St. Marys (WBLE),
- Kinetic (Work Readiness). They are holding Youth Life Skills on April 8 and 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Dickinson Center (Group Work Readiness)

- Cen Clear (all group and individual)
- Skills (all group and individual)
  - It should be noted that other District Offices have developed the programs with Cen Clear and Skills, but we can use them.
- Venango County Training and Development hasn't started yet but is approved.
- Quiet Creek Herb Farm in Brookville is looking at group services.

Chris noted that OVR is expected to spend 15% of their budget on PETS services. Coming up OVR has Summer Skills for Success with Goodwill – this was done last year and will be done again this year. Promoting Academic Success will be done with BC3 in Brockway. It is a one credit dual enrollment for juniors and seniors to prepare for the difference between high school and college.

Chris informed the CAC that Ben Fye of Goodwill is no longer in his same position. Brenda Gorham has taken over the position. Chris has not yet talked to her about being a part of the CAC.

Chris had fliers to pass out for Missy Franklin's "OVR Is....". and asks that if anyone sees a need, please bring it to Missy's attention.

Carma asked if the BC3 initiative has been looked at to move up north. Chris noted that it used to have very structured rules about how it could be done, but Chris sees the opportunity to expand. We want to see if it will work again and then we can look at possible expansion.

Mark Morelli of the PA Link noted that he hears comments that there aren't as many educational opportunities in the northern area as there is in the DuBois area. Chris Palmer noted that rural communities need more of a community college presence. Mark noted that Education Consortium of Upper Allegheny does have some two year degrees. <http://www.keystoneedge.com/2017/04/04/long-distance-learning-an-innovative-new-two-year-college-will-educate-rural-pa/>

Chris spoke on Section 511 update relates to sheltered workshops. High school students have to come through OVR now, they can't just go right into a sheltered workshop. Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) - integrated environment is the focus. OVR has specialists going into the sheltered workshops in our area – CJ Packaging, Elcam, Dickinson, Futures. They are going in every other month and doing information and referral sessions.

Chris has been meeting with ODP counterparts Community Connections of Clearfield Jefferson Counties on a regular basis. They meet monthly just to talk about how all of the regs are developing. Christy Patterson is lead on arranging the meetings. Elk Cameron and McKean are getting going. Upcoming meetings are April 11 at McKean 10:00 a.m., Elk Cameron at 1:30 p.m. April 10<sup>th</sup> is Clearfield Jefferson.

Chris Palmer and District Administrators from New Castle and Erie have been asked to speak at RCPA on Supported Employment, PETS, 511 and Summer Programs on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

OVR DuBois' two Business Services Reps Rhonda Dressler and John Benjamin are getting through their initial training. The end of April they will be trained on the ADA/CAT Kit. After April they will be out and about more. Kari Heeter remains the primary contact at this time.

Chris stated that at this time, there is no update on the budget.

OVR Staffing: Lots of vacancies. There is a lot of staff on over time. Interviews were conducted recently and OVR is waiting to be able to hire a couple individuals whose names have been submitted. Multiple layoffs statewide in December have slowed things down some. Chris will report when OVR has new staff onboard.

Bob Mecca stated that LIFT employees were given "OVR Is...." Flyers. Missy Franklin has been doing this for a year or so. April, May and June are in the north – Port Allegany, Smethport, and Bradford. Chris stated that this is a great opportunity to learn about OVR from OVR. People usually hear about OVR from one perspective – usually someone that they know. This is OVR teaching about OVR. Most people do not know the scope of what OVR is able to do. Missy is getting good consistent information out there. Mark Morelli of the PA Link asked if Missy could get to the May collaborative meeting in Smethport May 3<sup>rd</sup>. There will be about 25 agencies there. Chris Palmer noted that at this point Missy's spring schedule is pretty full and it is unlikely that she will be able to attend but information can be made available.

**Other News:** In other news, Chris Palmer updated that after the last CAC meeting, they did take the ADA/CAT kit and measure the sidewalks in DuBois that were in question. She reports that they passed inspection.

Bob Mecca, LIFT, said that Hope will be at Camp Hill next week for multiple day training for ADA. Chris Palmer suggested that maybe OVR can have her come speak at a staff meeting.

**Next Meeting:** The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at LIFT in St. Marys.