

# **PENNSYLVANIA REHABILITATION COUNCIL (PaRC)**

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## **WEEKLY UPDATE: March 4, 2020**

\*If you no longer wish to receive this update, please contact Jill Kovalcik Weaver at [jill.weaver@ucpcentralpa.org](mailto:jill.weaver@ucpcentralpa.org) to have your name removed.\*

**NOTE:** This update is for informational purposes only. The PaRC and Support Staff are not responsible for the accuracy of this information. Some of the information found in this update you may have already received from another source. The PaRC or the Support Staff do not use this update as a vehicle to express their views and positions. As of **March 4, 2020**, all links have been verified. Please credit the PaRC Support Project for any information forwarded to others. Thank You.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission of the Council is to inform and advise the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Legislature, and the Governor on the diverse issues affecting employment of people with disabilities.

**The PaRC 2019 Annual Report can be found on our webpage or by clicking on the following link**

<http://parac.org/reports/2019AnnualReport.pdf>

**Find Your Local CAC Meeting Dates:** Please go to our website [www.parac.org](http://www.parac.org) and click on the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) link to find dates, locations, times, etc. for information on the nearest CAC.

**\*\*\* PaRC Calendar Year 2020 –Please Mark your Calendars \*\*\***

## **FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS**

PaRC Full Council meetings will be held at the **Harrisburg Hilton** from 9:30 AM until 3:30 PM (unless otherwise noted). We will also have parking passes for those who park in the Strawberry Square Parking Garage. Please plan to stay for the entire meeting.

**May 13, 2020  
August 5, 2020  
November 18, 2020**

The agenda will be posted on the PaRC website.

[http://parac.org/council\\_mtgs.html](http://parac.org/council_mtgs.html)

**PaRC Member Committee Conference Calls – Please Mark your Calendars**

**CareerLink/WIOA**

Next Call: To be Determined

**Executive Committee Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

**Legislative and Public Awareness Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

**OVR Policy and State Plan Committee / Customer Satisfaction Conference Call**

Next Call: Friday, March 27, 2020 at 9:30 AM

**Social Media/Outreach Committee Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

**Transition & Education**

Next Call: Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 2:00 PM

The PaRC Social Media and Outreach Committee in partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) produced 6 videos, 5 of which are OVR individual and business success stories, as well as a PaRC Recruitment video. We want to thank both the individuals and companies that participated in making these videos and OVR for supporting the project. The PaRC is pleased to present the following 6 videos. Please feel free to share.

[PaRC Recruitment](#)

[PaRC Aha Moment](#)

[PaRC Dream Partnership](#)

[PaRC Keystone Blind Association](#)

[PaRC Herr Foods Inc.](#)

[PaRC Assistive Technology](#)

**PaRC COUNCIL OPENINGS:** The PaRC is looking for a candidate to fill the veteran with a disability opening. The openings for Deaf and Hard of Hearing and General Advocacy are pending as candidates have been sent forward for the Governor’s approval. If interested, please go to our website ([www.parac.org](http://www.parac.org)) and fill out an application.

## **1.) From Disability Scoop**

### **Senate Passes Bill Expanding Access To Respite Care**

by Shaun Heasley | February 26, 2020

Lawmakers are pressing ahead with a plan to increase federal funding to support respite care for families of those with disabilities and other special needs.

The U.S. Senate unanimously approved a bill this week known as the Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act of 2019, or S.995, which would authorize \$50 million over the next five years for the Lifespan Respite Care Program, a system of community-based respite care services across the country. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/02/26/senate-passes-bill-expanding-access-to-respite-care/27882/>

### **Down Syndrome Treatment Often Requires Traveling**

Access to Down syndrome treatment is uneven across the nation, with many who have the chromosomal disorder living hours from the nearest specialty clinic, new research suggests.

by Michelle Diamant | February 27, 2020

Access to Down syndrome treatment is uneven across the nation, with a significant number of Americans who have the chromosomal disorder living hours from the nearest specialty clinic, new research suggests.

One in five individuals with Down syndrome must travel at least two hours to reach a dedicated clinic, according to a study published in the March issue of The Journal of Pediatrics. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/02/27/down-syndrome-treatment-often-requires-traveling/27886/>

### **As Diagnoses Rise, More Colleges Add Services For Students With Autism**

by Charlotte West, The Hechinger Report | February 28, 2020

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Jared Jellicorse made the dean's list in his first year at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, an achievement that still makes his mother, Marla, tear up. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/02/28/as-diagnoses-rise-colleges-add-autism/27896/>

### **Program Gives Law Enforcement Training To Those With Special Needs**

by Avalon Zoppo, NJ.com/TNS, March 3, 2020

FREEHOLD, N.J. — For Travis White, large group settings used to be overwhelming. The 22-year-old who has autism would feel uncomfortable leaving his family's side, his father Tyrone said.

Then, White joined the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office's "Growth Through Opportunity" pilot initiative last year, the first of its kind in New Jersey to give law enforcement training to people with special needs.

A graduation ceremony for the five cadets who went through the 16-week program was held at the prosecutor's office in Freehold recently, and Travis White's parents watched as their son confidently chatted with officers he worked alongside at the Holmdel Police Department for the past four months. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/03/program-law-enforcement-training-special-needs/27905/>

## **To Address DSP Shortage, Lawmakers Want Nationwide Head Count**

by Shaun Heasley | March 3, 2020

The federal government would track the number of direct support professionals for the first time ever under a new proposal designed to help address a shortage of workers to assist people with disabilities.

A bipartisan bill introduced in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives on Monday would change the way that the government categorizes direct support professionals.

Currently, these workers are lumped in with home health care aides in the system used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to monitor workforce trends. Advocates say that category is far too broad and leads to a lack of reliable information about how many people across the nation are employed as direct support professionals and where more are needed. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/03/to-address-dsp-shortage-lawmakers-want-nationwide-head-count/27913/>

## **2.) From the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)**

### **Notice of Interpretation: Pre-Employment Transition Services Flexibility Regarding the Use of Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Funds**

Today in the Federal Register, OSERS issued a notice of interpretation (NOI) to:

Clarify current policy regarding the use of Federal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) funds reserved for the provision of pre-employment transition services to pay for auxiliary aids and services needed by all students with disabilities in order to access or participate in required pre-employment transition services under section 113(b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; and

Announce a change in policy with respect to additional VR services needed by eligible students with disabilities that may be paid for with Federal VR grant funds reserved for the provision of pre-employment transition services and the circumstances under which those funds may be used to pay for those additional VR services.

There will be a public comment period from February 28, 2020 through March 30, 2020. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/02/28/2020-03208/state-vocational-rehabilitation-services-program>

### **3.) National Disability Navigator Research Collaborative February 28, 2020 by NDNRC**

#### **NEW OUTREACH RESOURCES AVAILABLE!**

While Open Enrollment Year 7 (OE7) has concluded, AAHD is still working with Community Catalyst and other partners in conducting outreach to educate individuals about health insurance literacy, special enrollment periods (SEPs) and other issues related to healthcare enrollment. Our new blog post this week highlights several new resources which were released and includes graphics like the one below which highlights properly using your health insurance and avoiding the ER. Links to the graphics can be found in our blog post. Community Catalyst has an Outreach Hub which has a wide variety of graphics addressing many different areas. To learn more about the project we are doing with Community Catalyst, check out our earlier news item. To read the entire article visit:

<https://nationaldisabilitynavigator.org/2020/02/28/february-28-2020/>

### **4.) From the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) the advocacy monitor Independent Living News & Policy from the National Council on Independent Living**

#### **Action Alert: Oppose the Proposed Independent Living Changes in the President's Budget**

February 28, 2020 By theadvocacymonitor Leave a Comment

Last week we sent out an information alert with information about cuts and harmful proposed changes to the Independent Living (IL) Program in the President's 2021 Budget.

As a reminder, the budget includes a \$7.5 million cut to Part B funding. It also includes a \$5 million increase to Part C funding, but those funds are reserved for competitive employment grants. To read the entire article visit:

<https://advocacymonitor.com/action-alert-oppose-the-proposed-independent-living-changes-in-the-presidents-budget/>

### **The National Organizing Project Presents... A Teleconference: Passing On What We Have Learned – Preserving Our History While Envisioning a More Inclusive Future**

#### **February 28, 2020 By theadvocacymonitor Leave a Comment**

March 24, 2020; 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Eastern

Register online

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, we have an opportunity to reflect on the history of our movement, who helped forge the path toward equality and integration, and what work remains to be done. As we move beyond 30 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act, we raise our eyes towards building equity in our movement. Leaders who have played critical roles in mentoring disabled activists, especially lifting up multiply-marginalized disability activists, will

reflect on the history of the movement and their mentorship experiences in this roundtable. Activists on the panel who are helping our movement look toward a more inclusive, more equitable future for the ADA will set out a vision for the work yet to be done. To read the entire article visit:

<https://advocacymonitor.com/the-national-organizing-project-presents-a-teleconference-passing-on-what-we-have-learned-preserving-our-history-while-envisioning-a-more-inclusive-future/>

### **5.) From Governor Tom Wolf Newsroom Wolf Administration Awards \$1 Million in Grants to Help Veterans Overcome Substance Use Disorder**

March 02, 2020

Governor Tom Wolf today announced \$1 million in federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant funding to programs offering supportive services to veterans suffering from opioid use disorder and their families. The grants are part of the \$55.9 million SAMSHA grant secured by the Wolf Administration to bolster the state's response to...To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/wolf-administration-awards-1-million-in-grants-to-help-veterans-overcome-substance-use-disorder/>

### **6.) From the PA Pressroom 02/28/2020**

#### **Wolf Administration Prepares for Spread of Coronavirus, or COVID-19**

**Harrisburg, PA** - Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine today outlined the Wolf Administration's steps to prepare for community spread of the coronavirus known as COVID-19, as well as what Pennsylvanians can do now. To date, no one in Pennsylvania has tested positive for COVID-19. "Since the start of this outbreak, we've taken a proactive approach to prepare and carefully monitor potential cases of COVID-19 in Pennsylvania," Dr. Levine said. "As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advised today, we need to be prepared for community spread of COVID-19. We are working to make sure our health systems, first responders and county and municipal health departments have the resources they need to respond." To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.media.pa.gov/pages/Education-details.aspx?newsid=795>

### **7.) From The Hill Fixing the disability workforce crisis**

CONTRIBUTORS — 03/02/20 06:30 PM EST 12THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

Imagine you're a person with an intellectual or developmental disability. You're working toward living a full, independent life.

Perhaps you rely on support services to accomplish daily tasks, develop skills and prepare for the job market, or attain other personal goals. Your

opportunities to thrive depend on stability, and strong relationships with the professional service providers who work with you, know you and have earned your trust. BY REP. JOE COURTNEY (D-CONN.) AND SHANNA YORK, OPINION To read the entire article visit:  
<https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/485583-fixing-the-disability-workforce-crisis>

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