

The Region VI CRP-RCEP e-News Bulletin is published monthly through a grant awarded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration to the Department of Rehabilitation, Social Work & Addictions at the University of North Texas.

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From the desk of: Martha Garber

While searching a local Workforce Development Area (WDA) website for marketing messages to use in a training that I was developing, I read something astounding: the WDA was advertising to employers that job seekers with disabilities would negotiate just about everything to get a job-- even their **wages** . I saw it, but I could not believe it! Why would we subject ourselves to disparate wages simply on the basis that we have a disability? That idea runs counter to every fiber of my being, my values, of what we teach and preach at the CRP-RCEP.

I could not sit on this ...so I presented the electronic page at the training – you see, the participants at this training were also listed as partners of this WDA and, of course, they were mortified. (They had not read it before.)

Lesson learned: As rehabilitation professionals, we must be very careful with the messages that we (including our partners) provide to employers. It is not appropriate (or honest) for us to promote ourselves or our customers as less than; if we do, we set the stage for people with disabilities to be treated and paid less than.

Perhaps we need to review our marketing materials, and those of our partners, to make sure that we are indeed presenting messages that align with our philosophy. The key to success is back to the basics – matching the interests, skills and abilities of a specific job seeker to the needs of a specific employer. That produces the win, win, win proposition.

Well, I am happy to report that the “wages” message is no longer on the WDA's website – I suspect that the WDA's good partners helped them with that change.

News & Announcements

Frieda Holland with Lifeworks of Metairie, Louisiana was named this year's Job Placement Professional of the Year at the 2007 Louisiana Rehabilitation Association (LRA) Conference held October 9-12,



Training Schedule

November 8-9, 2007:
[Supported Employment: Basic Skills Clinic](#), Dallas, Texas

December 1, 2007: [Job Coaching Strategies](#), Las Cruces, New Mexico

January 10, 2008: [Workforce Re-entry & the Ex-offender](#), New Orleans, Louisiana

January 15, 2008: [Job Coaching](#), Austin, Texas

January 29-31, 2008:
[Certificate in Employment Services](#) (Session II: Feb 26-28), Houston, Texas

February 12-13, 2008:
[Supported Employment: Basic Skills Clinic](#), San Antonio, Texas

Upcoming Conferences

[TRAN 2007 11th Annual Conference](#), November 4-6, 2007, San Antonio, TX.

[National ADA Symposium & Expo](#), May 12-14, 2008, St. Louis, Missouri

2007 in Baton Rouge. (pictured left to right Joby Weber, Julie Pitisci, and Frieda Holland).

In an interview with Martha Garber, Region VI CRP-RCEP Project Director, Ms. Holland attributed her success with job placement to concepts and values she learned in our flagship employment training program, Certificate in Employment Services, which she took some years ago with Jim Humes and Christine Young.

Congratulations Frieda! You make us proud!

Wages



If you've been wondering how the new minimum wage increase will affect your consumers, you are not alone. The increase is of particular interest to people

who currently make at or near the minimum wage, especially consumers of rehabilitation services who receive SSI, SSDI, Medicare or Medicaid.

Did you know that, even with the increase in the minimum wage, many consumers do better financially if they go to work or continue to work? Even moving past the minimum wage, consumers who make in excess of the mandated \$5.85/hour most often do not risk the loss of benefits when they accept employment or get a raise if they access sound financial planning. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has set up Work Incentives & Assistance Planning (WIPA) offices across the United States staffed by Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWICs) who can help consumers understand their options when it comes to employment and benefits.

We've worked up a simple example to show you how this might work. You can view it by [clicking here](#).

You can obtain more information on benefits and wages from the resources listed below:

http://www.ssa.gov/work/who_can_help.htm

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ServiceProviders/wipafactsheet.html>

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ServiceProviders/WIPADirectory.html#top>

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/1619b.htm>

<http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/america.htm>

<http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm>

Social Security & Disability Webinar Series

More From the JAN Webcast Series



Another installment in the Webcast Series from the Job Accommodations Network (JAN) that we highly recommend is the upcoming [Hiring & Accommodating Veterans with Disabilities](#). The webcast starts at 2:00 PM eastern on Tuesday, November 13, 2007. Click on the link above for more information or to register for this timely training program.

What Would You Like to Hear About in Future Issues of e-News?

Send your comments and story ideas to e-News Bulletin [Project Director & Editor, Martha Garber](#).

Speaking of experts, Ms. Hardy is the newest addition to our slate of guest trainers. Ms. Hardy's specialty is Work Incentives and Assistance Planning (WIPA).

In a three-part Webinar series, starting this month, Sandy Hardy will offer an overview of the various benefit programs and work incentives available from the Social Security Administration (SSA) for individuals with disabilities who want to work but are afraid of losing their much-needed medical benefits. This program will be repeated in a few months based on its high demand.

Ms. Hardy has over 30 years of experience in employment services for people with disabilities. She has provided Social Security work incentive training, technical assistance and consultation to all SSA-funded Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects for seven years. She is also the Project Director for Imagine Enterprises, overseeing the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) project covering 104 counties in West Texas.

Next Month: Collaboration

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