Creating a Workforce System that Works for All

Oklahoma ABLE Tech

- @OKABLETech
- http://www.ok.gov/abletech/
- State Assistive Technology Act Program
- Housed at Oklahoma State University
- Work with…
  - Assistive technology
  - Technology accessibility
  - Policy and Standards

Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Partnership

- DRS delivers quality services to Oklahomans with disabilities
  - Opportunities to achieve productivity, independence
  - Enriched quality of life
- Partner with Oklahoma ABLE Tech
  - Connecting Oklahomans with disabilities to assistive technology
- Think accessibility

Accessibility = Access for All

- Access for everyone within the workforce system
- Springboard to success for businesses and job seekers
- Increase household wealth for all

People with Disabilities at Work: More Than Possible

- It's not just possible, it's likely!
  - Great investment for employers
    - Qualified, capable, dedicated, independent employees
  - Technology makes accommodations easier
    - More affordable technology tools
    - More technology in the classroom
- Adds up to more opportunities
- Workforce System is in a unique position

Some Context

- People with disabilities in Oklahoma
  - Age 5-17, 41,079 or 6.1%
    - http://weba.im/6to
  - Age 18-64, 312,480 or 13.7%
    - http://weba.im/6tp

More than Possible, but Still too Rare

- In Oklahoma, 34.4% of people with disabilities aged between 18 and 64 are employed.
  - 75.1% of people without disabilities are employed.
    - http://weba.im/6tq

Median Income

- Median earnings, age 16 and up
  - People with disabilities: $20,341
  - People without disabilities: $26,951
    - $7,249 disparity
    - http://weba.im/6tr

Poverty in Oklahoma

- Age 18-64
  - People with disabilities, 89,715 or 28.8 %
    - http://weba.im/6ts
  - People without disabilities, 274,868 or 14.2%
    - http://weba.im/6tt

People with Disabilities at Work: Protected by Law

- Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Section 503 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act
  - For federal contractors

ADA Title I

- Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities on basis of disability.
  - Covers employers with 15 or more employees, including private, state and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions.
  - Includes job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

Implications of Title I

- Employers need to level the playing field, not tip it in anyone's favor.
- Create fair and equal access to employment.

Section 503

- Applies to federal contractors
- Prohibits discrimination, similar to ADA Title I
- New Rule has some changes:
  - Affirmative Action Plan required for some employers

A Bigger Push

- Title I and Section 503 Will Bring Folks to You!

You Can Help to Bridge the Gap

- Comprehensive partnership
- Systemic approach
- Regional focus
- Individual results

"How Does this Effect Me?"

- Your programs and services need to be accessible, too.
- Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Title II, State and Local Government
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
  - Federally funded, but most partners receive federal money

Title II of the ADA

- Applies to State and local government entities.
- Protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability in services, programs, and activities provided by State and local government entities.
  - Partners included
  - Workforce Centers included
    - Counseling and coaching
    - Training
    - Placement
  - Technology included
    - Websites, web forms, documents, etc.

Technology Accessibility

- Covered by Title I and Title II of the ADA
- Specifically covered at Federal level by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Specifically covered at State level by Oklahoma's Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Statute

Meeting the Charge

- Accessibility in buildings and technology
- May be things you cannot change, but you can identify.
  - May have to meet client at more accessible location temporarily.
    - Permanent fix still necessary.
- We will get more into what to do and look for later.

Accessibility in a Nutshell

- Make it work for as many people as possible
  - People with…
    - …mobility disabilities
    - …visual disabilities
    - …hearing disabilities
    - …cognitive disabilities

Mobility

- Getting around your Workforce Center, for example
  - Parking lot
    - Striping, grades
  - Sidewalks
    - Grades, seams, broken concrete, stuff in the way
  - Doorways
    - Door too hard to open, room to move through
  - Meeting rooms, bathrooms
    - Room to move
  - Technology
    - Work without a mouse

Visual

- Curb cuts
  - Tactile feedback
- Braille or raised text on signs
- Information kiosk functionality
- Color contrast in signs
- Technology
  - Work with a screen reader
  - Zoom-able?

Hearing

- Videos for training or information
  - Captioned
- Volume controls for canned audio
- Sign language interpreters as needed

Cognitive

- Logical, plain language writing
- Clear instructions
- Logical layout
  - Signage
  - Documents
- Technology
  - Above, but with web pages and documents

Coming to a Workshop or Webinar Near You

- Emphasis on programmatic access
  - Services
  - Programs
  - Activities
  - Physical space
  - Technology

Multimedia

- Meet you where you are
  - In-person
  - Computer-based
    - Website
    - Webinars
  - Specific technical assistance

Upcoming Training Topics

- More on the ADA
- Structural access
  - Identifying, reporting, prioritizing, fixing
- Service animals
- Technology
  - Documents
  - Web pages
  - Identifying, reporting, prioritizing, fixing

Reminders

- We all started out knowing nothing about this.
- We will help to get you moving toward a more accessible system.
- It won't happen overnight.
- It will happen, though.

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