

DDRC - Navigating the World of IDD Services – Sept 26, 2019

Employment Supports for Adults & Transition-Aged Youth

Speakers, Panelists and Facilitator

Kristie Braaten, Senior Director of Waiver Programs with DDRC, will welcome attendees and help facilitate this session.

Speaker /Panelists

Adam Tucker has worked for the Colorado Department of **Health Care Policy & Financing** (HCPF) for the past five years. He is the Subject Matter Expert on Supported Employment for HCPF. Adam is originally from Colorado Springs and has a deep passion for employment and disability rights. [Colorado.gov/hcpf](https://colorado.gov/hcpf)

Katie Taliercio has been active for many years with **Colorado APSE**, Association of People Supporting Employment First/Employment for All, and currently serves in a voluntary capacity as the CO APSE chapter president. Katie also works with the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) and prior to that worked more than 10 years with the Developmental Disabilities Resource Center. Whether in a personal, volunteer or professional capacity, Katie's passion to advocate for all people is evident!

<https://apse.org/chapter/colorado/>

Terry McGarry works with **Ability Connection Colorado**. She has been a certified Community Work Incentive Coordinator under Social Security's Work Incentive Planning and Assistance grant for the last twelve years. Terry counsels beneficiaries on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) who are seeking employment, and how it will affect these important benefits, including Medicare, Medicaid and other healthcare related supports. She enjoys working directly with clients and reaching out to other community-based agencies. Terry is proud of the fact that in November she will celebrate 25 years at Ability Connection Colorado! <https://www.abilityconnectioncolorado.org>

Dane Talmage is a Rehabilitation Counselor with the Colorado Dept. of Labor and Employment, **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DRV)** where he works closely with individuals to help determine an employment goal and to identify and arrange for services that will be needed to achieve those goals. He has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Colorado State University and a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation from the University of Northern Colorado. He has more than 20 years working in the arena of disability supports and advocacy, with knowledge of Employment First principles and practices. Dane has a personal understanding of disabilities as a person with Cerebral Palsy and is a testament to the professional contributions that people with disabilities make to their employers. <https://www.colorado.gov/dvr>

Dan Deslauriers currently serves young adults as the Assistant Director of **Transition Services in Jeffco Public Schools**. He studied Special Education at Adams State University and Lehigh University. He has many years of experience working as a special education teacher in Alamosa, as a special education district behavior specialist in Mesa County, and as a special education administrator with the Mountain BOCES and Estes Park School District. In addition, he has worked as a DVR counselor and as a Program Director for a large private agency in Maryland that supports employment and community access needs of adults with significant disabilities.

https://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/programs/special_education/transition_services

Jeff McCormack is a Special Education teacher with the **Jeffco Transition Services (JTS)** and this is his 17th year with the program. As a teacher in JTS, he specializes in providing 18 to 21-year-olds with disabilities community-based instruction that focuses on developing skills in Career & Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Adult Independent Living Skills. His JTS "Hub/Site" is housed in Sobesky Academy, in Wheat Ridge.

More Over

Heather Hagen is the Assistant Director of **Employment Services at DDRC**. Heather has worked in employment supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Colorado for more than seven years, both as an Employment Specialist and in supervisory roles. DDRC's Employment Services believes in competitive, inclusive employment for all Coloradoans, and Heather leads her team to achieve this goal. Real Work for Real Pay is what drives them daily! They help job seekers explore their interests and skills and find the right job match for the employee and business. They take an individualized approach to job development, which results in many positive outcomes, including successful longevity on the job for employees. DDRC Employment Services include career exploration, resume development and interview preparation, job development, initial on-the-job training, travel training and ongoing follow-along supports.

<https://ddrcco.com/vocational/home>

<https://ddrcco.com/get-involved/employers>

Myrriah Bland is a cashier/checker with **Safeway**, where she has worked for 12 years. Myrriah was determined to learn the system and duties of being a cashier, and through self-determination, diligence, hard work and using her supports, she was able to accomplish her goal. She earned the quote from her store manager of "One of the best employees I've has ever had." Myrriah is currently receiving employment supports through DDRC.

Douglas Love is an Employment Specialist at **DDRC** who helps individuals find and thrive in their jobs. He coordinates between the employee and the employer to help create a beneficial situation for both. Douglas joined DDRC in 2019 and previously worked at Mercy Housing, helping the chronically homeless maintain housing and at Thirdway Center, working with at-risk youth.

Bryn Baldassarri is the owner/Executive Director of **Stepping Stone Support Center** which she started 6 years ago after graduating from CSU in Fort Collins. From her high school and college years of working and volunteering with people with disabilities she knew she wanted to work in this field. She worked closely with a parent to create a productive and meaningful program that now serves 110 participants. The program provides 4 main types of services: 1) an onsite program setting working on vocational training, life skills, and providing social opportunities; 2) helping individuals find jobs out in the community and providing on-going job coaching; 3) providing in-home supports for individuals working one-on-one with a provider on cooking, cleaning, laundry, household care as well as respite for the family; 4) providing residential supports overseeing the 24/7 care for whatever individuals might need. Bryn says, "I cannot say enough great things about our community and feel so blessed to be a part of this journey!" <https://steppingstonesupportcenter.com>

Kelly King is the **Self-Determination Coordinator** at DDRC, working with both the Self-Determination Initiative and the **Employment Gateway project**. Self-Determination is a Jefferson County-funded initiative designed to create a space for people to self-direct personal plans and make progress toward their chosen long-term goals. Employment Gateway is a new pilot program intended to connect job seekers to personally meaningful employment. Participants will create individualized multi-media portfolios, including video resumes, that they can share with potential employers. Kelly has been with DDRC for several years, including as a Resource Coordinator, and previously worked as a residential Program Manager and at a day program in the Boulder area.

<https://ddrcco.com/self-determination-initiative>

<http://employmentgateway.org/>



Developmental Disabilities Resource Center

<https://www.ddrcco.com>