



STATE OF WASHINGTON

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT

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Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

Introduction

The Community Outreach Subcommittee of the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE) held two meetings in Cowlitz County; a Town Hall Forum on November 15th, 2018 and a Leadership Breakfast on November 16th, 2018. The Town Hall Forum was held at the Health and Science Building on the Lower Columbia College campus in Longview. The Leadership Breakfast was held at the Cowlitz County Event Center.



Photo 1: Longview sign

On behalf of the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment, we want to recognize Sharon Weinhold and the Cowlitz County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee for inviting us to come to Longview and for their valuable assistance in marketing the outreach event to the community. We also like to acknowledge Carolyn Fundingsland,



Photo 2: Lower Columbia College Health and Science Building

Cowlitz County Auditor and Jeremy Heffernan, Cowlitz County Elections Manager for making the arrangements for the Leadership Breakfast held at the Cowlitz County Event Center.

The efforts of Steven Chapman, Career Specialist with the Lower Columbia College (LCC) were much appreciated for making the arrangements for our meeting space -the Laufman Lecture Hall in the Health and Science Building.

The following report represents a summary of the issues discussed at the two meetings. Action items recommended by meeting participants, local resources and promising practices are included along with a contact list of the meeting attendees.

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Cowlitz County Demographics

Cowlitz County is located in the southwestern part of Washington State on the Columbia River. It is one of the smaller counties in the state, rated 28 out of 39 with a total population of 105,900 (2017, Office of Financial Management). Kelso is the county seat and has a population of 12,130 according to the most recent US census estimates. Longview is the largest city in the county with a population of approximately 37,377 (Visit the City of Longview website at: Full URL: <https://mylongview.com>). Longview offers a rural lifestyle with year-round opportunities for recreation. Cowlitz County has a long and rich history of manufacturing in the forest products industry.

Outreach/Scouting

To encourage community attendance and leadership participation, GCDE staff visited Kelso/Longview in August to confirm accessible meeting and lodging facilities. While in town they attended the Cowlitz County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee's monthly meeting and personally met with key service providers.

In addition to distributing meeting flyers, over 150 invitation letters were sent to elected officials and stakeholders in the disability community. Sharon Weinhold, with the Cowlitz County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee and Steven Chapman with the Lower Columbia College, sent out numerous emails to their local contacts encouraging attendance at the Town Hall meeting. GCDE Members made follow-up phone calls to key people encouraging their participation in the outreach meetings.

Local Success Stories and Promising Practices

Cowlitz County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee

In 2018, the Cowlitz County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC) applied for and was rewarded a grant totaling \$62,903. With this grant, they were able to install new store fronts with automatic door opener buttons to improve the access to business offices at the Courthouse. This effort greatly improved safety and assisted seniors and persons with disabilities in gaining access to conduct their business.



Photo 3: Elections Office
Accessible Store Front

Cowlitz County Developmental Disability Program

All of their participants are employed at or above minimum wage. Previously, these participants were in sheltered workshops or unemployed. The Health and Human Services

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Department now offers fully integrated work training and opportunities with jobs earning at or above minimum wage. The Department continues to expand jobs and work hours for people who experience a developmental disability.

The Phoenix House is a transitional housing program that embodies a wrap-around services model which includes referrals for substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, physical health care, domestic violence services, and sexual assault services.

Project Homeless Connect is an annual program held in Longview. It is a one day, one-stop event designed to provide the essential services to those experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Town Hall Meeting Summary

With over 50 people attending the Town Hall meeting, there was a diverse cross section of the community including people with disabilities, family members, service providers and several elected officials. Discussion topics were broad with an emphasis on educational services, effective communication, a community need for volunteers, affordable housing, and connecting people to existing programs and services. During the meeting participants were open to possibilities and excited about making new connections. Action items were identified and commitments were made to continue the discussion to improve programs and services for individuals with disabilities.

Accessibility

Participant Comments

Lisa Waldvogel, Senior Attorney with the Northwest Justice Project, often hears concerns that the walk signs at crosswalks are too short in duration for people to cross streets safely. For example, one of the troubling main thoroughfares, 15th Avenue, has both high pedestrians and car traffic. Unfortunately, a lot of pedestrian and car accidents happen on this thoroughfare.

William with Catholic Services added that drivers often stop in the crosswalk obstructing the walkway.

Bill Josh, Risk Assessment Manager with the City of Longview, explained that he serves as chairman of the Mayor's Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Committee has nine members appointed by the Mayor. The Committee developed a short questionnaire to learn more about disability related concerns in Longview. If you are interested in completing the survey, contact Brian Loos, ADA Coordinator, at Brian.loos@ci.longview.us. His phone number is 360.442.5024.

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Brian Loos added the Accessibility Advisory Committee started meeting last April and it meets every other month on the third Monday. The next meeting will be March 18th at 4:00 pm at City Hall in the small conference room.

Affordable Housing, Accessible Housing and Homelessness

Participant Comments

City Councilman Jim Hill expressed concerns about people who experience mental illness and homelessness in Cowlitz County. There are not enough shelters or providers to house or direct these individuals to services. He is interested in learning more about the laws regarding accessibility and if the state offers any funding to assist counties in providing these services.

Another person expressed concerns regarding the difficulty to qualify for current housing programs. If you are single, aged individual and you no longer can afford to live in a home or apartment due to increased rent, there doesn't seem to be a program for you. The person applied for some vacant housing but was not eligible because the person was not a substance abuser.

Susan Marion, Section 8 Advantage Coach with the Housing Opportunities of Southwest Washington (HOSWWA), stated that the waiting list for Housing Choice Voucher/Section 8 would open for a couple of weeks in December. It is the waiting list, and they have not taken new applications in a very long time. We do have housing shortages throughout the county. The waiting list for senior housing may be open and Susan recommends people call the front desk to find out more information - 360.423.0140. Another program is their home ownership program; it is not for everyone. It requires a lot of personal commitment. HOSWWA has helped people and families including several families with disabilities buy homes.

Housing Opportunities of Southwest Washington (HOSWWA)

Susan Marion

820 11th Ave.

Longview, WA 98632

Phone: 360.423.0140

Susan.marion@hoswwa.org

Website: Full URL: <http://www.longviewha.org>

Another resource for seniors and individuals with disabilities is the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AAADSW). Often times, people just need a little assistance to stay in their homes or apartments. AAADSW provides assistance with bathing, dressing and hygiene, housekeeping and laundry, and meal preparation just to name a few.

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Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington

1338 Commerce Avenue, Suite 309

Longview, WA 98632

Phone: 360.577.4929

Toll Free: 800.682.2406

Email: iakelso@dshs.wa.gov

Website: Full URL: <http://www.helpingelders.org>

The Home and Community Service Office in Kelso serves persons applying for or receiving public assistance to pay for long term services and supports.

Home and Community Service Office

711 Vine St Suite B

Kelso, WA 98626

Phone: 360.501.2500

Toll Free: 800.605.7322

Website: Full URL: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/node/30062>

Catholic Community Volunteer Services provides in-home non-medical assistance to aging persons and those with disabilities. Home care does everything from housework, grocery shopping, laundry and personal care. Many people qualify for free or reduced cost services through the Department of Social and Health Services. For those who cannot afford to pay for services and do not qualify for assistance, they can receive two to eight hours of free service per month.

Catholic Community Volunteer Services

Tina McCully

676 26th Ave.

Longview, WA 98632

Phone: 360.577.2200

Toll-Free: 1.888.649.6734

E-Mail: TinaM@ccsww.org

Website: Full URL: <https://ccsww.org/get-help/services-for-seniors-people-with-disabilities/volunteer-services/volunteer-services-southwest>

Other Resources for Homelessness

- Housing Opportunities of SW Washington, “Connecting People to Homes, Hope and Opportunity” Strategic Plan December 2015 – September 2020 (Full URL: <http://www.longviewha.org/files/Housing-Opportunities-of-SWWA-strategic-plan-final-public-document.pdf>)
- **The Consolidate Homeless Grant (CHG) program** utilizes state funds to support communities in creating and maintaining an integrated system of housing assistance. This

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program provides resources to assist currently homeless people in obtaining and maintaining housing. The program is housed in the Department of Commerce. Megan Kendig is the Program Manager for Cowlitz County. Her phone number is 360.725.2920 and her email is megan.kendig@commerce.wa.gov. To visit their website, go to: Full URL: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/consolidated-homeless-grant/>.

- **Continuum of Care** is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program to promote community-wide commitment and support to end homelessness. It provides grants to nonprofit agencies, state and local governments through an annual competition. To learn more about this program contact Matt Mazur-Hart, Program Manager at 360.725.2926 or email him at matt.mazur-hart@commerce.wa.gov.
- **ADA Checklist of Emergency Shelters** – (Full URL: <https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7shelterchk.htm>)
- **Northwest ADA Center**
Website: Full URL: www.nwadacenter.org
Toll-Free: 800.949.4232
Email: nwadactr@uw.edu

Promising Practices

Affordable Housing, Accessible Housing and Homelessness

Catholic Charities and Volunteers of America offer Housing First programs for the chronically homeless in Spokane using federal and state tax credits. Catholic Charities of Spokane and Volunteers of America of the Inland Northwest collaborated to build two neighboring 50-unit permanent supportive housing facilities on the 200 block of East Second Avenue in Spokane.

Here is a link to a Housing First article describing the program and funding mechanisms in more detail: (Full URL: <http://www.thefigtree.org/may15/050115housinghomeless.html>)

Catholic Housing Communities

P.O. Box 2253

Spokane, WA 99210-2253

Phone: 509.358.4250 ext. 6183

Toll-Free: 1.800.831.1209

Email: chc@ccspokane.org

Website: Full URL: <https://www.catholiccharitiesspokane.org/housing>

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The Arc of Spokane's Home Ownership Opportunities Program helps individuals with intellectual or developmental disability and their families to navigate the complex process of buying a home. Since 2004, they have helped more than 200 individuals and families purchase safe and affordable housing. For more information contact the Arc of Spokane:

Home Ownership Opportunities

Arc of Spokane

320 E. 2nd Avenue

Spokane, WA 99202

Attn: Theresa Griffith

Phone: 509.328.6326 ext. 8326

Email: tgriffith@arc-spokane.org.

Arc of Spokane Home Ownership Program website:

Full URL: http://www.arc-spokane.org/home_ownership_opportunities

Arc of Spokane website: Full URL <http://www.arc-spokane.org>

HomeChoice Downpayment Assistance Loan Program is offered through the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. It is a down payment assistance and second mortgage loan program for qualified borrowers who have a disability or who have a family member with a disability living with them. It funds up to \$15,000. HomeChoice combines with House Key and Home Advantage first mortgage loan programs. One-on-one counseling is required. Contact:

Downpayment Assistance Loan Programs

Attn: Dietrich Schmitz

1000 2nd Avenue #2700

Seattle, WA 98104

Phone: 206.287.4459

Email: dietrich.schmitz@wshfc.org.

Website: Full URL: <http://www.wshfc.org/buyers/downpayment.htm>

Employment and Transitional Services

Participant Comments

Susan asked if there would be a way for Housing Opportunities of Southwest Washington to work collaboratively with employment providers. Having employment is a key to success if you are in subsidized housing; people need stable employment to become self-sufficient.

A representative with Catholic Community Services talked about their Certified Nursing Assistant program (CNA). They offer training to individuals who are interested in becoming CNAs, which might be an employment option to consider.

Benton Waterous is a Program Manager with Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW). He offered to work with Susan on employment and shared his contact number. Benton announced

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WSW received a grant from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to fund summer employment for youth with disabilities. There are two types of employment; internships and paid employment. Their goal is to serve 220 high school students who have Individual Educational Plans or 504 plans. They are currently recruiting students and working with local employers. If you want more information about this exciting opportunity, he encourages people to give him a call or email him at the numbers listed below.

Benton Waterous, Program Manager
Workforce Southwest Washington
805 Broadway St., Suite 412
Vancouver, WA 98660
Phone: 360.567.3182
Email: bwaterous@workforcesw.org
Website: Full URL: <https://workforcesw.org/>

The workforce system in Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties is led by Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW). Their mission is to prepare and promote a skilled and adaptive workforce for a thriving economy in Southwest Washington. They help job seekers build resumes and develop interview skills; provide training and education; connect job seekers to open jobs and provide referrals to other services like housing and child care.

Tina Ailinger, with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), shared that she has met with Susan to talk about their employment services. Tina encouraged anyone with a disability interested in employment to apply for DVR services. She explained DVR is under the rule of “Order of Selection” which requires them to prioritize services to people who are in most need. Some people who qualify for services will be put on a waitlist and will be served as additional resources become available. For more information on the “Order of Selection” please review “**Order of Selection: Information, Updates, & FAQs**” on the DVR website. (Full URL: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/office-of-the-secretary/order-selection-information-updates-faqs>).

Tina Ailinger, Supervisor
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
711 Vine Street
Kelso, WA 98626
Phone: 360.501.2494
Toll Free: 866.893.1047
Email: tina.ailinger@dshs.wa.gov

Monica, a parent of a high school senior with disabilities, is concerned about services after graduation. Her daughter acquired disabilities and was not born with them. Both her daughter and the family continually deal with many unknowns. Her daughter uses sign language interpreters and experiences low vision. They struggle with learning about employment options, her rights to secondary education and her need for transportation services.

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Damiana Harper, a GCDE Member, who works for the Department of Services for the Blind responded. Unfortunately, like DVR, the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) is also under “Order of Selection”. However, DSB is able to serve youth with our youth service programs. DSB offers a six-week summer program for high school students with paid work experience. After high school graduation, there is the Bridge Program. Damiana is part of the Bridge staff. This is a five-week program over the summer at Eastern Washington University. It prepares students for college and provides experience away from home and living in a dorm. It consists of courses on college life, study and social skills and orientation and mobility lessons. Damiana encouraged Monica to contact Ardell Burns, who is the staff person in the Vancouver office. Ardell can provide more information on how to apply for services. Her contact information is below.

Ardell Burns
Washington Department of Services for the Blind
2214 E. 13th St. Ste. 208
Vancouver, WA 98661
Phone: 360.735.5185
Cell: 360.485.3062
Email: Ardell.burns@dsb.wa.gov

Lacey Cairns with the Arc of Cowlitz County suggested Monica contact her as well. The Arc provides support services for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. In addition to direct services they assist families through their Parent 2 Parent program and they help families find the services they need.

The Arc of Cowlitz County (housed inside Life Works)
Lacey Cairns
Parent 2 Parent (P2P) Program
906 New York Street
Longview, WA 98362
Phone: 360.425.5494
Website: Full URL: <https://www.lifeworkswa.org>

Steven Chapman, Career Specialist, with the Lower Columbia College (LCC) added that any college you attend will have a disability support person on campus to help students navigate through the system. They don’t develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or provide transportation. Yet they provide sign language interpreters, note takers, and audio books for example. The person to contact for LCC is:

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Mary Kate Morgan, Director
Disability Support Services
Lower Columbia College
Administration Center, Room 143
1600 Maple St
Longview, WA 98632
Phone: 360.442.2341
Email: mmorgan@lowercolumbia.edu
Website: Full URL: <https://lowercolumbia.edu/disability/index.php>

Sally, a parent of a child with a disability, is interested in having a college program, similar to **ACHIEVE** offered at Highline College at LCC. The Highline curriculum has been used as a national model and could be replicated. Employment statistics skyrocket for people with disabilities who attend college, even for a couple of classes.

Other Resources for Employment and Transitional Services

ACHIEVE is a comprehensive program partially funded as one of the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) through the Office of Postsecondary Education. **ACHIEVE** is a model demonstration program for Washington. For more information or to schedule an informational meeting call 206.592.3526. **ACHIEVE** is located east of the main Highline College campus at 23835 Pacific Highway S. in Kent Washington. (To visit their website, go to Full URL: <https://achieve.highline.edu/>)

WSU ROAR (Washington State University Responsibility Opportunities Advocacy and Respect) is a two-year inclusive postsecondary education program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The program provides individualized programs of study in education, social skills, and vocational training through person-centered planning. The program will start with 4 students and in year 2, they plan to increase the students to 10. WSU ROAR students will live communally on the Pullman campus during the University's fall and spring semester and complete WSU audit courses with same-aged peers. Most importantly, the WSU ROAR program will welcome young adults with I/DD to be part of the Cougar family experience. For more information, their email address is coe.roar@wsu.edu. Their Facebook page is Full URL: <https://www.facebook.com/WSUROAR/>.

Employment – Best Practices

The Governor's Employer Awards Program is an annual event honoring public, non-profit, and private employers statewide for their exemplary work to recruit, hire, retain, and advance workers with disabilities. Two individual awards are also presented; the Direct Support

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Professional and the Governor's Trophy *in Memory of Carolyn Blair Brown*. The Direct Support Professional award recognizes a job developer/coach who has shown extraordinary ingenuity and drive to create and sustain supported employment opportunities that create jobs. The Governor's Trophy is presented to an individual with a disability who has developed or influenced programs, services, legislation etc. resulting in positive outcomes dramatically enhancing the empowerment of individuals with disabilities. **Nominations will be accepted until August 31st, 2019.** For more information on the Awards Program, visit the GCDE Website: Full URL: <http://esd.wa.gov/gcde>, call Emily Heike at 360.902.9440 or email her at ehike@esd.wa.gov.

Effective Communication

Participant Comments

Shannon Underhill works with the deaf community and knows how difficult it can be to find sign language interpreters. In general, everyone needs more education on who is responsible for hiring interpreters. TILIKUM, formerly known as the Southwest Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, offers free training on how to work with interpreters and how to provide effective communication. Their contact information is:

TILIKUM

301 SE Hearthwood Blvd

Vancouver, WA 98684

Phone: 360.314.6971 (V)

Phone: 360.334.5740 (VP)

Email: grs@tilikum.us

Website: Full URL: <https://www.tilikum.agency/>

Kathleen, a coordinator for the Area Agency on Aging and Disability, advocates for the deaf community. She works with a couple of people who are deaf and legally blind. It is very frustrating when they arrive to a medical appointment and they don't have access to on-site interpreting services.

Many times, sign language interpreters are provided through video remote interpreting (VRI); a fee-based service that uses video conference technology to access an off-site interpreter to provide real-time sign languages or oral interpreting services. They may also use video relay service (VRS); a free, subscriber-based service for people who use sign language and have videophones, smart phones, or computers with video communication capabilities. If you rely on the internet for your communication, it is easy to understand that the quality of the communication can be impacted by poor quality images, pause time for communication and most concerning - the disconnections.

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Note: The Americans with Disabilities Act has specific performance standards that must be met if you use VRI or VRS. Here is a link to their guidance on “Effective Communication” (Full URL: <https://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>)

Employers and co-workers need training on how to work with people who are deaf, deaf-blind and those with hearing loss. It is vitally important for people to be comfortable and accept people for who they are and how they need to communicate.

Elva is an advocate for the deaf community. She is concerned about crisis and emergency planning services. As a deaf person, she cannot hear the warning messages on the radio and may not be watching her television for the emergency bulletins. What is the City of Longview doing to make sure the deaf community is alerted to local emergencies? Do they have a policy in place or action plan to address these concerns?

Captain Deborah Pineda and Elva agreed to meet following the meeting to talk about the issues in more detail.

A meeting participant added that each person is responsible for having an emergency kit on hand - it is a personal responsibility. She recommended that people go online and download the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Checklist, www.emergencykits.com/fema-emergency-kit-supply-checklist. Basically, it is a rather large grab-and-go kit, so you have enough medicine, food and water for 72 hours.

Social Security Disability Benefits

Participant Comments

Dana with Sea Mar Behavioral Health in Kelso works with people who need assistance with filling out the application for Social Security Disability Benefits and legal representation for the appeal process.

Lisa shared that the Northwest Justice Project provides assistance with Social Security terminations and overpayments. Denials are handled by private attorneys. There are two in the area; Teal Parham and Tom O’Neil.

Another resource for Social Security application assistance are staff members with the Department of Social and Health Services. If you are eligible for services, staff can assist with filling out the application for Social Security Benefits if your disability prevents you from filling out the forms.

For additional information on making an application for Social Security Benefits and the appeal process click on the link for the 2018 Red Book (Full URL: <https://www.ssa.gov/redbook>). The 2019 version is not available at the time of this report.

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Educational Services

Participant Comments

Dr. Elizabeth West, Director of Special Education for Longview Public Schools commented that their biggest challenge is dealing with the increase in students between birth and nine who are drug affected. They are seeing an alarming number of children coming into the early learning centers and it is a real challenge.

Chelsea, a parent of a child with a hearing impairment, is concerned about the quality of services her child receives at school. In a meeting to discuss her child's 504 plan, a school representative, who led the meeting, was disrespectful and did not understand her concerns. Chelsea researched her issues and recommendations, but they were not considered.

Dr. West commented that in the Longview School District, 504 plans are developed by the counseling department. It is outside of the Special Education services. She offered to talk with Chelsea following the meeting.

Melany Sheikh is a GCDE Member and a Speech Language Pathologist for a school district. She attends 60 to 70 Individual Education Plan meetings yearly. Each planning team is different. School districts serve a wide spectrum of disabilities and the planning teams have excellent skills for many types of disability but not all types of disability.

Michelle Rodriguez, a Family Support Specialist with the Educational Service District, works with families with children from age three to five. She has several children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). The only option given to these families is medication and the families are concerned about the side effects of the medications. Are there any natural options or different things families can do besides medication?

Evelynn commented that she too is a parent of child with ADHD and her physician recommended a book called *The Kazdin Method of Parenting the Defiant Child*, by Alan E. Kazdin, Ph.D. Evelynn strongly recommends the book.

Another parent shared that he too was resistant to using medication but has found the medication to be beneficial. He also struggles with the IEP process and wishes there were more resources for parents and students. He wants to make sure his son has an equal opportunity to learn.

Star is also a parent of two children; one with ADHD and one who experiences autism. She agrees with the other parents and wants better communication avenues between teachers, specialists and parents. Parents and families need more support services to help guide them through the process.

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Lisa with the Northwest Justice Project added that they can assist with education law. They can provide representation at due process hearings. She works closely with Lacey Cairns at Lifeworks as well. Lisa's contact information is below:

Lisa Waldvogel, Senior Attorney
Northwest Justice Project
1338 Commerce Avenue, Suite 210
Longview, WA 98632
Phone: 360.425.1537 X 0837
Toll Free: .866.402.7971
CLEAR - Client Intake - Toll Free: 888.201.1014
Website: Full URL: <https://nwjustice.org/>

Other Educational Resources

If you are unsatisfied with the service provided, you have a couple of resources available to you. You can connect with the Special Education Parent Liaison. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Special Education Parent Liaison is available as a resource to parents in non-legal special education matters and serves as a neutral and independent advocate for a fair process. The Special Education Parent Liaison does not advocate on behalf of any one party. To contact Scott Raub, the Special Education Parent Liaison, call 360.725.6075

Another resource is the PAVE (Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment). PAVE provides support, training information and resources to empower and give voice to individuals, youth and families impacted by disabilities.

PAVE

6316 So. 12th St.
Tacoma, WA 98465
Phone: 800.5.parent (727368)
Email: pave@wapave.org
Website: Full URL: <https://wapave.org/>

Education – Best Practices

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a unique leadership-training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. The program is in its 19th year of operation. Students serve as delegates from their communities at this six-day, five-night event. Young people with disabilities cultivate their potential leadership, citizenship and social skills. There is no cost to attend. GCDE pays for lodging, meals, transportation and all accommodations. This year the forum will be held at the Dumas Bay Center in Federal Way. The Forum will be held on August 3 - 9, 2019. For more information contact Elaine Stefanowicz.

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Elaine Stefanowicz, Program Coordinator
GCDE
PO Box 9046
Olympia, WA 98507-9046
Phone: 360.902.9362
Email: estefanowicz@esd.wa.gov

Volunteer Programs and Promising Practices

Participant Comments

Ann Swanson with the Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities expressed concerns about older adults with disabilities with little to no family support. These individuals do not meet eligibility criteria for care services through her agency or the Department of Social and Health Services. They are living alone with no supports. Ann would like to see a volunteer program where people would check-in on these folks by phone or in person.

Captain Deborah Pineda explained that her officers often conduct wellness checks - a personal visit to a residence for an individual who is not answering their phone. It is sad, but she often gets calls to help with turning off water, to replace light bulbs or to bring in food. She supports the idea of a volunteer visitation program and would post it on their Facebook page.

Captain Pineda is also concerned about evacuating people who use wheelchairs and other medical equipment. Our community often is at zero ambulance levels and we don't have any way to transport people in a wheelchair. She has even called the PUD staff to help transport a person whose wheelchair batteries died. It sounds crazy but you have to be resourceful and use the services available in the community. Recently there was an apartment fire and it was a cold night. The inhabitants were evacuated, and many were in their night clothes with no shoes or shirts. She called transit and asked them to bring a bus over so people could stay inside and be warm until other arrangements could be made.

Breanne with Catholic Community Services explained that wellness checks are not something they currently do but it may be something they could work on. The first thing we would need is to establish a pool of volunteers.

Lower Columbia CAP (Community Action Program) operates a volunteer program called R.U.O.K (are you ok)? It is a free, daily check in service for individuals who live alone. They also provide a variety of services to area seniors and person with disabilities including energy assistance, food, Meals on Wheels, transportation and other support services. Some programs require eligibility related to age or income levels.

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Lower Columbia CAP (Community Action Program)
1526 Commerce Avenue
Longview, WA 98632
Website: Full URL: www.LowerColumbiaCAP.org

Another participant suggested we consider using Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts as part of the volunteer pool. Part of their core requirements are to provide volunteer services.

Susan facilitates a community network called Community Resource Providers (CRP). It is a group of service providers who meet every other month to share program updates, needs and concerns. She also manages a listserv and sends out emails to everyone who participates. It is a great way to get information out about upcoming meetings, program updates and local success stories. She encourages everyone to send her information and she would make sure it was distributed to her group. Susan's email address is Susan.marion@hoswwa.org.

Zach, an AmeriCorps member, shared that volunteering and helping others is the backbone of the AmeriCorps program. Troy Packard is the Program Director. His phone number is 360.577.5859 ext. 222. His email is troypackard@lifeworkswa.org. If you want more information, click on the link (Full URL: <https://servewashington.wa.gov/cowlitz-ameri-corps-network>).

Steven Chapman with LCC offered to talk with the college president to see if the college could host a volunteer pool for students or post volunteer opportunities on their website. They could market these volunteer opportunities as a great way to start a career.

A meeting participant added that many agencies exist to help people in need. Tonight, we have been talking about a lot of programs that can provide the needed assistance, but people don't seem to know that the services exist or how to make connections. He heard a lot of people talking about being helpless. He expressed concerns about the disconnect between services and people who need them.

Local Resources

Participant Comments

Michael shared that **People First of Cowlitz County** is an advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Meetings are held at Life Works from 12:30 to 1:30 pm. They work with the community and the police and fire departments to find better ways to partner with the disability community. They have state conventions and lobby days in Olympia. To find out when the next meeting is scheduled, call Life Works at 360.577.9093.

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

One person described the benefits of **Pathways 2020**. It is a healthy lifestyles coalition which developed trail maps for 16 local trails to walk and in some cases to bicycle. The trails are fairly accessible. Pathways needs help from the disability community to identify which trails are the most accessible. They want people to review parking areas and trail surfaces for accessibility. They are starting to work on the Six River Trails and could use more input from the disability community. They are looking for volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved, call 360.423.8704.

Local Resources Best Practice

Sequim Wheelers - Free Community Service



Photo 5: Sequim Wheelers

Sequim Wheelers, a nonprofit 501(c)(3), is the fifth program of this kind in the US. They offer FREE wheelchair bike rides on a [Duet Wheelchair Bicycle](#) to our elderly and disabled community members, including children. Trained volunteers provide 45 minutes to one-hour long rides on the [Olympic Discovery Trail](#) (Full URL: <https://olympicdiscoverytrail.org/>) in Sequim. Their goal is to build an inclusive community where everyone can enjoy our amazing Trail without the limitations of physical capabilities. If you have questions contact Nicole Lepping, founder, at sequimwheelers@yahoo.com.

Leadership Breakfast Exercise

The following morning 40 people attended the Leadership Breakfast representing elected officials, service providers and leaders in the disability community to brainstorm solutions for the issues

discussed at the Town Hall Forum. The outreach



Photo 4: Leadership Breakfast attendees

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

team reviewed and rated the topics discussed and identified the top three issues:

- 1) Volunteer programs need to be expanded to decrease service gaps
- 2) Pedestrian crossing time in the timing algorithms for crosswalks must increase (improve or create) the safe crossing at signaled intersections.
- 3) A robust community resource and education system needs to be created

Participants were led through a modified “Gallery Walk”; a group exercise requiring participants to be actively engaged in a problem-solving process for three corresponding questions. The exercise provides opportunities to share ideas, review comments from other participants, prioritize issues and work towards possible solutions.

Question # 1 Building upon the need to decrease the service gaps, how might a volunteer program be developed and coordinated?

Listing of the Brainstorming Ideas

- Even hard to get employees who are paid
- Lack of sense of community
- Where to go?
- 211 – Can ask about services
- CAP (Community Access)
- Housing Opportunities for Southwest Washington (Susan) has Community Partners Network (CPN) meeting every two months
- List Serve
- Government services – website needs updating – add page
- Kelso resource center in mall (S. Kelso 501 3c)
- Find funding source to support a way to connect
- Match volunteers/skill set with appropriate opportunities to volunteer
- Recognize current resources (ACAC, Scouts, AmeriCorps, HS Senior Projects, Community Resource Provider Mtg)
- Identify gaps in service
- Start with above
- Schedule a town hall meeting etc.
- Online surveys (Alt. formats)
- Resource Fairs
- Events
- School Open House
- Sporting Events
- Churches, other
- Small group (collaborative) Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington, other?
- ID service gaps and define what volunteer activities would be
- Increase county leadership (Homeless TIF)

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

- Volunteers need to know expectations
- Have a resource for resources (i.e., Clark program to connect services or volunteer opportunities)
- Build centralized data base of resources
- Central place to go to – to find all resources with and educate to help
- Create a volunteer center
- Use high school students (high school projects)
- State independent living center (SILC)
- School service hours - use to volunteer – generate hours
- Faith based – solicit and organize
- CAP
- RSVP
- Extension Office
- Single agency to reach out to volunteer service groups
- Reach out to youth volunteers
- Local RSVP group (retired seniors)
- Need governing body for volunteer base
- AmeriCorps community coordinator position for help for elderly/disabled people
- Get with girl scout/boy scout groups
- Parent advocacy groups
- Ways to tell community about volunteer opportunities
- Volunteer Fair at college

Pathways for Change

Carla-Jo Whitson is going to connect with Susan Marion with the Housing Opportunities for Southwest Washington. Susan facilitates a networking group that meets bi-monthly to share ideas and get some feedback and buy-in.

Jim Hill and MaryAlice Wallis represent the city councils for Kelso and Longview. We are going to communicate with CCAP asking if they would be willing to host a Town Hall meeting, similar to the one we just participated in. The goals of the meeting are to explore ways to coordinate with existing volunteer programs and to identify an agency that would be willing to host or disseminate information.

Steve Chapman is going to talk with Christopher Bailey, President of the Lower Columbia College to see if they can post volunteer opportunities on the college's website or if students wanting to volunteer can post their name with a volunteer pool.

This group plans to get back together on January 15th to get updates on the work accomplished and develop the next steps. Email contacts were shared with people at the table.

People who volunteered to coordinate work efforts and keep the discussion moving forward are:

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

- MaryAlice Wallis, Councilmember
City of Longview Washington
1525 Broadway
PO Box 128
Longview, WA 98632
Cell: 360.430.2517
Email: maryalice.wallis@mylongview.com
Email: maryalice.wallis@ci.longview.wa.us
- Steven A. Chapman, Career Specialist
Lower Columbia College
1600 Maple St.
PO Box 3010
Longview, WA 98632
Email: schapman@lcc.ctc.edu
- Carla-Jo Whitson, LICSW, MSW CBIS, Resource Manager-Southwest Region, Brain Injury Alliance of Washington
PO Box 3044 Seattle, WA 98114 or
PO Box 65244 Vancouver, WA 98665
Cell 360.991.4928
Resource line 877.98.BIAWA (982-4282)
Email: CarlajoW@biawa.org;

Question # 2 To improve the safety of pedestrians, how could the timing on crosswalk signals be changed to provide additional time for a safe crossing?

Listing of the Brainstorming Ideas

- More time – public works traffic engineers – costs money
- Agile person cannot do
- Standard out there
- Signal priority station
 - Signals know bus is there – needs grant
 - Push button
 - 30th and Ocean Beach to get on bus
 - Couple years have added lights – etc. helps
- Add cameras back in school zones
- Add to question – mid block cross walks, not safe and some going in 3rd and Hudson truck route (interstate)
- Commitment to invest
- Public form awareness and discussion

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

- Involve city-analysis of timing – establish baseline of time to determine increase
- What is “best practice?” Compare with similar sized cities
- Lights, sound, motion, timing, color revisions?
- “Walk and stroll” trials
- Dedicated pedestrian areas – no cars allowed
- Use people with disabilities to help define the amount of time needed to set crosswalks
- Motion sensors for pedestrians (visual/auditory)
- Talk to City for change
- More blinking lights/crosswalks
- Overpass for pedestrians
- Traffic cameras
- Advocacy groups need to mobilize and speak out directly to city councils
- ACAC – sending members to the city to advocate needs
- Letter writing, email, phone campaign
- Have elected officials spend a day as someone with a disability (i.e., in a chair/vision impaired)
- Pressure state legislature to change laws and allow private groups to help improve public areas
- Improve timing
 - All-red intervals
 - Yellow light timing
- Improve signals/lights/signage/countdown lights/flashers
- Improve lighting
- Improve signage
- Pedestrian/bicyclist options
 - Orange clothing
 - Reflective clothing
 - Flags
 - Educational campaign

Pathways for Change

Brian Loos agreed to talk with Jeff Cameron, City of Longview Public Works Director to explore possible solutions. Jeff’s phone number is 360.442.5221 or his email address is jeff.cameron@ci.longview.wa.us.

Other people to connect with are:

Randy Johnson, City of Kelso Public Works Superintendent
Phone: 360.577.3360
Email: rjohnson@kelso.gov

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

Jason Gorans, City of Kelso
Traffic Tech
Phone: 360.423.5730
Email: jgorans@kelso.gov

Tabitha is going to meet with the local radio station and incorporate a public service announcement about pedestrian safety.

Additional small group discussion generated the following possible solutions and action items:

- River Cities Transit
 - Lanyards
 - Flashing Lights
 - Will give bus passes
- PSA
 - Police – Protective Clothing
 - Radio Ads
- Ilani
 - Brian – PWD – Jeff Cameron
 - Sharon – County – Mike Moss
 - Tabitha – Pedestrian Safety on Tuesday
 - Tabitha – Tabitha@RCTransit.org

Listed below are articles and resources addressing pedestrian safety and traffic signals

- **Making Traffic Signals Fair for Pedestrians** – (Full URL: <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2018/06/19/making-traffic-signals-fair-for-pedestrians>)



Photo 6: Pedestrian Beacon HAWK (High Intensity Activated crosswalk) in the City of Wenatchee

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Funding** – Washington State Department of Transportation, (Full URL: <https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/ATP/funding.htm>)
- A Checklist for Accessible Sidewalks and Street Crossings (Full URL: http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/Checklist_Accessible_Sidewalks_Crossings.pdf)
- **Note:** Walla Walla is a similar sized community and they are using a rapid flashing beacon (RFB) system to improve pedestrian safety. A typical RFB system includes a push button that activates rapid, irregularly flashing lights mounted on each side of the crosswalk, and sometimes in the center island. The lights are combined with a prominent yellow pedestrian sign. Because RFBs do not require in-pavement wiring or light modules, they are cheaper to install and maintain, and less likely to malfunction or fail.
- Washington State Department of Transportation provides grant funding to cities and counties that have adopted a Complete Streets ordinance. For more information on Complete Streets and which cites have received funding visit (Full URL: <http://wstc.wa.gov/Meetings/Documents/0912-BP12-CompleteStreets2019.pdf>).

Question # 3 Given the need to improve disability networking, what would the first steps be in building a community education and resource system?

Listing of the Brainstorming Ideas

- Awareness of resources disabilities
- Outreach
- Umbrella – Coordinated system – portal site for information
- Intergenerational supports old-young
- Pro-active vs. Re-active (knowing where to go)
- Diversity in disability – (cultural, race, gender, ethnicity) awareness and responsivity
- Reduce soiling
- Develop and maintain community resource guide – give to list of community groups
- Use social media to do list of community groups and resource guide
- Designate person and timeframe to check in with community agencies for updates to available services
- Distribute mailing list/social media
- Volunteer contingency that can do quarterly check-ins with most isolated folks
- Parent/family “champions for the cause” to spread info to their networks
- Match making web site (swipe right/left) – plug in info/demographics about yourself and it matches you to best fit resources
- Similar to “Uber” – get a ride app
- Get grant – research grant apps

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

- Research other community ideas
- ID CAP or other responsible HUB
- ID Existing (educational opportunities/resources/events/outreach/resource pairs/ability expo)
- Sign up for events
- ID and grow local advocate leadership (write/encourage connection)
- Coordinate existing groups
- Community Resource System (where to go/coordinate)
- Dedicate some MONEY
- Website would direct them (updating January)
- Council Resource Network – UNK – printed book
- Don't reinvent – print more and consolidate
- Person to handle
- Improve existing
- Provide public service announcements
- Social media
- Have coalitions – now bring them together
- Closest in city is transit
- The library system
- Not hard task
- 211
- Work Source – Under utilized
 - Disability Coordinator
 - Vet Coordinator
 - Youth Programs/Employment
 - Big Network with Multiple Services
- Look at other communities to see how they address issue
- Community Resource Book
- WorkSource ID's Employers who accommodate
 - Disability Employment – 2nd Change Employment for Youth/Adults with Criminal History
 - Building a Community Education Program for Reentry

Pathways for Change

This group was very large and dynamic and it was really exciting to hear everybody's comments. Most everyone in the group has a list of resources they use but the information is siloed. Discussion started on what a centralized data resource would look like.

Evelynn Marquez decided she would champion this project. Everyone will gather their resource information and share it with Evelynn. Meeting attendees who did not participate in this group were encouraged to send their resources to Evelynn as well. Evelynn's email address is marqueze@co.cowlitz.wa.us.

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

Evelynn would like all of the resource information to her by December 15th. She is contacting Pathways 2020 and Community Outreach as they are known to have community listings. This compilation of local resources will be an excellent starting point. Evelynn set a deadline to have this information collected by January 2019.

The group plans to apply to GCDE for grant money to support the upkeep of the data. They are also exploring if there is an app designed to help updating a resource database. Funding is essential to keep the listings current as the community has developed resource listings in the past, but they could not be maintained. The resource listing will include a description of the services the organization offers, hours of operation, and any program eligibility if required.

A meeting participant added that Council Member Mike Wallin is interested in working with this group.

Small Group's Solution Brainstorming process

- ACAC group lead pool resources in
- Sharon – health dept., LCC, etc., more accessible for people with disabilities
- Man power down
- Sharon lion share work – not fair
- Committee formed to take it on
- ACAC staff support? Don't know
- Compile together as group effort
- Cowlitz resource provider meeting
 - LV Housing authenticity every other month
 - Susan Marion @ housing opportunity is chair – clearing house for the type
 - Round robin what agency doing
- Move in place
- List serv – sends out info
- Big email list – bring more people in
- Pet project get at to everyone
- Project Homeless Connect – Evelyn will send meeting info to others or contact Suzie
- Resource Guide for whole city link to guide
 - Cowlitz County Website
- Info changes update
- Resource and what program provides
- Type in need and tell me what resource 211 does that resource matching
- Need resources given to us so we know what to include
- 211 for people with disabilities and aging
- Agency on Aging
- Database created in our office will have a DVR list of resources based on what is inputted
- Take all agencies resources and combine into a centralized database
- Challenge will be buzz words (searches older folks vs. younger big differences)

Kelso/Longview, Washington Outreach Summary

- Data base
- Housing – breakdown each big top, housing senses – religious/increase banners can't be on 211 don't meet criteria
- Can't assume all have computers
- Clark – book has ads goes out quarterly
- Most agencies seemed to try to direct those in need to best resources Arc, parent to parent
- License navigator – put in right direction community health partners – can plug info other services
- Library – national hub for resources – still barriers – accessible/computer senior centers

Project Coordinator - Evelynn – marqueze@co.cowlitz.wa.us

- Send resources
- Jan – reached out to Pathway 2020/community outreach
- Get her resources by Dec. 15

Action Plan

- Gather resources
- Get all resources to Evelynn by Dec. 15
- She'll reach out to other groups by Jan 1
- Evelynn is champion
- Apply to GCDE to distribute information or explore app use
- Finding/resources dedicated to up keeping?
- Idea about splitting out task under resources to check to make sure updated (i.e., give housing topic to a person in that discipline)

Below are a couple of articles and resources addressing community resource guides.

- How to Create a Community Resource Guide – (Full URL: <http://www.techsoupforlibraries.org/blog/how-to-create-a-community-resource-guide>)
- San Juan Islands Community Resource Guide - (Full URL: <https://sjiscommunityresource.org>)