



STATE OF WASHINGTON

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT

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*Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment (GCDE)*

**General Membership Zoom Meeting**

**May 13, 2022, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**Minutes**

- 10:02 a.m.    **Meeting Called to Order** – Damiana Harper, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair*
- i. Welcome of GCDE Members – Damiana Harper, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair*
    - a. *On behalf of GCDE Chair Pat Bauccio and GCDE Co-Vice Chair Warren Weissman*
    - b. *Present: Damiana Harper, Laurie Schindler, Lucas Doelman, Kevin Frankeberger, Pat Bauccio, Matt Nash, Christa Hewitt, Ryan Bondroff, Emily Heike, Karen Atwood, Warren Weissman, Clarence Eskridge, Daniel Ledgett, Patti Dailey-Shives, Carolyn Cole, Nate Hoston, Megan Mason-Todd, Bill Kinyon, Marsha Cutting, Rick Hauan, Cullyn Foxlee, Yvonne Bussler-White, Andy Song, Cheryl Strobert, Larry Gorton, Kristin DiBiase, Elizabeth Gordon, Kim Conner, Caleb Baldwin, Bev Young Reed, Shelby Satko, Alfie Alvarado, Courtney Williams, Melanie Smith, Sunshine Cheng, accommodation providers (Connie Church, Tami Berk, Mike Kosanovich)*
  - ii. Approval of the Meeting Agenda – Damiana Harper, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair*
    - a. Kevin moves to approve, Patti seconds
  - iii. House Keeping – Damiana Harper, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair* – *pertinent items were reviewed such as how to turn on captions, who to contact for technical difficulties, how to turn on your video, how to raise your hand, how to mute, when to use the chat, and to state your name before speaking*
- 10:20 a.m.    **GCDE Chair's Report** – Damiana Harper, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair* - Damiana reported on items covered in a memo sent earlier in the week by Pat, including:
- 1) There is a need for delegates for YLF – deadline May 31, distribute apps

- 2) We need swag to give the youth – coordinate donations of 50 items with Elaine
- 3) We will have a need for new members upcoming, help us find great candidates for recruitment in the Fall
- 4) Submit a nomination for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor’s Employer Awards recognizing businesses and individuals with inclusive practices by August 25<sup>th</sup>, the application is in your meeting packets
- 5) The subcommittee work is important, please contribute your talents by actively participating, joining meetings, and taking on tasks
- 6) Please attend our thrice-yearly General Membership meetings in May, October, and January – we publish our yearly calendar at the start of the year to aid in scheduling conflict resolutions, absences communicated in advance are acceptable, as long as they do not become a pattern

10:30 a.m.

**Executive Director's Report** – Elizabeth Gordon, *GCDE Executive Director* – Elizabeth shared and fielded questions regarding the Universal Basic Income Pilot Workgroup she participated in, stated that there is a proviso and the work conducted with partners is concluding, an evidence-based report is scheduled to be released in late June. A question was asked regarding impacts on SSI/SSDI benefits and Elizabeth shared that there will be recommendations to protect them at the federal level. A question was posed about providing a waiver for housing assistance instead of funds and Elizabeth shared that there are various models available, but the decision was made to use the least restrictive model. A comment was made about the impacts of the raised state minimum wage and the need to look at things with a wholistic viewpoint. A comment was made about the need to consider child support obligations. A comment was made about it being a potential disincentive to work. A comment was made about the impacts a tax incentive would have and the need to consider housing values.

Another comment was shared about an autism hiring program at DSHS designed to highlight best practices. A comment was shared about the continued barriers faced.

Elizabeth also shared that the session would be discussed in more detail, but highlighted the recent changes to the Open Public Meetings Act for now. Our meetings will now be recorded, materials will be published online, and public comment periods had, effective June 6.

Finally, Elizabeth shared that we continue to be involved in the work on the RETAIN grant nationally to impact early intervention for workers injured outside of work.

10:45 a.m.

**Round Robin Quick Check-in** – Damiana Harper, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair* – members were called upon and asked to share where they were born, whether they have any siblings, and one other interesting fact about themselves to get to know one another

- 11:05 a.m.     **10 Minute Break** (shortened to 5 minutes in the interest of time)
- 11:15 a.m.     **Office of Equity Presentation** – Carolyn Cole, *Assistant Director, Equity, Access & Belonging, Office of Equity* – Carolyn introduced herself and shared about Executive Order 22-04 to create a Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) plan for state agencies and other organizations. She shared that it is a decision-making lens for government and beyond. Her intent was to share it with the group and find ways to partner. It will include disability. She shared the values, services lines, determinants, and outcomes in a draft 1-pager document. Also included were the vision, mission, values, goals, and methodology. Key was the overlap in the framework between various marginalized communities magnifying issues. They will be leading with racial justice but addressing intersectionality, as the issues are not separate. The end goal is to end in eliminating disparities. It will be a statewide system. The plan will include actionable items. Language and disability access and accommodations, among others, are in scope. Everything from training, to websites, to documents, to interpreters, to support, to employment will be addressed. It will be a vehicle for legislation and coordinated efforts. It will both be for workplaces as well as the public. The goal is to have a shared vision. The focus on racism will not be to the exclusion of anything else. They want to find out who is not represented and bring people together to hear the stakeholder’s voice.
- 12:00 p.m.     **30 Minute Lunch Break**
- 12:30 p.m.     **Quick Check-in Activity** – Ryan Bondroff, *GCDE Staff* – members were asked to raise their hands and share about a situation that led to their involvement with GCDE
- 1:15 p.m.     **Panel Discussion – 2022 Legislative Session Wrap and Upcoming 2023 Session** – Elizabeth Gordon, *GCDE Executive Director* (Moderator)

Panel Members are:

1. Courtney Williams, Executive Director for Community Employment Alliance (CW)
2. Melanie Smith, Contract Lobbyist for NAMI-WA (MS)
3. Alfie Alvarado-Ramos, WA State Department of Veterans Affairs (AA)
4. Sunshine Cheng, Public Policy Fellow, Disability Rights Washington (SC)

Panelists were asked a series of questions and allowed time to answer.

*Question 1: What were the biggest takeaways for your organization from this session?*

**CW, CEA:** works with a lot of DDA providers, 1) statewide school-to-work transition program, working with a lot of stakeholders such as DVR, OSPI, and school districts on implementation in the system, thinks it is a great step forward in our employment first state to act as a bridge, 2)

rate study for providers as a result of the request for increased rates, working with a number of providers to learn the system and the impacts on providers and recipients of services

**AA, DVA:** HB 1181 for Veteran's suicide funding, it is a community issue that will require a lot of work and data collection, including on persons with disabilities, also, there is an enormous caregiving crisis, they are working on Nursing Assistant incentives, as well as addressing homelessness and its deeper roots

**SC, DRW:** Works on a lot of issues, from transportation to citizen advocacy and prison reform, cross-disability advocacy, main one was 5793 for workgroup compensation, and preventing 1141 for removing barriers to the Death with Dignity Act which many see as removing protections that would disproportionately harm persons with disabilities, there is a study for it in the budget in 2023

**MS, NAMI:** has lots of priorities during this short session, 1) surprise billing, out of network providers, worked with the OIC to supplement the 2019 bill about balance billing, for an emergency ER trip for example, federal bill in 2020, working to square up the two, as well as which behavioral health facilities are covered, emergency clause – went into effect immediately without having to wait for passage and implementation, 2) the budget for behavioral health, investments long overdue, focus on prevention and early intervention, including access and targeted need, 3) housing, particularly permanent supportive housing and assistance

*Question 2: What was the biggest surprise?*

**SC, DRW:** 1802 Nothing About Us Without Us didn't pass, requires representation of persons with disability on any workgroup etc., need to have stronger support, lived experience, and broader representation in the community

**MS, NAMI:** Expansion of high school health classes to include behavioral health, address the youth mental health crisis during the pandemic, in the end was viewed as a tradeoff between physical education (P.E.) classes and faced opposition there, resulting in no votes, need to evaluate the role of education in personal wellbeing and understanding/knowledge, 2) provision of prescribing psychologists with the appropriate education and credentials, versus in behavioral health having two providers, one for therapy and another for medication, there was no hearing due to a capacity issue, believes need to consider the who and how of care delivery

**AA, DVA:** 1592 regarding military spouse employment, DOL/DOH/LNI prioritize licensing for work ASAP in healthcare, have persons with disabilities in their family, could practice in WA

**CW, CEA:** surprised that the provider rate increase made it into a bill and not a temporary proviso, need time and study of need, 5790 remains, rate study, to examine structure, lots of bills passed that impact the DD/IDD system, need effective implementation critically, will be hosting a Town Hall for Employment Service Providers, counties, individuals receiving services, all will be impacted, need a stakeholder response, when legislation is passed to address unmet needs, advocacy and policy need to be shaped to meet them

*Question 3: How can we help?*

**SC, DRW:** Bring back Nothing About Us Without Us, bring your support, presence, help us with outreach and expansion into other communities, will be a meeting tomorrow, invite other

**AAR, DVA:** help with strategic agenda building, ensure needs are met via funding, expanding capacity, and quality, access to childcare, and changes to system access

**CW, CEA:** help us address systemic underfunding, flaws in system design, needs of communities are competing, help us have our voices heard from stakeholder input, have the timeline/vision to shape policy to work for all, no silos

**MS, NAMI:** help with continuation of 2021 legislation, 988 crisis response system, starting July 1 the hotlines will transition, is a first step, will have to transition, to appropriate crisis response mechanism, build out, need for broad and comprehensive support, a consumer advocacy office for access to services, better experience for HCA claims, ensured payment, and connection to services, behavioral health ombuds similar to the LTC or DD ombuds to ensure patient rights are respected in facilities, slated to go into effect in October, will be follow up regarding office's needs, could have the potential to alter the future of service delivery

*DRW Fielded question re: support on 1802:* the expansion strategy was a group decision, to buildup support of the coalition, embody communities underserved, allow for funding of underrepresented groups, is a natural next step to remove barriers, who should be represented, careful about the language used, not excluding anyone, seats for all at the table, no language yet

*CEA Fielded question on rate increase:* what happened with the CRP rate setting policy, hourly versus outcome based, is there anything that can be done to mitigate, clarification that there is no policy yet, simply a rate study, which could then open doors, directed to DDA, found underfunding, under compensation, looking at consumer price index, report will be issues in October, have from March-October for study, CEA is a part of that

*DVA fielded question on labor shortage:* and the impacts on previous legislation implementation, work, or ideas needed, having a meeting with the nursing commission, creatively broadening the field, lots found that basic caregiving was not for them during the pandemic, the wages are not worth the risk or time involved, no longer in the field, it is an emergent need and you can't manifest providers where there are none, looking at working with immigrant communities, getting them into careers, paying for training, providing incentives, is a national issue not just local, requires looking internationally

*NAMI adds* has an impact on mental health, workforce involvement issue, 1) the cultural value on service and caregiving, and living wages, need for parity, compensate providers commensurately, ensure insurance can be accepted without so much effort, get rid of the complicated mechanics that make insurance hard to accept, it isn't easy and many end up out of network, creating a shortage, needs to be fixed

*CEA adds* echoes previous sentiments, the pandemic highlighted the issue, the value of employment service providers and human services, and their effects on infrastructure, is chronically underfunded, needs aren't met, needs to change, rate low in care, need to listen

*DRW adds* we need to transform systems, behavioral health specifically, people are underpaid and undertrained, need a thriving wage

*Participant comment:* We need to change attitudes about disability in the culture, end the culture of self-reliance and negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities, address direct service provider pay rates for individual supported employment, minimum wage versus decent rates disparity, ensure the skills match the wage, remove disparity in pay between agencies doing the same job and qualifications, aren't "just" serving people with disabilities, don't require a lower level of services, rather more skill, knowledge, training, challenge that mindset, advocate about the value, contributions etc., build relationships on top of providing information, share experiences

*Fielded question about drivers license designations:* there is ones for Deaf or hard of hearing, they are optional, can be shared with law enforcement, may be one for Developmental Disability or Disability as well, is a workgroup on the topic, a database, can provide info to DOL, if you have a disability that may be perceived as something else such as neurodivergence, can make changes for free as recommended by the group

*Question: are we headed in the right direction legislatively for people with disabilities –* comments: yes, we are more aware of the issues of persons with disabilities, making progress, have a disability caucus, there are champions, despite the complexities, personal experiences, and divides, some consistency, bipartisan support, can increase effectiveness if we work together differently, use a friendly approach, the makeup of the legislature is very different than it once was, this is very foundational, there are working parents, members of the BIPOC community and the working class, the Lt. Gov. Cyrus Habib made a difference, the system was not previously configured in an accessible way until 2016, showcases the power of accommodations, statewide something that can be referred back to as an example in the future, the past two years have proven that increased access is possible, things can be done smoothly, no exceptions, no more room for favoritism, address comments in order, keeps things fair and effective

*Members were thanked for their participation and partnership, we will be reaching out in the future and sharing any materials*

2:30 p.m.      **10 Minute Break**

2:40 p.m.      **Human Centered Design Activity** – William Kinyon, *GCDE Legislative Workgroup Lead* – Bill shared information on Human Centered Design via a described shared screen, noted that we will be using a shared communication strategy of chat and verbal comments, Elizabeth will read things aloud, curious as to what's not working and ideas to improve, used to be one person who dealt with legislation (executive director) but now members are encouraged to get involved, there is a

*more organized strategy to do so, a place to have impact, an opportunity to have impact, HCD is both a system an philosophy, gets to input and ideas wants, includes users and recipients of services, extroverted people benefit in brainstorming, quiet people have ideas too, this way it is simultaneous, ideas from all, eventually get to implementation, will be asking some questions to get perspective on equity and access locally, using the Rose/Bud/Thorn exercise*

*\*Note you can share your comments to the LWG via Bill anytime*

<i>Rose: positives in legislation or policy?</i>	<i>Thorn: what isn't working and could be addressed?</i>	<i>Bud: ideas that haven't been considered yet?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-elimination of subminimum wage</li> <li>-formation of GCDE</li> <li>-stipends for workgroup reimbursement</li> <li>-hearing aid benefit</li> <li>-WA constitutional prohibition on disability discrimination</li> <li>-bringing Nothing About Us Without Us forward</li> <li>-Driver's license designations</li> <li>-GCDE's Leg. Workgroup (LWG)</li> <li>-ACAC funding from GCDE</li> <li>-Public closed captioning requirement</li> <li>-stronger lobbying</li> <li>-listening sessions</li> <li>-sharing of lived experiences</li> <li>-Colville outreach events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of resources</li> <li>-Siloed systems</li> <li>-Lack of data sharing</li> <li>-quality of captions</li> <li>-Lack of mainstream interest in issues</li> <li>-Isolation in rural communities</li> <li>-Lack of accessible transport</li> <li>-Scarce home caregivers</li> <li>-Communication challenges</li> <li>-Lack of adequate infrastructure</li> <li>-Lack of affordable housing</li> <li>-Reluctance to hire PWD</li> <li>-Difficulty in compromises</li> <li>-Government has outdated accessibility equipment</li> <li>-Lack of Braille/large print</li> <li>-Waiting lists for voc. Rehab.</li> <li>-Caregiving insufficiently funded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Established ISE budget</li> <li>-Established RA budget</li> <li>-Caregiver cooperatives</li> <li>-Education about disability</li> <li>-All agencies reporting disability statistics</li> <li>-PR campaign to promote PWD</li> <li>-removal of employment barriers and stereotypes</li> <li>-Increased access to services</li> <li>-State and federal govt. communication</li> <li>-Tax incentives for family caregivers</li> <li>-Better pay/benefits for interpreters</li> <li>-Universal design in education</li> <li>-Funding for DB support services</li> <li>-improve availability and reduce costs of healthcare services</li> <li>-training re: ADA/RA for supervisors</li> </ul>

*These ideas will be combined, analyzed for themes and ways to address, prioritized (LWG)*

3:40 p.m.     **Closing Remarks & Next Steps** – Warren Weissman, *GCDE Co-Vice Chair* – reminder: we need YLF delegates and SWAG, nominations for awards, meetings will be recorded, read Elizabeth’s legislative report and panel comments, many will be leaving the committee and we need more recruitment, will be sharing the output of our prior activity, next meeting will be on October 28, thanks to everyone for your participation, please take the survey

3:45 p.m.     **Meeting Adjourns**

*Next General Membership Meeting will be on October 28, 2022*