

2023

**NYS APSE EMPLOYMENT FIRST  
TRAINING INSTITUTE**

November 7-8, 2023

Lake George, NY





On behalf of the New York State APSE Board of Directors, we welcome you to New York State APSE's 2023 Employment First Training Institute. It is great to have everyone back together in beautiful Lake George!

We are excited to be part of a national organization with over 2,000 members that supports Employment First to facilitate the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace and community. New York is one of 38 state chapters belonging to a strong national office based in the Maryland/DC area.

This year's theme is "*Creating Connections: Tools, Tips and Strategies*". We have over 20 learning sessions designed specifically for the Employment Services Professional. There is no one size fits all approach to supporting someone in achieving employment success. For this reason, we hope you participate, network, and listen to colleagues as well as sharing your own experiences with others. We are always stronger together!!

Sincerely,

*Jim Scutt*

Jim Scutt

New York State APSE President

[www.apse.org](http://www.apse.org)

# Conference Highlights

**Silent Auction:** New York State APSE will again feature a Silent Auction. Items will be available for your preview and bid on **Tuesday at 7:30pm** in the Carriage House at the Fort William Henry Hotel. The proceeds from the auction allows NYS APSE to provide scholarships and financial support for training events throughout the year.

**50/50 Raffle:** Take a chance at winning half the earnings of the raffle ticket sales. Ticket prices are 1 for \$1.00, 3 for \$2.00, or \$5.00 for an arm's length. The drawing will take place at prior to the **APSE State-of-the-State Update**.

**Karaoke:** Join us in the Carriage House on Tuesday at 8:00pm for an evening of fun. Please consider sharing your talents with fellow conference attendees. A cash bar will be available for your enjoyment.

**State Agency Updates:** Join representatives from ACCES-VR, OPWDD, OMH, NYS Chief Disability Officer, and NYSCB as they provide information on local and state-wide initiatives and the future of Employment Supports and Services in New York State.

**Meet and Greet:** Meet the people behind the scenes at NYS CASE, Innovations, and a variety of employment services professionals from across the state.

**Conference Evaluation:** Please complete the pink overall conference evaluation form and return it to the registration table at the completion of the conference to be entered into a gift card drawing.

# 2023 New York State APSE Employment First Training Institute Day One

## Tuesday November 7

8:00	<b>Conference Center Foyer: Registration and Continental Breakfast</b>				
9:00-10:30	<b>Lake George North/South Room</b> <b>Opening Keynote: <i>Creating Blue Space for All</i>, Hanns Meissner</b>				
10:30-10:45	<b>Fort Edward Room</b> <b>Resource Tables and Break- Coffee/Tea Available</b>				
10:45-12:00 <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Lake George North</b>  Developing Capacity as a Social Innovator  <b>H. Meissner</b>	<b>Lake George South</b>  ACCES- VR Update  <b>L. Schramm</b>	<b>Albany Room</b>  Updates from National APSE  <b>E. Belois-Pacer</b>	<b>Long Lake Room</b>  Multiple Pathways to Employment  <b>R. Statham</b>	<b>Tupper Lake Room</b>  Simply Hiring BIPOC Youth is not a Diversity Strategy  <b>D. Campbell</b>
12:00-1:30	<b>Carriage House</b> <b>Lunch and Acknowledgments</b>				
1:45-3:00 <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Lake George North</b>  Standards of Excellence of Community Based Worksites within School Systems  <b>N. Villani</b>	<b>Lake George South</b>  Using Virtual Reality for Vocational Exploration  <b>M. Barry/R. Peiris</b>	<b>Albany Room</b>  Social Security Disability Benefits- Case Studies  <b>M. Russo</b>	<b>Long Lake Room</b>  Building Supports for Employee Growth While Improving Services  <b>J. Kelly /K. Snyder</b>	<b>Tupper Lake Room</b>  Ethics and The Now Normal  <b>A.Scott/W. Quarles</b>
3:00-3:15	<b>Fort Edward Room</b> <b>Resource Tables and Break- Iced Tea/Lemonade Available</b>				
3:15-4:30 <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Lake George North</b>  Making the Business Case: DEIA as a Business Engagement Strategy  <b>J. Tamburo</b>	<b>Lake George South</b>  Worker Retention Services (ACCES-VR/NYSCB)  <b>J. Geiger/J. Sullivan</b>	<b>Albany Room</b>  Maintaining Staff Wellness  <b>G. Oswald</b>	<b>Long Lake Room</b>  Going or Growing: Performance Evaluations and the APSE Competencies  <b>K. Page</b>	<b>Tupper Lake Room</b>  <b>Quiet Space</b>
4:30-8:00	<b>Explore Lake George/ Dinner on your own</b>				
7:30-9:30 8:00-11:00	<b>Carriage House</b>  Silent Auction / Cash Bar Karaoke/Cash Bar- Come sing, dance, and network with your colleagues !				

# 2023 New York State APSE Employment First Training Institute Day Two

## Wednesday November 8

<b>8:00</b>	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>			
<b>9:00-10:15</b>  <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Lake George North</b>  NYS APSE Listening Session: Tell Us! - Building a Strategy for the Future of Employment First  <i>M. Boylan, J. Madarash</i>	<b>Lake George South</b>  Stronger Together: Collaborative Customized Employment  <i>Job Path NYC/Job Path Rochester</i>	<b>Albany Room</b>  NYESS Initiatives and NYS OMH Employment and Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services Program Updates  <i>L. Brown</i>	<b>Long Lake Room</b>  Job Coaching-A Wholistic Approach  <i>D. Chamberlain</i>
<b>10:15-10:45</b>	<b>Break and Hotel Checkout</b>			
<b>10:45-12:00</b>	<b>Lake George North/South Room</b>  <b>APSE State-of-the-State Update</b>  <b>Featuring:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Kim Hill</b>, Chief Disability Officer Office of Governor Kathy Hochul</li> <li>• <b>Andy Sink</b>, NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH)</li> <li>• <b>Ana Duraes</b>, NYS Commission for the Blind, Regional Coordinator (NYSCB)</li> <li>• <b>Linda Schramm</b>, NYS Adult and Continuing Education Services- Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)</li> <li>• <b>Julia Kelly</b>, NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)</li> </ul>			
<b>12:00</b>	<b>Fort Edward Room</b>  <b>Lunch - Box Lunches available for enjoying on-site or to-go</b>  <i>Safe Travels Home! And thank you for joining us this year!</i>			

# Session Descriptions

## **Keynote: Creating Blue Space for All**

*Hanns Meissner PhD, Author and Independent Consultant*

Employment for All unfolds in emergent process that thrives when providers and the people they serve engage in a partnership to co-design an employment support arrangement uniquely fitted for each person. This is a shift from standardized programs and services to individualized supports and customization. This calls for transformational change— socially innovating a new way of behaving, thinking, relating and scaffolding support arrangements from actors on all levels of the service system. **Lake George North/South**

## **Developing Capacity as a Social Innovator**

*Hanns Meissner PhD, Author and Independent Consultant*

This session intends to explore what it takes to develop self as an instrument of change, moving from bureaucratic leader to change master. It invites advanced learners of person-centered employment practices to further develop and deepen their personal capacity to facilitate innovative and inclusive ways to design partnership-based supports, influence others in changing the way teams, organizations, systems and the community align with emerging individualized support arrangements, and working more effectively in constrained and heavily regulated environments to discover and encourage what more is possible for the people supported by their agency. **Lake George North**

## **ACCES- VR Update**

*Linda Schramm & Monica Toye-Smith, ACCES-VR*

ACCES-VR's Service Delivery Manager Monica Toye-Smith and Assistant Commissioner Linda Schramm will provide an in depth overview of the changes to the Core Rehabilitation Services CRS contract coming out in 2024. **Lake George South**

## **Updates from National APSE**

*Erica Belois-Pacer*

What are the benefits of getting an APSE membership? Historically hundreds of people from across NYS attend the APSE Conference, but surprisingly very few are APSE Members! Becoming an APSE member means that you are a member in NY and National. One benefit is that National APSE hosts at least one free webinar each month on a variety of topics

related to Competitive Integrated Employment, All of our trainings are aligned with APSE's Universal Employment Competencies which will also be shared during this session. If you are interested in getting involved in policy at the state level we have monthly updates and a new Action Center that will be explained. Whether you are interested in joining one of our many Communities of Practice that meet monthly or learn more about the CESP Exam this session is for you. Resources and updates from National APSE will be shared and questions are welcome! **Albany Room**

## **Multiple Pathways to Employment**

*Rob Statham, NYAPRS*

Assisting Individuals with disabilities obtain and maintain employment has been a mainstay of employment programs for a number of years. While the traditional course of obtaining employment was to work for an employer in the community, research is suggesting that self-employment also works well for workers with disabilities. Yet many programs are not equipped with the knowledge to assist individuals move toward this route. Exploring Non-Traditional Employment Options focuses on multiple paths to employment (self-employment, apprenticeships, "gig economy" work) as a direction for individuals to pursue and how programs can assist in the process of helping individuals to be successful in this arena. Using the tools provided, providers will become experts at assisting individuals with disabilities gain and maintain self-employment, side hustles and new pathways into the workforce. **Long Lake Room**

## **Simply Hiring BIPOC Youth is not a Diversity Strategy**

*Deborah Campbell, Heritage Christian Services*

The belief that a good job is the surest path to economic security has always been at the heart of our nation's political and social framework. But for BIPOC youth—who are already at a higher risk for many negative life outcomes—youth employment is yet another driver of disparities in opportunity and outcomes in a society where their prospects for socioeconomic mobility are already limited. Learn strategies aim to address some of these disparities and be an ally to spark the flame to help BIPOC youth do the work to find success and help your organization. **Tupper Lake Room**

## **Standards of Excellence of Community Based Worksites within School Systems**

*Nick Villani, Career and Employment Options, Inc.*

Vocational Organizations have a body of knowledge and expertise far beyond schools in the implementation of worksites, getting students ready for the work world and preparing those students for beyond high school. Given that, schools are the governing body of those student's futures yet without the specific knowledge of how to do it. Vocational agencies can and should lead the path for special education students toward their transition into the work world. This presentation will focus upon the 10 Standards of Excellence we developed to provide both our agency staff and the schools with specific information on how community based work experiences will facilitate a seamless transition into the workforce. It will discuss the program we call the Career Labs for as a model for students to have an ongoing career instruction during the school year. A review of the issues of how school personnel can facilitate or represent speed bumps in this process. **Lake George North**

## **Using Virtual Reality for Vocational Exploration**

*Mike Barry, Heritage Christian Services & Roshan Peiris, Rochester Institute of Technology*

Heritage Christian Services and Rochester Institute of Technology have been partnering for the last year to study the use of virtual reality (VR) in vocational environments. We will share how and why this can be a useful tool in vocational exploration and how we have been using it with people with disabilities. We will demonstrate a library of virtual jobs we are currently building, a social training tool using Chat-GPT and the results of our research so far. **Lake George South**

## **Social Security Disability Benefits-Case Studies**

*Marsha Russo, Goodwill Industries of NY NJ*

This presentation will walk participants through a few scenarios of folks on SSI and/or SSDI benefit, in a case study format. The “beneficiaries” will be working and earning at a level where their benefits will stop. For the SSI, a review of how an SSI calculation is done with and without earned income. For the SSDI case, Marsha will walk through the work incentive phases (i.e. Trial Work Period, Extended Period of Eligible, etc.) and explain Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) and how income is compared to it. For both, she’ll touch upon other work incentives (such as IRWE and Subsidies) and provide examples of what both may look like. Lastly, she’ll cover the related medical insurances, Medicaid and Medicare, and the key



incentives for them. The workshop will be interactive with handouts to complete and questions from the participants adding value to the information presented. **Albany Room**

## **Building Supports for Employee Growth While Improving Services**

*Julia Kelly & Kristine Snyder, OPWDD*

This training will cover the current and newly added SEMP services in the regulations and administrative memorandum to allow agencies to increase their supports for job coach/developer staff, improve services outcomes, provide a career ladder and increase staff retention.

The session presenters will discuss the following topics:

1. What makes work meaningful?
2. What are the roles of an Employment Specialist and Management?
3. How can the current and new SEMP services improve supported employment outcomes to help people with I/DD gain, retain and advance in their careers?
4. How to build a layer of planning and managing services while creating opportunities for employee development.
5. What are the various types of roles that agencies can develop or enhance?
6. How do employees benefit from additional supervision, coaching and mentoring?

**Long Lake Room**

## **Ethics and The Now Normal**

*Wendy Quarles, San Diego State University Interwork Institute & Amy Scott, Elevance*

This engaging session will focus on the values and ethics associated with Employment Services with an emphasis on the changing dynamics in the field and navigating the "now normal". Join your colleagues to explore the ripple effect of re-framing our thinking and the power of capturing the stories of both ethical successes and challenges. We will have the opportunity together to discover the APSE Ethical Guidelines and strategies for ethical decision making. Come prepared to discuss ways to infuse ethics discussions into your workplace! **Tupper Lake Room**

## **Making the Business Case: DEIA as a Business Engagement Strategy**

*Jeffrey Tamburo, Cornell University*

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion AND Accessibility (DEIA) is a hot topic in the business world today, yet often disability—the "A" of DEIA--can be left out or an afterthought. This interactive session will focus on the ADA and employment, with a particular focus on utilizing disability inclusion and accessibility as a strategy that adds value to the business community. Using interactive case scenarios, this session makes the case for disability inclusion not merely being a “nice thing to do”, but rather as a strategic business imperative. Come to this session to discuss and discover ways to let your business partners know that accessibility and inclusive practices are good for business. Attendees will be introduced to the Northeast ADA Center at Cornell’s Small Business at Work Toolkit, a no-cost resource for employers and anyone working with employers. In addition, attendees will learn about opportunities for no-cost training and technical assistance from Cornell to support your organization’s efforts to promote disability inclusion, accessibility and ADA implementation in your work with employers. **Lake George North**

## **Worker Retention Services (ACCES-VR/NYSCB)**

*Jennifer Geiger, ACCES-VR & Jane Sullivan, NYSCB*

Jennifer Geiger, Business Relations Representative at ACCES-VR Rochester District Office and Jane Sullivan, District Manager at NYS Commission for The Blind are presenting on Worker Retention Services. Worker Retention Services can assist individuals with disabilities currently employed, individuals who may acquire a disability, and it is also a service that can assist the business to retain qualified employees. This interagency collaboration demonstrates how partnerships are important to strengthen workforce development. **Lake George South**

## **Maintaining Staff Wellness**

*Gina Oswald, Cornell University*

Although often stated, when life becomes too busy and chaotic, many individuals sacrifice their own needs or allow others' needs to take priority. Participants will explore the importance and impact of self-care practices on the personal and professional health, roles, responsibilities, and relationships of staff members. Participants will also have the opportunity to assess their current levels of wellness and supportive practices, as well as self-care areas and activities which they prioritize. Learning objectives - Participants will be able to (1) recognize the impact of self-care and wellness on personal and professional roles;

(2) assess their own levels of wellness; and (3) explore strategies for initiating a sustainable self-care practice. **Albany Room**

## **Going or Growing: Performance Evaluations and the APSE Competencies**

*Katie Page, iCareManager & Erica Belois-Pacer, APSE*

Come join us for a conversation about the APSE Universal Competencies

<https://apse.org/apse-2019-universal-employment-competencies/>

Together we will be discussing how to incorporate them into your work as a training road-map, a staff evaluation tool and the route to becoming a nationally recognized Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP). We will provide an overview of the competency domains, including why the resource is an excellent one to use frequently. Participants will leave with tips and tools and an understanding of the benefits of infusing the APSE Universal Competencies into your everyday life. **Long Lake Room**

## **NYS APSE Listening Session: Tell Us! - Building a Strategy for the Future of Employment First**

*Marilee Boylan, Joani Madarash*

We want to hear from YOU! We invite attendees to express their thoughts, concerns, challenges, ideas, and strategies to advance Employment First. Beyond a philosophy and theory....how do we best create the practices and culture to implement employment being the first and preferred option for people with disabilities . . . including people with the most significant disabilities? Please join in and contribute to this interactive session with other APSE Training Institute attendees ...and we promise to LISTEN to your collective voices and help inform NYS APSE on how to best support your work in obtaining employment outcomes for the people you serve! **Lake George North**

## **Stronger Together: Collaborative Customized Employment**

*Karen Waltuck & Wendy Banner, Job Path NYC*

*Charis Happ & Kathryn Davidson, Job Path Rochester*

Customized Employment (CE) is the most effective strategy for finding meaningful employment for many people with disabilities. CE is a winning strategy that leads to job creation which meets the needs of both the job-seeker and the employer. Finding someone a customized job is challenging work and the more we collaborate, the better. So ten years

ago the Consortium for Customized Employment was created to mentor provider agencies in CE and offer NYC employers a larger candidate pool.

You will learn about this winning strategy and hear from one of the original Consortium member agencies to learn about this collaboration from their perspective. Moving beyond our City's border, a Rochester based agency will share how they embraced CE through training and mentoring, expanded their practice and are now leading the way in mentoring other agencies. When we collaborate, we reduce competition, learn from each other, expand our business networks, and ultimately succeed in our shared mission - great jobs! better outcomes! **Lake George South**

## **NYESS Initiatives and NYS OMH Employment and Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services Program Updates**

*Lisa Brown, OMH - New York Employment Services System (NYESS)*

New York Employment Services System (NYESS), an Office of Mental Health (OMH) team, will provide information about our new initiative: NYESS Work Incentive Network (NYESS WIN) a directory of Work Incentive Practitioners (Benefits Advisors) to fill the gaps of Benefits Advisement for SSA Beneficiaries throughout the state of New York. This directory is available on the NYESS website for anyone looking for Benefits Advisement services. If you are a Certified Work Incentive Practitioner (or a Certified Benefits Advisor) and would like to join this Network, now is the opportunity. NYESS will also provide an overview of the training initiatives that have been implemented within the last year and will be implemented in the year to come. NYESS will provide an overview of OMH Program updates relevant to the services you provide, and the customers you serve. **Albany Room**

## **Job Coaching-A Wholistic Approach**

*Dianne Chamberlain*

Person-centered designed services are at the forefront of what we do as Employment Specialists working in the field. In order to best support those we serve, we tend to be more than a "job coach". We are seeing more and more the need to support the whole person. There is a great deal of emphasis on not only the individual's ability to do the job tasks, but there is a great need for mental health and life balance, as well as emotional support to help individuals navigate challenging conversations and daily interactions with people- whether it be supervisors, co-workers, or customers. Let's look at the best practices and ways to get

creative in the field of coaching to assist both the individual and the business. Bring your ideas and willingness to share proven strategies. **Long Lake Room**

### **APSE State-of-the-State Update**

*Kim Hill, Chief Disability Officer Office of Governor Kathy Hochul*

*Andy Sink, NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH)*

*Ana Duraes, NYS Commission for the Blind, Regional Coordinator (NYSCB)*

*Linda Schramm, NYS Adult and Continuing Education Services- Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)*

*Julia Kelly, NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)*

**Lake George North/South**

## **Acknowledgments**

New York State APSE exists and flourishes as a result of tireless efforts of many people who generously volunteer their time, energy and talents. New York State APSE has no paid staff, so these volunteer efforts completely drive the outcomes of our organization. We would like to recognize and thank the following NYS APSE Board Members:

Avery Valins, Marilee Boylan (Conference Committee), Bryan Devans (Conference Committee), Carina Parrow (Conference Committee), Christina Murgola, Erin Abele, Gillian Lebron (Conference Committee), Jajaida Gonzalez, Jeffrey Tamburo, Joani Madarash (Conference Committee), Katie Page (Conference Committee), Laura Aneiro-McCaffrey (Conference Committee), Marianne Durrant (Conference Committee), Wendy Quarles (Conference Committee), Jim Scutt

**A special and heartfelt thanks goes to the 2023 Session Presenters, who share their enthusiasm and knowledge with us!**

We would like to offer our sincere gratitude to the Eleversity team of Chris Frank, Amy Miller and Karen Schnauer for their conference coordination support. It truly takes a village to create an opportunity for professionals to gather at this meaningful event. And finally, we would be remiss if we didn't pause for a moment to also thank our state and federal partners and each and every one of you for the work that you do to embrace

and carry-out the mission of Employment First, Employment for All. Let this gathering be a call to action for us to honor the legacy of those who have come before us and take forward the wisdom of the connections you have made here.