



# Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities



## 2018 - 2019 Annual Report





September 16, 2019

The Honorable Tony Evers Governor, State of Wisconsin 115 East-State Capitol Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers:

Please find attached the 2018-2019 annual report from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD). The report details our Board's mission, membership, goals, accomplishments, and budget.

Our federal charge in the Developmental Disabilities Act is identifying the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities and developing innovative and cost-effective ways to meet these needs in a manner that upholds human and civil value. Councils (Boards) must include, at minimum, 60% people with developmental disabilities and their family members.

The BPDD State Plan, informed by statewide input from the disability community, focuses primarily on two areas: Full Participation in the Community & Advocacy Efforts. During 2018–2019, we have made significant progress in all our goal areas.

A few highlights include:

- **Living Well Grant** - The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) received a 5-year federal grant from the Administration on Community Living to develop and test approaches for improving home and community-based services (HCBS) for people with developmental disabilities. Wisconsin's Living Well project aims to increase health, safety, independence and well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community.
- **Self Determination Conference** – In 2018 over 650 people attended the conference with BPDD awarding 125 scholarships for low cost attendance. Over 30 organizations had resource tables and 25 Microbusinesses exhibited their crafts, art, jewelry etc.
- **Employment First Conference** - The Employment First Conference continued to focus on sharing lessons and brainstorming ideas about service transformation to support meaningful lives in the community that include work, connections, recreation, and contribution. Over 350 professionals, providers, individuals with disabilities and family members attended the conference in 2019.
- **Monthly Newsletter** – Every month BPDD puts together a newsletter containing information on our current projects, upcoming events and funding opportunities. Over the last year we have also started a monthly column called What's the Word, where we highlight a person with a disability living in Wisconsin. The topics are chosen by the individual and can be about anything they want to share about their lives. We wanted to have our newsletter be as accessible as possible, so we have it available in several formats including Hmong audio translations, Spanish text translations and English video.

As a Governor-appointed Board, BPDD is committed to apply cultural competence in all that we do. The Board strives to increase the number of people in Wisconsin with I/DD to become more independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.

If you have questions or comments regarding this report or about BPDD, please contact Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, BPDD (contact information listed on Staff page). Additional information, including our five-year plan for 2017-2021, is located on our website, [www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org).

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Elsa Diaz-Bautista". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elsa Diaz-Bautista, Board Chair

Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

# Current Board Members



**Elsa Diaz-Bautista**  
**Chair**  
*Parent*  
Whitefish Bay



**Kevin Coughlin**  
*Dept. of Health Services*  
Madison



**David Pinno**  
*Self-Advocate*  
New London



**Greg Meyer**  
**Vice Chair**  
*Self-Advocate*  
Monico



**Meredith Dressel**  
*Dept. of Workforce Development*  
Madison



**Nathan Ruffolo**  
*Service Provider*  
Appleton



**Pam Malin**  
*Service Provider*  
De Pere



**Rita Fuller**  
*Dept. of Public Instruction*  
Madison



**Andy Thain**  
*Self-Advocate*  
Thorp



**Barbara Beckert**  
*Disability Rights WI*  
Milwaukee



**Hector Portillo**  
*Parent*  
Madison



**Leila Solati**  
*Public Provider*  
Whitefish Bay



**Liz Hecht**  
*Waisman Center*  
Madison



**Robert Kuhr**  
*Self-Advocate*  
Menasha



**Lynn Stansberry-Brusnahan**  
*Parent*  
Shorewood



**Ashley Mathy**  
*Self-Advocate*  
Rhinelander



**Pam Delap**  
*Parent*  
Oshkosh



**Tricia Thompson**  
*Parent*  
Menomonie



**Gail Bovy**  
*Parent*  
Middleton



**Stephenie Mlodzik**  
*Self-Advocate*  
Appleton



**George Zaske**  
*Parent*  
River Falls



**Kedibonye Carpenter**  
*Parent*  
La Crosse



**Desi Kluth**  
*Self-Advocate*  
Pewaukee

# About the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

BPDD is Wisconsin's state developmental disabilities council, authorized under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). Every state and territory have a state Developmental Disabilities Council.

## Federal law outlines a unique role for state Councils that includes:



Serving as an independent advisor to the Governor and legislature on public policy issues that impact people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD)



Charging councils with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and **integration and inclusion in all facets of community life** for people with I/DD.



Engaging with people with disabilities and their allies to understand pressing needs and identify emerging issues impacting the state's I/DD community.



Funding innovative and pilot projects—based on data driven strategic planning—that test best practices and inform state and federal policies and practices leading to greater independence and self-sufficiency for people with I/DD



Encouraging citizen engagement and participation so that the voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are part of policy decisions.

The Governor appoints BPDD's board members. 60% of BPDD's board are people with I/DD and family members from across the state. BPDD's work is driven by a five-year state plan, which is created based on statewide input from the disability community. 70% of BPDD's federal funding is spent on local projects in accordance with needs identified in the state plan.

## BPDD's Unique Role



The role of state councils is to seek continuous improvement across all systems—**education, transportation, health care, employment**, etc.—that touch the lives of people with disabilities. Our work requires us to have a long-term vision of public policy that not only sees current systems as they are, but how these systems could be made better for current and future generations of people with disabilities.

BPDD has relationships with people with disabilities and their families across the state. We routinely host community conversations, outreach to diverse communities, fund local initiatives, and provide information and training to empower citizens to be more engaged on issues affecting people with I/DD.

BPDD is an independent state agency and is available as a resource to Wisconsin's executive, legislative, and judicial branches on disability and disability policy issues. BPDD is also connected and can draw upon a national network of disability experts and data sets to understand how federal actions may impact Wisconsin, and other states' approaches to disability issues.

## BPDD's federal charge to improve the lives of people with I/DD cont.

In keeping with other federal laws and policy—including the Americans with Disabilities Act—our charge is to work towards people with disabilities having the same rights and responsibilities as people without disabilities.

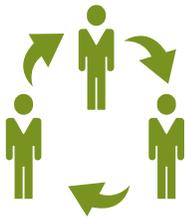
BPDD's federal charge includes advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities. What do these terms mean?



**Self-determination** means freedom for people with I/DD to: explore their interests; develop skills; have new experiences—including making and learning from mistakes; make decisions about their lives; have relationships; and choose support staff and others they want to support them.



**Independence** means maximizing the control people with I/DD have over their lives, including: managing their money; living independently; choosing where to live and with whom; being able to get where they need to go on their schedule; and having a job in the community that matches their skills and interests.



**Productivity** means having full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities.



**Integration and Inclusion** means having the same expectations and opportunities for people with disabilities as people without disabilities. People with disabilities need the same access to and preparation for education, community participation, and community employment as people without disabilities; outcomes and expectations for people with disabilities include independence, decision-making, living and social skills.

## What does BPDD do to advance advocacy, capacity building, and systems change?

The federal DD Act charges BPDD and other DD Councils with outreach, training, technical assistance, supporting and educating communities, interagency collaboration and coordination, barrier elimination, system design and redesign, coalition development and citizen participation, informing policymakers, and demonstration of new approaches to services and supports.

# Increasing Civic Engagement and Advocacy

The Board is sought out by state agency and state policymakers for its I/DD perspective. We are frequently asked how public policies—budget decisions, legislation, administrative rules, and changes to or implementation of state agency programs—will affect people with I/DD and their families. We are also consulted for recommendations on ways to improve programs and public policy for people with I/DD and are a valued stakeholder in a wide variety of public policy arenas (health care, long term care, transportation, and education).

BPDD works in collaboration with Survival Coalition—a cross disability group of 30 organizations—and with the three DD Act partners—Disability Rights Wisconsin, the Waisman Center, and People First Wisconsin—on high priority public policy issues affecting people with I/DD and their families including expanding integrated employment, increasing transportation options and access, improving special education quality and general education access, and improving Medicaid and long term care quality and access.

BPDD collaborates as a joint partner in the Disability Vote Coalition, a non-partisan effort to increase voter turnout and participation in the electoral process by Wisconsin voters with disabilities.



“ I am thinking of getting involved in my local government. Maybe working on a commission on veterans issues. 6 months ago I would not even have thought about this.

- Partner in Policymaking Graduate

## Empowering advocates with information:

- BPDD collaborates with Survival Coalition of Wisconsin during Disability Advocacy Day. This event connects more than 600 disability advocates from around the state with their legislators at the State Capitol. The annual event includes a briefing about current disability issues and meetings between disability advocates and their legislators.
- BPDD maintains an active legislative alerts email service which allows us to send about 200 alerts a year. BPDD maintains an overall list of more than 9,000 members. In 2018-2019 more than 1,200 subscribers were added to the list.
- BPDD, in partnership with Disability Rights Wisconsin and The Arc, trained over 400 people statewide on disability-specific issues in Governor Evers 2019-21 Biennial Budget to help them advocate for their needs. • Two trainings were offered in Spanish along with translated materials. About 25 people took advantage of these trainings.
- The WI Disability Vote Coalition provided language and testimony on a bill to remove the requirement that a voter with a disability must state their name before being allowed to vote because of the difficulty many voters with disabilities have in doing this.
- Promoted social media campaigns, public service announcements, press releases and email to spread awareness about Disability Voter Registration Week.

# Partners In Policymaking

Partners in Policymaking is a six-session advocacy program for people with I/DD and family members to become seasoned leaders across the state. Graduates work to improve policies and practices that lead to better lives for people with disabilities by improving the quality of supports, developing cost efficiencies, and learning how to use community supports to maximize independence. Partners in Policymaking is designed for adults with developmental disabilities and family members of children and youth with developmental disabilities ages birth to 21.



“ The moment when my Senator looked me in the eyes and asked me what I would say if the Secretary of the Dept. of Health Services was in the office with us. Instead of feeling anxious or fearful I felt empowered and prepared to tell my story and ask for change

- Partners Graduate ”

**100% of graduates said they would be more connected with their legislator.**

## Partners gets results:

- More than 200 Partner graduates are now a network of community leaders and decision-makers serving on policymaking committees, commissions, and boards at local, state and national levels.
- 100% of Partner graduates say they will be a stronger advocate and be more actively involved in issues that affect people with disabilities.
- When asked how they will use their new skills after Partners, graduates said:
  - "Last week I was appointed to St. Croix County's Council for the Aging and Disability Resource Center. In my future I plan to run for school or city board. I also look forward to continuing to grow my relationships with my local legislators."
  - "I am currently part of the NAMI-Waukesha Advocacy Committee and I intend to begin driving our agenda to build relationships with local & state elected officials. I will also increase my engagement with the Independence First Advocacy Committee."
  - "Besides confidence, I also feel I have gained knowledge on how the legislature operates and how I can be involved. I am also very driven to continue with my advocacy efforts after this. "

# SPARKS Grants

Small grants of \$3,000 or less to “SPARK” local communities into action have led to big changes at the local level. The purpose of SPARKS Grants is to organize local grassroots groups that identify and make changes in their communities that result in a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities. Grassroots community organizing means local people working for positive community change with people with disabilities on issues that are important to them.



“**Knowing we were backed by the SPARKS Grant gave us confidence and energy to develop and provide the best training we could in this pilot year.**

*- SPARKS participant*

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**5 SPARKS grants were awarded during 2018-2019.**

## Communities best know what they need:

- The **Access for All** project in Wisconsin Rapids works with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to increase their skills in advocating for themselves on the issues that are most important to them.
- **Celebrating Ability** started a conversation in the community about how people with disabilities can meaningfully contribute their skills and talents. A viewing of Dan Habib’s film, “Intelligent Lives,” kicked off the conversation followed by a panel discussion. Over 150 community members attended the event in Stoughton, WI.
- **People First Wisconsin of Fond du Lac** focused their chapter’s work on legislative issues. Members have been meeting monthly on a variety of topics and have included several visits with their legislators. Members are receiving training on running meetings and holding executive positions. The meetings are run by people with disabilities with some support from allies.
- The **Padres e Hijos en Acción** organization offers activities like cooking, gardening and biking in Spanish to allow children and their family members to fully participate in the larger community. Participants also have access to literacy activities and family members will receive information on advocating for their child(ren) and disability service resources. Padres e Hijos en Acción serves over 50 kids with special needs in Dane County.
- The **Greater Wausau Metro Area Transit Challenge** involved volunteers from all walks of life, to agree to take the bus for three days to do all their normal activities. Those who accepted the challenge journaled their experience. The committee will use this information to talk about how the metro system could be improved, especially for people with disabilities.

# Employment First Initiative

Wisconsin Employment First promotes competitive integrated employment—jobs in typical business settings at minimum wage or higher—in the general workforce for people with disabilities. The initiative combines the work of grassroots groups with statewide policy and legislative efforts. The Employment First Partners project provides mini-grants of \$2,000 to local groups to create big changes in their communities. This year, The Employment First Conference continued to focus on sharing lessons and brainstorming ideas about service transformation to support meaningful lives in the community that include work, connections, recreation, and contribution.



“A student was hired because of one of our community outreach presentations and he is supported through DVR and a job coach to work on the weekends.”  
- Employment First Partner

**As a result of an Employment First Partners' community conversation event, a legislator in attendance recognized her role in the solution and announced that she plans to have an intern with a disability in her office at the Capitol.**

## Grassroots efforts create opportunities:

- 9 statewide grassroots groups are currently working with local businesses to increase employment at competitive wages for people with the most significant disabilities.
- Over 350 professionals, self-advocates, and families attended the Wisconsin Employment First Conference on service transformation in May 2019.
- 17 Employment First Ambassadors, people with disabilities working in the community who advocate with Employment First Partners about the importance of competitive integrated employment, presented at 16 events, building self-confidence while educating others.
- Employment First Partners coordinated over 20 events, reaching nearly 400 people to advocate for employment for people with disabilities.

## Legislation to Improve Employment Opportunities:

“BPDD advocated for the passage of Wisconsin’s Employment First law in 2018. In 2019, implementation of the law continued with Wisconsin’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Health Services, and Department of Public Instruction collaborating to develop a joint plan to increase competitive integrated employment.”

# Wisconsin Promise

BPDD received three contracts, based on previous successful work, to support the implementation of the PROMISE grant. BPDD coordinated community conversation events around the state to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities and facilitated executive committee meetings for project leadership and state agency secretaries and superintendent. In addition, BPDD supported the development of a network of family advocates around the state who supported participating youth and families to build their advocacy skills, to raise family expectations about employment, and to help families navigate service systems. In 2019, an extension year for the project, BPDD supported interested youth and families in implementing community leadership projects.



**Wisconsin Promise was a project for 2000 participating Wisconsin families with 14 to 16 year old teens who receive Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI). The goal was to support teens receiving SSI and their families in achieving their education and career goals. The main project ran from 2013-2018 with an extension year for final activities in 2019. Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation received and led the grant.**

## Youth and Families Impacting their Communities

- 33 youth and 56 family members who participated in the Promise project implemented over 60 Community Leadership Projects.
- A parent who works for the United States Postal Service (USPS) saw many jobs at work that could be done by a person with a disability. The parent joined the board of the national union and quickly gained support for hiring people with disabilities. She is working with the USPS to create a study guide and accommodations for the entrance exam to minimize the barriers.
- A father brought together a group of Latinx family members for networking, mutual support, and education on disability rights and resources available in the community. Twenty people attended the first meeting, and he plans to bring in speakers and meet monthly.
- In a small town in northern Wisconsin, a youth developed a plan to provide support and information to teens with mental health issues that impact their ability to stay in school and find work. She also spoke to her local mental health coalition about her experience as a trauma survivor and the challenges people face to employment in her community.

# Take Your Legislator To Work Campaign

The Board for People with Developmental Disabilities' Take Your Legislator to Work Campaign connects individuals with a disability who work in local businesses, both large and small, with their state legislators. BPDD supports the employee and employer through the process of hosting a legislative visit in district, providing guidance, materials (t-shirt, buttons, and stickers), and assistance with communication if needed. The Take Your Legislator to Work campaign has resulted in increased civic engagement and has helped to forge lasting relationships between legislators and their constituents with disabilities who are working and contributing to the local community and economy



**“ I was able to learn how having a job has helped a person with a disability increase their self-esteem, foster new relationships and have pride for money earned through employment.**

**- State Legislator ”**

**100% of participants say they are more likely to remain in contact with their legislator, and they feel more confident talking to him or her about issues that are important to them.**

## Changing attitudes about hiring people with disabilities:

- In 2018/2019 there were 18 total visits including 14 State Representatives and 7 State Senators.
- BPDD also coordinated a Capitol Square Employment Tour with: 6 legislators and staffers, staff from the Governor's office, the Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) along with 2 DWD staff

## As a result of participating in the program, Employers said:

- “We believe in a supportive community. We believe in walking the walk and not just talking the talk.”
- “We want more employees like him. That enthusiasm is something we need in our community.”

## As a result of participating in the program, legislators say:

- "Alex makes a huge difference in our community. That's why NOW is the time to get more hardworking people like him employed in WI."  
@RepDittrich
- "This exemplifies how these great community-based partnerships work. I want to highlight this great story and encourage other businesses to consider similar arrangements when making decisions as to how to address their workforce development needs" -Rep. John Spiros

## Public Policy



BPDD works with the state legislature, state agencies, and Governor's office to consult and advise on public policy issues that impact people with I/DD.

This year, BPDD worked with legislative members on several proactive legislative ideas including, required training for guardians, continuing the successful PROMISE Family Navigator program, increasing the capacity to provide community integrated employment services across the state, facilitating regional approaches to transportation, improving non-emergency medical transportation, promoting effective abuse prevention and response for people with disabilities, and incentivizing increases in the number of accessible bathrooms with adult changing tables. BPDD submitted its first annual report to the legislature on the outcomes of the Partners with Business Grant program (see page 18), established in 2018.

The 2019-21 State Budget included many positive items BPDD discussed with the Governor and the legislature's budget writing committee, including increases in: special education categorical aid, Medicaid Personal Care Services rate and Family Care direct funding supplement; children's long-term support funding sufficient to end the current waiting list; public transit, specialized transit, and paratransit funding; lead poisoning and prevention funding; and funding for Dentists serving Medicaid patients with disabilities.

### Legislative Advocacy:

- This year, the Governor created a Governor's Task Force on Caregiving a key ask from the disability community, including BPDD.
- BPDD collaborated with state agencies to facilitate and advise on the implementation of new laws, including training on Supported Decision-Making agreements and adjustments to agency policies to reflect this new option, and changes the Medical Assistance Purchase Plan (MAPP) waiver. BPDD responded to agency requests for ideas to improve IRIS, Family Care, Dental Access, community integrated employment, special education and other topics.
- BPDD has also submitted numerous public comments on federal administrative rules and policies that outlined how proposed changes would impact Wisconsin and its citizens living with I/DD.

# Increasing **Advocacy and Leadership Skills**

The Board supports the statewide self-advocacy organization, People First Wisconsin. Members of the organization work to increase advocacy and leadership skills for people with disabilities.



The Wisconsin Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a week-long leadership training and career awareness program for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors with disabilities. Each summer, 25-30 students with disabilities participate.

“

*“Because of the YLF, I intend to become more of a leader and be more assertive.”*

*- Youth Leadership Forum Participant*

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## **People First:**

- People First supports 21 local People First Chapters around the state. People First members work on state and local issues to improve full participation in their communities and access to the services and supports they need including: expanding transportation, increasing integrated employment, voting education, and self-directing their long-term care services.
- People First members provided training to local chapters on voter education and leadership skills.
- People First works to ensure people with disabilities are represented on committees and Boards that oversee issues that are important to them.
- People First mobilized and gave testimony on Medicaid expansion and supported Decision-Making

## **Youth Leadership Forum:**

- 21 youth attended the 2018 Youth Leadership Forum and 21 attended the 2019 Youth Leadership Forum to learn leadership skills, advocacy, and career training.
- All youth met with their legislator to discuss an issue that was important to them such as bullying, working in the community, revamping special education services, etc.

# Self-Determination Conference

The Board is dedicated to improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

The Self-Determination Conference helps to educate individuals with disabilities, their families and the people who support and provide services. The conference is an opportunity to gain skills, tools, and information that they can take back and implement for themselves; either in their own lives or in their professional role.



***Of all the super powers we have, sometimes people do not give us credit for them***



***- Self Determination Conference participant***

**Besides having a better understanding of resources available, such as how to help people with setting up ABL Accounts or how to hire Private Hired Workers (self directed model through IRIS), my main take-away is the importance of finding people's strengths. Everyone has strengths and you can build community on these strengths.**

## Improving independence, productivity, and integration:

- More than 650 people attended the Self-Determination Conference.
- BPDD provided over 125 scholarships for families and individuals with disabilities to attend the conference.
- Over 30 organizations attended to provide resources at exhibitor tables.
- 25 Micro-bussinesses exhibited and sold their crafts, art, jewelry etc.
- We asked participants what their experience was like at the conference and they had this to say:
  - "I now have tools to help my family member be as successful as possible in their self-direction and determination. "
  - "I am going to work more on helping people with disabilities to vote, by getting the word out and coordinating transportation."
  - "This conference is always a great reminder that even little things mean a lot. I will continue to be a steward for self-determination working within my community to continually make others aware of possibilities and opportunities. My next measurable action will be participating in Superior Days to advocate for more Medicaid dollars to be delegated to caregivers in an effort to support self-determination."

# Family-Led Network Grants

**Goal:** *People with disabilities and their families make choices about their lives and are actively engaged in planning their services and supports.*

Individuals with disabilities and their families must have adequate information, resources and supports to create opportunities for an inclusive and meaningful life in their communities. Many families are uncertain about what they were looking for other than they want the best possible life for their loved ones. When families support each other, they are empowered to think creatively to meet the needs of their individual with a disability.



**The Board supports families with children transitioning from high school or adult children with disabilities that are committed to work together to educate themselves on various aspects of adult life for their child. It's a way for families to work together to identify and meet their needs. The families decide the focus for the group, including learning more about: self-direction, circles of support, housing, integrated employment, transportation, etc. The focus can change as their needs change. Families meet monthly to learn about resources, provide support to each other, engage in Person Centered Planning, coordinate and or develop resources for themselves.**

## Changes in people's lives (2018 - 2019):

- There are currently 6 family groups supported through a technical assistance grant with LOV Dane: three family groups in Milwaukee and one in Mukwonago with over 20 families in total.
- In 2018 there were two new groups added to the four groups already active
  - We launched a Transition group for Padres e Hijos en Acción to support Spanish speaking families in the Dane County area
  - And SPARRK Group of families from The Arc in Mineral Point, a very rural area

## Family-Led: Story

One mom advocated for the school to have an accessible stage at graduation. Her son graduated this year, but broke his knee a few weeks before graduation, so wouldn't be able to climb the stairs to get to the stage to accept his diploma. Unfortunately, the school was unable to provide a ramp, but they did come up with a workaround for her son that allowed him to participate fully in the ceremony. She felt empowered to advocate because of the knowledge she has gained by connecting with the group.

# Supported Decision-Making

Supported Decision-Making is an alternative to guardianship through which people with disabilities get help from trusted family members, friends and professionals to help them understand the situations and choices they face, so they can make their own decisions. Supported Decision-Making enables people with disabilities to ask for support where and when they need it.

Supported Decision-Making Agreements can be used for many kinds of decisions including medical, financial, housing and other life matters. Powers of attorney, representative payees and simple release of information forms can also help families provide the needed supports and safeguards without going to court and imposing guardianship restrictions.



## Supporting Individuals to Live Full lives Keeping Them in Charge:

- DPI now has information on SDM and alternatives to Guardianship in the Post-secondary transition planning (PTP) tool.
- We are seeing indications that the numbers of guardianships in WI are going down but don't have definitive info on that.
- BPDD is on the WI WINGS Steering committee: WINGS stands for Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders. WINGS is part of a national movement for improving guardianship and conservatorship practices.
- BPDD held a statewide SDM training with 400 people in attendance from around the state.
- Over 7000 booklets distributed statewide



**We wanted our son to have the chance to grow and learn to make decisions that affect his life. As his parents, we won't always be around to guide him, and we didn't want to restrict his life and future happiness. So, we chose not to pursue guardianship and instead to develop a circle of supporters to help him make those big decisions in life."– Parent**



# BUILDING FULL LIVES

## Creating **BIG CHANGE** for People with Disabilities

Building FULL Lives provides coaching and business planning expertise to disability service providers working with hundreds of people around the state with the most significant disabilities and their families to more flexibly support people with disabilities in the community. Service providers are learning to create individualized supports that lead to better employment outcomes, build skills and broaden people's social networks



“

**Community CONNECT is a great way to get out and enjoy my free time. Gives me ideas of where to hang out with my friends.**

**-BFL Participant**

”

**Leads to increased independence and connections in the community, resulting in a decrease in the need for paid supports.**

### **Building FULL Lives increases choice, independence and community participation:**

- Thirteen service provider organizations, including three new organizations, receive technical assistance to expand community-based services to support people to safely, explore, connect, and contribute to their communities while developing specific life skills.
- BPDD piloted a mentoring component to build capacity and expand expertise in Wisconsin. Service providers farther along in their service transformation will provide technical assistance to partner organizations at an earlier stage in the process
- •BPDD developed materials and written stories to explain the Building Full Lives service model and to illustrate changes that occur in people's lives when they connect more to their community.
- Three participating service providers have transformed to provide pre-vocational services in the community only.

# Partners with Business Annual Report to the Legislature, June 2018 - May 2019

Submitted by Shannon Webb, inControl Wisconsin (contractor for the WI BPDD's Partners with Business coaching program)

2017 Wisconsin Act 323 established the Partners with Business initiative to assist businesses interested in hiring and employing people with disabilities using an evidence-based coaching model. The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) submits the first annual report to the legislature on Partners with Business pilot projects and outcomes.

In its first year, Partners with Business has provided technical assistance and coached two employment service providers (Opportunity Development Centers, VIP Services) and two school districts (Altoona High School, Green Bay Public School District) on effective strategies to respond to the hiring needs of local businesses and match employees who have disabilities with jobs that fit their skills and interests.



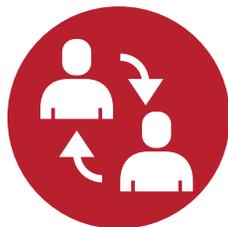
- Fourteen businesses interested in employing people with disabilities have received assistance.
- Twenty-two people with disabilities participated in the pilot sites. In the first few months of the pilots, six people with significant disabilities landed jobs working an average of 11 hours a week at \$9.57 per hour.

One Family Care managed care organization (Inclusa) received a grant and focused on building capacity to implement Partners with Business practices within their employment services provider network, which includes hundreds of service providers across 52 Wisconsin counties. Inclusa adjusted service provider service contracts, created a tool to identify employees who can benefit from co-worker supports, and conducted trainings on Partners with Business best practices.

## The Partners with Business initiative promotes the use of best practices to:



Ensure good job matches between employers and job seekers with disabilities;



Empower employers to directly train and supervise their employees with disabilities;



Cultivate workplace inclusion and natural supports;



Maximize independence on the job for workers with disabilities; and



Reimburse employers for the costs of providing formal support above and beyond the “natural supports” typically found in the workplace to their employees with disabilities, rather than relying on outside job coaches provided by a vocational agency.

To incentivize employment service providers to implement these best practices, Inlucsa compensates service providers based on the number of hours a person with disabilities works and the length of time they've been on the job. Using these strategies costs the Medicaid funded long-term care system significantly less, while increasing the number of hours worked.

Compared to service providers being paid through a traditional Fee for Service (FFS) Medicaid model—which pays providers based on the number of hours of job coaching they provide and creates a disincentive to reduce paid services—Partners in Business providers:

- **Invested 83% less staff time;**
- **Increased the number of hours people with disabilities worked by 32%; and**
- **Spent 48% fewer Medicaid dollars.**

	<b>Provider (Partners with Business)</b>	<b>Provider (Fee for Service Model)</b>
Number of people with disabilities receiving employment services	47	50
Total Hours Members (people with disabilities) Worked	2030.45 per month	1385.75 per month
Average Hours Worked per person	43.20 per month	27.72 per month
# Hours Job Coached	220.75 per month	1264.50 per month
Total Medicaid dollars spent on employment services for all members	\$18,855.85 per month	\$35,760.06 per month

All five grantees will continue to implement Partners with Business strategies and have agreed to continue to track employment and cost savings outcomes in the 2019-2020 project year.

Five more grantees have been selected for the 2019-2020 project year, including another Family Care Managed Care organization and four employment service providers. They are:

- **My Choice Family Care; based in Wauwatosa**
- **Aptiv, Inc; based in La Crosse**
- **Employment Resources Inc; based in Madison**
- **Portal, Inc; Grafton**
- **Valley Packaging Industries, Inc; Appleton**



“This is a guy that loves his job and being part of a team,” said Josh. “He is just happy and grateful to be here every day. He is taking on more and more responsibility, and he is very productive during his shifts.”

Josh Witt, Co-owner of Power Pac, a “power sports” dealership in Marshfield.



The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) mission is to help people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.



Wisconsin's Living Well project aims to increase health, safety, independence and well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community.

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) received a 5-year federal grant from the Administration on Community Living to develop and test approaches for improving home and community-based services (HCBS) for people with developmental disabilities.

### **BPDD's collaborators on the project include:**

- Waisman University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
- Disability Rights Wisconsin
- WI Department of Health Services Division of Long-Term Supports and Services
- The Arc Wisconsin
- InControl Wisconsin
- Managed Care Organizations
- IRIS Consultant Agencies
- Service providers
- Self-advocates
- Families

The project will select five pilot sites that will test promising strategies to promote health, safety, independence, and community participation of people with disabilities, while improving community monitoring to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

### **Living Well project activities will include:**

- Training and mentoring for direct care professionals.
- A peer leadership network of self-advocates and families.
- Implementing evidence-based and promising practices such as self-advocacy training, Supported Decision-Making, personal futures planning, community-based services to build a meaningful life, and competitive integrated employment.
- Conducting Personal Outcome Measure interviews with individuals to ensure supports and services are truly person-centered.
- Developing consumer-friendly resources to equip individuals with I/DD, families, direct support workers and funders to identify indicators of both risk and safety across community settings and to assess and identify quality settings.

Resources and policies developed as a result of the pilots will be used to support people with developmental disabilities throughout Wisconsin to be healthy, safe, and included in their communities.

**For more information about the Living Well Project, contact: Allison Kelly  
Allison.kelly@wisconsin.gov \ (608) 266-5038**

# Financial Information

## Budget Summary by Funding Source

FY18

GENERAL PURPOSE REVENUE	\$117,600
State Operations	\$42,600
Grants	\$75,000
FEDERAL REVENUE *	\$1,308,704
State Operations Aids	\$885,740
to Ind. & Org.	\$422,964
TOTALS - ANNUAL	\$1,308,704
State Operations	\$928,340
Aids to Ind. & Org.	\$422,964

\* includes Program Revenue-Federal and Segregated Revenue-Federal.

### Additional Financial Notes

Leverage of financial resources: the Board has been lead grantee or sought out to receive four subcontracts from two federal grants in the past year, totaling an added \$2,343,721 beyond it's core funding.

BPDD has seven full-time permanent employees. Official office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Staff can choose their start and stop times within a 2-hour range, starting between 7 and 9, and ending between 3:30 and 5:30. Staff with positive performance reviews also can elect to work up to one day per week from a remote location. Staff who work extra or outside hours (e.g. nights, weekends) earn comp time. This serves as the agency's report on the success or failure in developing and creating flexible-time work schedules; additional, permanent part-time positions; and other alternative work patterns as required by s. 230.215(4), Wisconsin Statutes.

If you have questions or comments regarding financial information in this report or about BPDD, please contact Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, BPDD (contact information listed on Staff page). Additional information, including our five-year plan for 2017-2021, is located on our website, [www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org).

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WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE  
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) is charged under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities in Wisconsin.

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### To Find Out More about WI-BPDD

#### **The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD)**

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<http://www.wi-bpdd.org/>

[bpddhelp@wi-bpdd.org](mailto:bpddhelp@wi-bpdd.org)

