

Exceptional Opportunities

Algona, Iowa

Jean Menning & Rodney Davis

Transition Planning for Exceptional Opportunities, Inc.

Exceptional Opportunities made many transitions simultaneously:

1. September 2014 introduced plans to EOI TEAM
2. Began transition from workshop to community employment fall 2015
3. Closed sheltered workshop June 2016
4. Moved day habilitation to the community without walls July 2016
5. Closed one ICF/ID facility September 2016 transitioning more people to HCBS/ID SCL
6. Combined Employment office, Supported Community Living office and Administration office to one office October 2016

Community Employment

- Share with staff why the changes are needed and what they will look like. Set goals and embrace the change.
(My Iceberg is Melting and Who Moved My Cheese great reads)
- We emphasized no need for job loss if willing to change
- Creates opportunities for change of jobs within Ex Opp
- Hired Director of Employment Services
 - Must know business people to open doors
 - Developed brochures and offer programs to services organizations
 - Business visits
 - Stress ability to help with unmet employment needs.

Living Through the Change

- Set a goal to find one person employment each month
- Ceased least preferred contract work at workshop to conserve usage of workforce
- As people obtained employment, workshop employees who expressed interest became job coaches.
- Communication is essential. We provide job coaches with cell phones and Chrome books for documenting.
- Flexibility is a must:
 - Many jobs are for short time periods (1-4 hours per day)
 - Coaches must be flexible to go from one employer to another
 - Coaches must blend in with culture of employer
 - Cross train coaches to help cover vacations, illnesses, etc.
 - Employment and Supported Community Living teams must communicate constantly

Looking Back

- 32 people in community employment
- 30 employers
- 40 participate in Day Hab
- 16+ volunteer sites
 - These volunteer sites are a part of our Day Habilitation. Chance to assess work skills.
 - Day Hab is a wrap around to community employment.

Exceptional Opportunities continues our efforts to help more people live, work and recreate in the community.

Employers



Diamonds Clothing Store



Jenson's Chiropractic

Quality Motors



Employers



West Bend Cenex



Camp Algona
POW Museum



Employers



Lott's Creek
Church



Good
Samaritan
Center



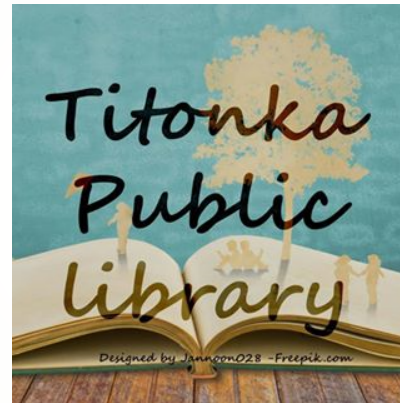
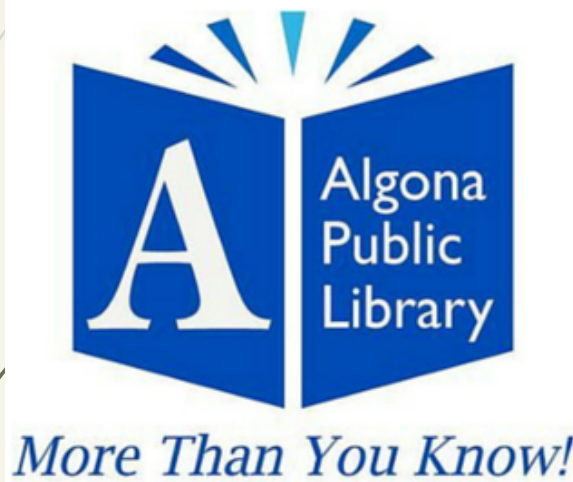
Volunteer Sites

St Michael's
Catholic Church

Algona Food Pantry

Burt Public Library

Kossuth County CARE Team



Volunteer Sites

Methodist Church



First Lutheran Church



*First Presbyterian Church of Algona
Member of the Kossuth Area Presbyterian Parish*



CROSSROADS
of Western Iowa

Touching lives to shape extraordinary tomorrows.

Our Mission

The Mission of Crossroads of Western Iowa is to empower individuals to actively seek out opportunities for an enhanced quality of life.



Crossroads of Western Iowa

- Founded in 1975
 - Based on providing work opportunities
- Located in Western Iowa
 - Monona, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Woodbury and Cherokee Counties
- Services offered
 - Residential, Day Habilitation, Adult Day Care, Prevoc, and Employment Services



Crossroads of Western Iowa

CWI fully embraces the Employment First Initiative...

- “Iowans with disabilities, as their peers without disabilities, possess the right and responsibility to work. Iowans with disabilities, as their peers without disabilities, should have the opportunity to live their life to the fullest and contribute toward their own self-sufficiency.”
- *The goal of the Employment First Initiative is that competitive employment will be the first priority and the expected and preferred outcome of all Iowans with disabilities.*



Crossroads of Western Iowa

- The start of our Transformation
 - 2012 merging Supported Employment with our Vocational program
 - Starting fresh in creating our Supported Employment Program
 - Seeking out providers in the state and listening to what they are doing...
 - What works and what doesn't
 - Seek out technical assistance when available
 - ODEP –via IVRS
- Open to “change” and having support from the Board of Directors, senior leadership and employment staff.



Crossroads of Western Iowa

- Development of the plan and implementation
 - Communication with all stakeholders (clients, families, staff and the community)
- Building program capacity
 - Expanding of funding streams to support individuals seeking employment
 - Waiver, Habilitation, IVRS, Iowa Department of the Blind, Ticket to Work, Grants
 - Staff development
 - ICIE, Iowa APSE, College of Direct Support, IACP etc.
 - Business relationship building
 - Chamber, various civic groups etc.
 - Networking.... is key



Crossroads of Western Iowa

Hurdles along the way...

- Transportation
- Recruit, Train and Retain qualified and highly motivated staff
- Employment Rule changes 5/4/16
- MCO challenges



Crossroads of Western Iowa

- Utilize the experts; they are there to help
 - Find a mentor agency in the industry
 - Don't be afraid to ask why or to challenge the industry norm
 - IME, IACP and ICIE are only a phone call or email away
 - Ask questions
 - They will respond



Crossroads of Western Iowa

Stephanie Little

Crossroads of Western Iowa

712-256-3956

stephanie.davids@cwiowa.org




IOWA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

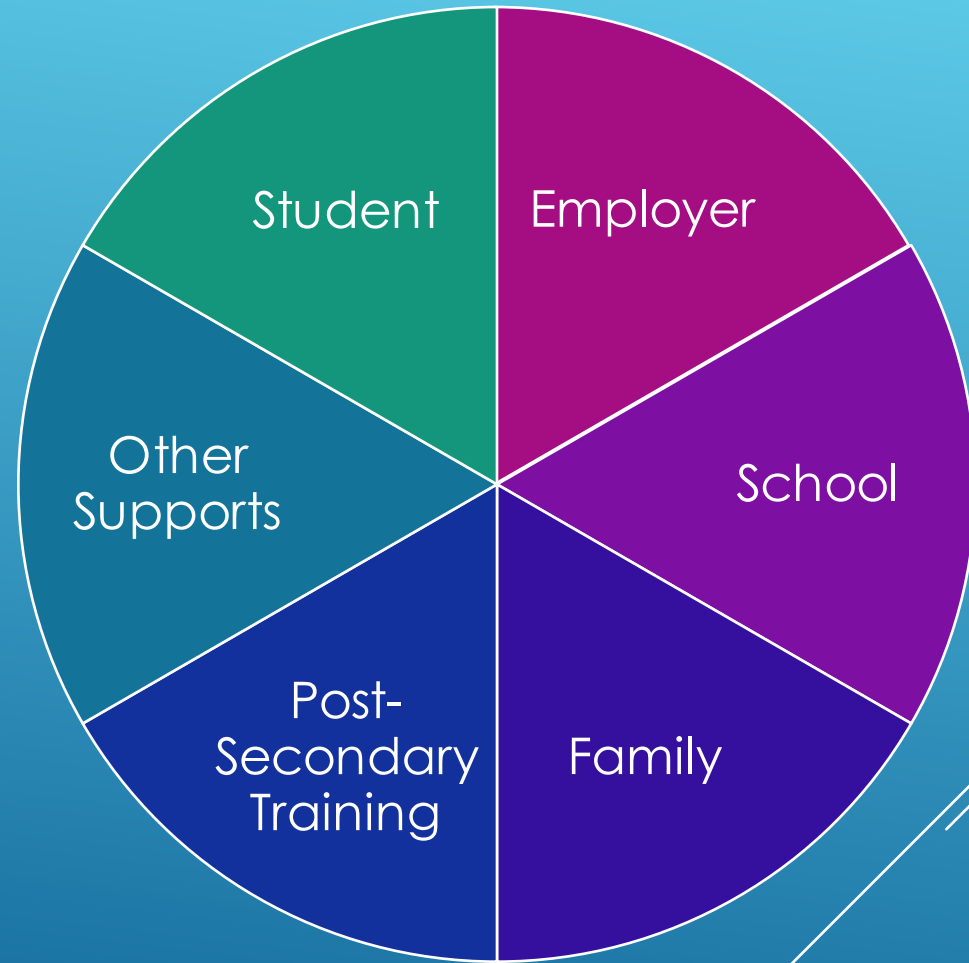
Techniques for Success in Transition

A series of several parallel white lines of varying thicknesses, slanted diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right, crossing the right side of the slide.


WHERE TO BEGIN?

- ▶ Assessments
 - ▶ 1:1 Interactions with VR staff
 - ▶ Employer Panels
 - ▶ Online job description videos
 - ▶ Iowa's Career Coach
 - ▶ Job Shadows
 - ▶ Informational Interviews
 - ▶ Career Fairs
- 
- A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted upwards from left to right, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Working Together



WHEN THINGS WORK

- ▶ IVRS contacted Employer and set up Job Shadow
 - ▶ School provided helmet
 - ▶ Student and IVRS filled out scholarship application through Post-Secondary Institution
 - ▶ Student applied for job
 - ▶ IVRS followed up on application
 - ▶ Employer hired Student
 - ▶ Post-Secondary will provide additional training
- 
- A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted upwards from left to right, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

...AND WHEN THINGS "DON'T"

