

2023 Fall Conference Speaker & Session Information						
Day, Time & Track	Session # & Title	Session Description	Speaker First Name	Speaker Last Name	Job Title	Organization
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 9:30am Keynote	Keynote - Session 1 Fearlessly Different: Our Differences Are Our Strengths	In this engaging keynote, Mickey shares his deeply personal story of growing up autistic and pushing beyond the restrictions of a special education classroom to shine on the Broadway stage. As an autistic and legally blind person, it was always made clear to Mickey the many things he was apparently incapable of doing. But Mickey did them all anyway—and he succeeded because of, not in spite of, his differences. Rowe shows all of us that whether disabled or not, the things that make you different, or that you might even perceive as your weaknesses, actually make you unique and valuable and might even be your biggest strengths. Ensuring that everyone we come in contact with feels seen, heard, understood, and valued. And that sometimes just one small action can change the course of someone’s life. LEARNING OUTCOMES: • CONFIDENCE: Increased sense of self-worth and self-confidence, knowing that they are more powerful because of everything that makes them unique and that they have agency! • CULTURE: Seeing all of their classmates and colleagues differently. Especially those they have had the least interaction with. • MOTIVATION & GOAL ACHIEVEMENT: Realizing that regardless of their goals, they can best succeed at all of their goals when they work with people who are very different from them. • UNDERSTANDING: Understanding and empathy of autism and the disabled lived experience. According to the CDC, 20 – 25% of the population has a disability, so understanding and empathy are essential for everyone.	Mickey	Rowe	Speaker, Author & Consultant	Top Youth Speakers
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 10:45am Leadership	Session 2 Reframing Disability and Access	Now you need to help keep this change going. Now it’s time for you to tell your story. In this participation based Q&A workshop the audience will learn to value themselves and to advocate for themselves by sharing their own stories, acknowledging both the challenges, and the strengths. (And specific accommodations that can make all the difference). How are your differences at times your strengths? I want to hear your story of dynamic empowerment. How can you use your stories, self-awareness, and knowledge about yourself to advocate for the things you need?	Mickey	Rowe	Speaker, Author & Consultant	Top Youth Speakers
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 10:45am Healthcare	Session 3 Alzheimer's Disease and Down Syndrome - What You Need to Know	During this session, we will explore the topics of what Alzheimer's disease is, what's the connection between Alzheimer's disease and Down Syndrome; diagnosis, and life after diagnosis. In the life after diagnosis discussion, we will focus on caregiver principles, strategies, and practical applications.	Pamela	Myers	Program Director	Alzheimer's Association
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 10:45am ICF	Session 4 Voice, Choice and Control	Voice, Choice, and Control “We are our choices.” But how do we learn to make decisions throughout life, and how can we support others to have more self-determination and develop decision-making skills? This topic is often overlooked in the I/DD field, with many people taking for granted that people with disabilities will be unable to make decisions for themselves, or that they are too vulnerable to learn through trial and error. This “protective” perspective, which often results in the removal of a person’s rights through legal guardianship, doesn’t necessarily produce the outcomes we think it does. The Supported Decision- Making movement challenges our assumptions about decision-making and encourages opportunities for practice, learning, and growth so people with disabilities have more voice, choice, and control in their lives. o Training objectives § Define Self-Determination in simple terms and explain why it is important § Discuss the purpose of legal guardianship, the history of its use in the I/DD field, and the authority and limitations that come with guardianship § Identify less-restrictive alternatives to guardianship § Describe the Supported Decision-Making Movement, its principles, and practical application of them § Practice using SDM resources § Understand Capacity and its role in decision-making § Identify opportunities for SDM § Calculate risk in decision-making from an objective perspective § Apply SDM principles to decisions that balance happiness and safety	Josh	Young	Director of Operations	Ohio Network for Innovation
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 10:45am Workforce	Session 5 Supervisory Bad Habits and How to Break Them	This class discusses 2 of the most common supervisor bad habits that affect the supervisor’s effectiveness and identifies replacement behaviors for these bad habits with guidance on adopting and sustaining the new behaviors. Habits discussed in this class include: 1. Lack of clarity about specifics of performance expected from employees - we will look at how to set expectations with tools provided to session participants suggesting specifically what those expectations should be in the developmental disabilities field and will discuss how to communicate them to employees. 2. Being too nice and too concerned about being liked - we will look how a truly effective supervisor operates and discuss how to build self-confidence as a supervisor. In this class we will redefine the definition of a ‘nice’ supervisor to one that has a positive impact on employees’ future success.	Debra	Easley	President	Academy for Professional Development
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 10:45am Sponsored Session	Sponsored Session Self-Directed Transportation: Ohio's Pilot Program	In July of 2022, Ohio became the first state in the nation to pilot self-directed transportation. GT Independence has been honored to work with Ohio in this endeavor. Self-directed transportation is available to all waivers and can assist providers in supporting the needs of the people we serve.	Sarah	Davies	Director of Relationships	GT Independence

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Thurs., Oct. 26th - 1:00pm Leadership	Session 6 Person-Centered Service Delivery: Achieving Quality Outcomes and Services	As a former Direct Support Professional, I know the job can be physically and emotionally taxing, even though many individuals I served had a special place in my heart. The hands-on training I received was designed to help individuals have a productive and meaningful life, regardless of if they were able to perform certain duties on their own, or they needed complete direct hands-on care around the clock. We were trained to interact with the individuals as people and foster an environment of sincere care and compassion – “person-centered”. Unfortunately, the job became very robotic extremely fast! Individuals were routinely checked on, moved from one program activity to another, and “fed” because the documentation for each individual had to be accomplished by the end of the shift.... Lack of documentation or documenting while not providing the service leads to a compliance problem. I can only understand how the feeling of being overwhelmed can be even more true as the shortage of DSP’s is prevalent today. Providers need to be integral in reversing the robotic direct care.	Michael	Marshall	Provider Support Specialist	Nineteen Services, Inc.
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 1:00pm Healthcare	Session 7 Actions Speak Louder Than Words: Common Behavioral Presentations of Underlying Medical Conditions in People with IDD	Behavior is a form of communication. Adverse behaviors in people with IDD are often a way of communicating underlying pain or emotional discomfort and require a thorough evaluation for treatable underlying causes before starting a person on medication or behavior support plans to reduce the actions. This presentation will use real-life case studies to illustrate 10 different groups of behaviors that can point to specific underlying treatable medical causes that can improve the health, wellness, and quality of life in people you support.	Craig	Escudé, MD, FAAFP, FAADM	President	IntellectAbility
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 1:00pm ICF	Session 8 The Five 5's of Supporting People on Their Worst Days	This session will increase attendees knowledge of resources to improve their way of supporting people on their worst days. Areas to be included are related to behavioral supports, mental health, and trauma.	Heather	Leffler	Cross System Regional Liaison	DODD
			Co-Speaker: James	Bennett	Regional Support Facilitator	DODD
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 1:00pm Workforce	Session 9 OSHA Resources to Help Your Organization Sustain a Safe Workplace	Larry Johnson, Area Director for the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), will join attendees for a session on how employers can best leverage OSHA resources to create a safe workplace for their employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The compliance resources available to employers through OSHA The various trainings OSHA offers and other employer resources on the OSHA website Share OSHA data related to workplace safety in long-term care settings 	Larry	Johnson	Area Director	US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 2:15pm Leadership	Session 10 Unleashing Possibility by Changing Company Culture	When the HCBS Settings Rule was initially rolled out, the relatively new leadership team at Core Services of Northeast Tennessee saw an opportunity to improve the direction of their agency by embracing the spirit of the new regulations. Seeking a roadmap forward, the agency enrolled in the state’s “Becoming a Person-Centered Organization” initiative and achieved Person Centered Excellence Accreditation through The Council on Quality and Leadership. This was the start of a virtuous cycle of change, transforming from a service model to a support model and enabling a number of important epiphanies along the way. In this session, leaders from Core Services will share how their agency embarked on a journey to reinvent roles and relationships to create a virtuous cycle of change that benefits everyone.	Susan	Arwood	Executive Director	Core Services of Northeast Tennessee
			Co-Speaker: Nicholas	Filarelli	Program Director	Core Services of Northeast Tennessee

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Thurs., Oct. 26th - 2:15pm Healthcare	Session 11 Multi-Disciplinary vs. Inter-Disciplinary Systems of Care for the Dually Diagnosed	For decades the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has been engaged in efforts to improve health outcomes for those with serious mental illness (SMI). People with co-occurring IDD and with a serious and persistent mental illness, such as those with major depression, other psychoses, bipolar disorder, and impulse control disorders have higher rates of chronic medical conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease to name a few. To better meet the needs of people with mental health and substance use conditions, SAMHSA and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) established the Center for Integrated Health Solutions (CIHS). The CIHS encourages the development of integrated primary and behavioral health services. SAMSHA has outlined levels of integration that provides a uniform framework for providers to communicate precisely and clearly and defines level of collaboration/ integration. The expectation is that the framework will inform further development about integrated healthcare. The World Health Organization has also recognized this as a priority. The need for integrative health care was also cited as one of the five interrelated priorities that must be addressed to improve the health of people living in the United States. Professionals working with dually diagnosed people range from a wide variety of clinical specialties, for example, cardiologists, neurologists, dietitians, occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and speech/language pathologists. These clinical specialists interact with group home staff, educational institutions, and a variety of home and community-based services to share health and treatment information. Unfortunately, the integration of these providers in a cohesive framework to improve the outcomes of people with dual diagnosis is not clearly identified as a framework. Professionals employ a multi-disciplinary approach, but overall outcome of the person's life, and how the various efforts effect their life are rarely if ever examined in an integrative manner. The lessons learned through the evolution of integrated care should be applied to people with dual diagnosis to ensure improved outcomes. Interdisciplinary approaches rely on healthcare experts from many fields, and the person/ family working together as a team. The most successful teams encourage role interdependence and responsibility sharing while honoring the expertise and autonomy of each individual member. An interdisciplinary approach supports the "Quintuple Aim" of improved health, reduced cost, enhancing the experience of the person and their family, equity in the provision of services, and improving the clinician's work life.	Frank	Koerber	Dual Diagnosis Treatment Team, Clinical Director	Merakey
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 2:15pm ICF	Session 12 ICF/IID Reimbursement	This session will explain the ICF Reimbursement system including the calculations for each rate component including the ceilings and efficiency opportunities. Based on recent legislation surrounding House Bill 33 (HB33), we will discuss the rate calculations for FY24 and implications for FY25 rates. Due to HB33 budget language it will be crucial for providers to develop thoughtful strategies around spending that impacts the Direct Care Ceilings as well as the new Professional Workforce Development Add-on. We will walk through examples of the capital fair rental value calculations and provide scenarios to demonstrate opportunities for providers as it relates to capital. We will also share information and benchmarks available on the ICF industry both for Ohio providers and nationally.	Denise	Leonard, CPA	Partner	Plante Moran, PLLC
			Co-Speaker: T. J.	Ely	MBA, Senior Manager	Plante Moran, PLLC
Thurs., Oct. 26th - 2:15pm Workforce	Session 13 Workplace Stability: Improving Retention, Productivity, and Engagement in Entry-Level Workers	Do you have employees who: Are late for work due to non-related work issues? You thought just went to lunch and never came back? Asked for a cash advance or a loan? Sit in the lunch room each day but don't eat lunch? Learn an innovative method for staying staffed by stabilizing the lives of your employees. You will learn how to do the following: Reduce the hard and soft costs of constant turnover Increase employee retention and save significant money annually Expand employee productivity Gain an edge in a tight, competitive labor market Improve your company culture at every level Lead employees and tackle challenging workplace/workforce issues	Lora	Fish	Principal Consultant	Applegate Talent Strategies
Fri., Oct. 27th - 9:00am Day & Employment Services	Session 14 Ticket To Work - Long Term Retention	Ticket To Work is a free support for career development and/or employment retention for those on SSDI. It can be used as braided funding along with DODD services and provides long term retention services after employment placement. There are many myths about maintaining waiver benefits along with employment with full benefits. ventureLINX is an Employment Network (a Ticket to Work provider). Come hear the facts about benefits and how those who receive these services can get free career development and retention services while you are still the DODD provider or after someone has a closed case through VR.	Beth	Butler	CEO	ventureLINX
			Co-Speaker: Morgan	Triplett	Medicaid Administrator and Work Incentive Practioner	ventureLINX

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Day, Time & Track	Session # & Title	Session Description	Speaker First Name	Speaker Last Name	Job Title	Organization
Fri., Oct. 27th - 9:00am Human Resources	Session 15 Part 1 - Building a Diverse, Inclusive, and Accessible Future: A Three-Step Process for Advancing Your DEIBA Objectives	In today's interconnected and rapidly changing world, organizations recognize the immense value of embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility (DEIBA) to drive innovation, foster creativity, and achieve sustainable growth. However, many struggle to develop and implement effective DEIBA initiatives that resonate with their workforce and stakeholders. This dynamic one-hour presentation offers a comprehensive three-step process to guide you in building a strong foundation for your organization's DEIBA journey and advancing its impact to create a truly inclusive and accessible environment. Workshop Objectives: 1. Understanding the Power of DEIBA: Begin by delving into the core principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility and their interconnectedness. Participants will gain a profound understanding of the myriad benefits these values bring to an organization, such as enhanced employee engagement, improved decision-making, and increased productivity. 2. The Three-Step DEIBA Development Process: a. Assessment and Visioning: Learn how to conduct a thorough assessment of your organization's current DEIBA landscape. This step involves gathering qualitative and quantitative data, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, and creating a compelling vision for your DEIBA initiative aligned with your organizational values and strategic objectives. b. Strategy and Implementation: Translate your DEIBA vision into actionable strategies. Explore best practices, case studies, and real-world examples of successful DEIBA initiatives from various industries. Participants will gain practical insights into designing effective policies, programs, and interventions, as well as how to align DEIBA objectives with overall organizational goals. c. Empowering Change and Measuring Progress: Develop the skills to foster a culture of continuous improvement and accountability. Understand how to empower employees at all levels to embrace DEIBA principles and integrate them into daily practices. Additionally, explore various metrics and assessment tools to measure the progress of your DEIBA initiative and identify areas that may require further attention. 3. Overcoming Challenges and Sustaining Progress: Recognize the potential challenges and barriers organizations may face during their DEIBA journey. Discover effective strategies to overcome resistance and ensure the sustainability of your initiative in the long run. Gain insights on building alliances, fostering leadership buy-in, and integrating DEIBA practices into the fabric of your organization's culture. By the end of this workshop, participants will leave with a comprehensive understanding of the three-step process to develop and advance their DEIBA initiatives successfully. Armed with practical tools and strategies, attendees will be equipped to foster a culture of inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility, ultimately promoting a thriving and forward-thinking organization.	Stacy	Sufka	Chief Executive Officer	Gladegy Consulting, LLC
Fri., Oct. 27th - 9:00am Residential Waiver	Session 16 Smart Living: Innovating a New Model of Technology Enabled Supports	For the last 3 years LADD has piloted the Smart Living model of support. With an emphasis of technology first, hyper customization of technology solutions and a new staffing model, LADD has solved its staffing crisis and achieved higher outcomes of independence. Validated by a 3 year research study from Xavier University and awarded the ZeroProject award from the United Nations, this model is drastically changing the way services are delivered. This session will explain the process of Smart Living and give audience members the information they need to begin their own Smart Living transformation.	Brian	Hart	Chief Operations Officer	LADD
Fri., Oct. 27th - 9:00am Hot Topics	Session 17 Five Tools for the Involuntary IT Manager	Teaser Paragraph Step into the world of IT management without the proper training or guidance, feeling overwhelmed by the responsibility of meeting your organization's tech needs? Seek no further! Discover a wealth of valuable insights on finding reliable vendors, securing your data against hackers, and exploring essential tools of the trade. Whether you're an accidental IT manager or a seasoned professional seeking fresh perspectives, our session on "Five tools for the Involuntary IT Manager" is tailor-made for you. Join us and unlock the secrets to navigating the complex IT landscape with confidence. Session Description The purpose of this session is to share the knowledge that seasoned information technology professionals have learned over years of working in that discipline. This is not the typical OPRA Conference content in that it is focused on how information technology services are organized and managed. These concepts apply to organizations of all types, not just I/DD providers. The target audience is the provider who does not have a fulltime technology staff and outsources the work to a third-party or attempts to manage IT demands along with its other responsibilities. The person who has taken responsibility for this will benefit from the discussion and the documented procedures and examples that they will receive because they attended this session. The tools that will be shared were adapted from the tools and practices that the Technology Services team at Koinonia Homes uses to manage the technology in its 500-employee organization. They are free to use with no obligation for pay for their use. We will demonstrate the value of these tools and their use, but we will not warranty their use and warn that the user accepts any risk in their use. The session will encourage discussion of key lessons related to the operation, governance and implementation of information technology. In addition to the guidance that we will provide, other technology professionals will be drawn to attend the session and participate in the discussion. Koinonia Homes Technology Services is offering this content in an effort to increase the knowledge that other I/DD providers have in this discipline. The community of providers will benefit from this work. Five Tools -Technology Troubleshooting Methodology -Technical Requirements for Cloud Solutions -Acceptable Use Policy -Basic IT Security Practices -Interview and Assessment for IT Professionals	Howard	Pincham	Chief Information Officer	Koinonia Homes, Inc.

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Fri., Oct. 27th - 10:15am Day & Employment Services	Session 18 Employee-Centered: A Path to Organizational Success	Our presentation aims to explore strategies to promote employee-centered practices, eliminate employee burnout, and create a positive work environment. We will discuss practices, such as leaders taking new employees to lunch within the first month, to implementing monthly touch bases for the next six months. These practices establish strong connections, allows for open communication, and ensures employees feel valued and supported. One of our topics will be gathering feedback through questions like “What is the most exciting part of your job?” and “What makes your office a good place to work?” and the answers will help to identify positive aspects of the work environment allowing organizations to build upon them. As well as asking questions regarding employees training experiences, desired improvements, and areas for growth. Other topics covered will be identifying factors that lead to a negative workplace environment, and how addressing these issues, organizations can implement changes to create a more positive and supportive workplace. Additionally, we will share the importance of acknowledging milestones and achievements, such as personalized gifts for exceeding accountability goals and anniversary celebrations and how these gestures of appreciation contribute to employee morale, loyalty, and motivation. Lastly, we will emphasize allowing opportunities for open discussions, addressing concerns, and identifying growth and career development possibilities. By prioritizing employee needs and providing relevant training opportunities, organizations can enhance employee skills, job satisfaction, and overall engagement.	Beth	Barr	District Leader	Capabilities
		Co-Speaker:	Jane	Huber	HR Leader	Capabilities
Fri., Oct. 27th - 10:15am Human Resources	Session 19 Chat GPT: The HR Superhero You Never Knew You Needed	Topics that will be covered: Introduction to Chat GPT: Understanding what Chat GPT is and its potential in transforming HR practices. Exploring the Challenges: Identifying common HR challenges and pain points that Chat GPT can address effectively. The Superpowers of Chat GPT: Unveiling the unique capabilities of Chat GPT in HR, such as natural language processing, context understanding, and personalized responses. Enhancing Candidate Experience: How Chat GPT can improve the recruitment and onboarding process by providing instant, personalized responses, answering FAQs, and guiding candidates through the application process. Best Practices for Implementing Chat GPT in HR: Practical tips for successful integration and deployment of Chat GPT in HR workflows, including training, monitoring, and continuous improvement. Personalized Support: Chat GPT has the ability to offer tailored assistance and support to individuals with developmental disabilities.	Chris	Hadley	HR Director	Choices In Community Living
		Co-Speaker:	Michelle	Madden	CEO	Independence of Portage Co., Inc.
Fri., Oct. 27th - 10:15am Residential Waiver	Session 20 The ISP Meeting and Managing Medicaid Waiver Utilization	Discussing the importance of delivering services pursuant to the ISP in order to maintain compliance and maximize revenue. How to prepare for an ISP meeting, the Provider's role in the ISP meeting and Best Practices following the ISP meeting.	Shari	Weber	Director of Provider Services	Medicaid Billing Solutions
Fri., Oct. 27th - 10:15am Hot Topics	Session 21 Transition Resources for Every Age and Stage	Over the last several years, OCALI's Lifespan Transitions Center has worked with a variety of schools, agencies, and providers to develop materials, toolkits, and resources to aid professionals, DSPs, caregivers, and self-advocates in those critical transition years. No matter what age or stage you are transitioning to or from, there is a resource created to assist you. In this session, the OCALI team will share the tools and resources that have helped promote better outcomes through transition assessment, family engagement, planning strategies and more.	Elizabeth	Wietmarschen	Transition to Adulthood Consultant	OCALI
		Co-Speaker:	Alex	Corwin	Program Director	OCALI
		Co-Speaker:	Britta	Hough	Community Life Engagement Project Manager	DODD

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Fri., Oct. 27th - 10:15am Sponsored Session	Sponsored Session Part 2- Empowering Organizational Transformation: A Live Demonstration of the DEIBA Interactive Dashboard for Comprehensive Assessment and Action Planning	In the pursuit of creating inclusive and equitable workplaces, organizations need efficient tools to assess, benchmark, action plan, and evaluate their Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Accessibility (DEIBA) efforts. Join us for an immersive one-hour sponsored demonstration, where we unveil a cutting-edge DEIBA Interactive Dashboard designed to revolutionize the way organizations drive positive change and measure their progress towards a more diverse and inclusive future. This live demonstration will showcase the power of technology in facilitating data-driven decision-making and fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. Participants will gain hands-on experience with the interactive dashboard, witnessing its potential to propel meaningful DEIBA initiatives within their organizations. Workshop Objectives: Understanding the DEIBA Interactive Dashboard: Begin with an engaging introduction to the DEIBA Interactive Dashboard, its features, and functionalities. Participants will grasp the dashboard's role as an all-in-one solution to assess, benchmark, action plan, and evaluate DEIBA efforts. Comprehensive DEIBA Assessment: Witness how the dashboard allows organizations to conduct a comprehensive assessment of their current DEIBA landscape. Explore various data points and indicators used to measure diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility across different departments and hierarchies. Benchmarking Against Best Practices: Learn how the dashboard enables organizations to benchmark their DEIBA progress against industry best practices and peer organizations. Participants will gain insights into areas of improvement and potential opportunities for growth. Action Planning for Sustainable Change: Experience the power of data-driven action planning through the interactive dashboard. Witness how it identifies specific areas of focus and offers tailored recommendations to implement effective DEIBA initiatives. Real-time Evaluation and Progress Tracking: Explore how the dashboard provides real-time evaluation and progress tracking mechanisms. Witness how it facilitates continuous monitoring of DEIBA efforts, allowing organizations to make agile adjustments and celebrate milestones. Q&A and Interactive Session: Engage in a vibrant Q&A session, where participants can explore the full potential of the DEIBA Interactive Dashboard for their specific organizational needs. By the end of this sponsored demonstration, participants will leave with a clear understanding of how the DEIBA Interactive Dashboard can serve as a catalyst for organizational transformation. Armed with insights and practical knowledge, attendees will be empowered to take informed steps towards building a more diverse, inclusive, and accessible workplace that fosters a true sense of belonging for all.	Stacy	Sufka	Chief Executive Officer	Gladegy Consulting, LLC
Fri., Oct. 27th - 11:30am Day & Employment Services	Session 22 Person Centered Planning and Community Integration	Focuses on person centered planning and tools used to provide successful Day Services. As well as a success story of Andrew that was part of the DODD Innovation Series: Supporting People with Significant Needs and the tips and tools to help him succeed.	Wendy	Mbugua	ADS Team Lead	RVI, inc.
			Co-Speaker: Laura	Borows	CEO	RVI, inc.
Fri., Oct. 27th - 11:30am Human Resources	Session 23 Building a Sustainable Workforce: Unleashing the Potential of Employer Resource Networks	Join us to learn about the Employer Resource Network (ERN) model, a cross-sector approach that has revolutionized job retention services, work supports, education, and training. This innovative model combines the efforts of businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, higher education, and technical and training institutions to create a comprehensive support system for employees, transforming lives and businesses alike. The presenters have spearheaded multiple successful ERNs for DD providers in Ohio. You will learn how ERNs have become a game-changer, fostering economic self-sufficiency for employees and their families. By supporting workers' growth, ERNs contribute to creating a more engaged, skilled, and motivated workforce that also enables companies to retain their most valuable asset: their human capital. Key takeaways from this session include: Understanding the core elements of the Employer Resource Network model and how it integrates job retention services, work supports, education, and training to empower employees. Exploring the collaboration between businesses, nonprofits, government entities, and educational institutions and how this collective effort drives positive outcomes for both workers and employers. Gaining insights into the specific strategies successful ERNs employ to create supportive environments that lead to long-term economic self-sufficiency for employees. Identifying practical steps to initiate and sustain Employer Resource Networks within your organization or community, fostering lasting positive change.	Stephen	MacDonald	Program Manager	Lucas County Family and Children First Council
			Co-Speaker: Natalie	Longmeier	Executive Director	Marion Matters
			Co-Speaker: James	Vander Hulst	Chief Disruptive Officer	Employer Resource Network

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Fri., Oct. 27th - 11:30am Residential Waiver	Session 24 The Path to Shared Living	Are you a provider who is debating whether to begin offering OSL (Ohio Shared Living) through your agency? This session will provide an overview of OSL service and experience as well as a 'path' for providers to begin offering the service. Join us for a panel discussion as Sara Eppard from Dungarvin, Jeff Pattison from the Franklin County Board of DD, and Nyoka Craddolph from the Department of Developmental Disabilities as we identify the roles and responsibilities for the provider, County Board, and DODD throughout the Shared Living process.	Sara	Eppard	State Director	Dungarvin Ohio, LLC
			Co-Speaker: Jeff	Pattison	Assistant Director, Service Coordination	Franklin County Board of DD
			Co-Speaker: Nyoka	Craddolph	Assistant Deputy Director	DODD
Fri., Oct. 27th - 11:30am Hot Topics	Session 25 Understanding Autism	After working 28 years in the field of Developmental Disabilities, establishing a reputation for working with people with complex needs and "behavioral concerns", was diagnosed with Autism in 2014. Now looking to turn that insight into being a person with and serving people with Autism into a powerful training to help improve Autism services. Learning objectives: 1) participant gains better understanding of broad overview of Autism 2) participant gains better understanding of how a person with Autism processes the world around them, leading to greater empathy towards/understanding of "behaviors" 3) participant broadens knowledge base regarding sensory processing, social interaction, and communication issues in people with Autism.	Steve	Maenle	Executive Director	Manahan
			Co-Speaker: Anthony	Aquillo	Lobbyist	The Success Group
Fri., Oct. 27th - 12:45pm Lunch & Learn	Session 26 Legislative / Department Updates	Join Pete and Christine for a moderated discussion with OPRA's lobbying team at The Success Group and with representatives from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). During the session we will discuss the current political climate in the Ohio General Assembly (GA) and its impact on the legislative priorities of the GA. After this overview, attendees will hear from DODD and OOD on the legislation they are watching and what it could mean for providers. This session is interactive and the audience is encouraged to bring questions for the panelist.	Jeremiah	Wagner	Deputy Director of External Relations	DODD
			Co-Speaker: Michael	Graham	Legislative Liaison for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities	OOD
			Co-Speaker: Christine	Touvelle	Director of Advocacy	Ohio Provider Resource Association
			Co-Speaker: Peter	Moore	President & CEO	Ohio Provider Resource Association