

4-17-15

To: Employment First stakeholders

From: Mike Maley, Statewide Employment First Coordinator

Re: Employment First: Meet at the Mountain III

(Please forward to your local partners & stakeholders)

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Meet at the Mountain III, which brought together local Employment First teams from around the state, drew a capacity-only crowd of more than 300 attendees, almost doubling the attendance at the first event held in 2011.



Al Condeluci spoke about the power of social capital.

Photo: Cassy McCartney

The event, which had the theme “Time to Climb,” kicked off on April 9 in Bend with keynote speaker Al Condeluci, who talked about “Employment: Through Social Capital.” His rousing talk highlighted the many benefits of social capital, including being part of the community, making friends, getting and keeping jobs and living a healthier life due to community inclusion.

After Condeluci’s talk, local Employment First teams from around the state gave brief presentations on what they accomplished in the last year, and highlighted future goals.

Corissa Neufeldt with the DHS Employment First team, along with members of the Seamless Transition Pilot, then gave an update on the pilot. The Seamless Transition Pilot team also discussed successes that already occurred with students leaving school with paid employment.



The Central Oregon Employment First team had a strong showing at the Meet at the Mountain event. The group boasted a strong collaboration with VR, DD and education.

Photo: Cassy McCartney

On April 10, breakout sessions on many topics were offered. Sessions included topics such as transforming from facility-based to community-based organizations, the power of self-advocacy and peer mentors, parent engagement around employment, a session on self-employment, and much more.

On Friday afternoon, state leadership from Employment First, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) gave updates. Then conference participants broke into small groups to have facilitated conversations about their best ideas supporting community jobs for people with developmental disabilities in Oregon.

At the end, conference participants discussed and committed “bold moves,” or ideas they had to individually and collectively move the Employment First initiative forward.

Meet at the Mountain III was funded by the Department of Human Services’ Employment First team, with planning and coordination provided by the Central Oregon Employment First team, ODDS, VR, ODE, Oregon Rehabilitation Association (ORA) and the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE).

Thank you all for your continued involvement, support, and advocacy for services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oregon. If you have comments or other questions, please email them to employment.first@state.or.us.

A slideshow of photos from the Meet at the Mountain is [online](#).