AHEDD is driven by our mission and thrives through the commitment of our team across the state. This 17-18’ Annual Report is comprised of the year’s outcomes, captures the quality of what our staff bring to the organization, and the successes of those we serve.

Not having been in this new role a full year, I can only speak to my observations over the last four months. I will rely on the charts and numbers to tell the rest of our story. It is important to note however that those charts and numbers are not just numbers to us. Since assuming the role of President, I have had the pleasure of getting to see what’s behind the numbers and at the “Heart of AHEDD,” by getting to know our dedicated staff, assessing our processes, convening with our partners, watching our participants thrive, and observing how we focus on our mission. In the pages to follow, you will see many charts and numbers that demonstrate AHEDD’s success. Those charts and numbers represent positive impacts on people’s lives, whether it be finding and retaining competitive integrated employment, building self-sufficiency, or the expansion of economic opportunities for the individuals we serve. It is very simply what is at the “HEART of what we do at AHEDD.”

Still in the early stages of the Employment First legislation, AHEDD will continue to capitalize on this pivotal time to influence policy that promotes competitive integrated employment. We will use this very opportune time in history, when the entire nation has elevated the needs of individuals with disabilities, to target our efforts succinctly through strategic planning that will guide our path for the future. I’ve used the phrase “Heart of AHEDD” very purposefully in this message, as it is also the theme of our Annual Meeting. Always keeping in mind what is at the “Heart of AHEDD” ensures we stay rooted in our mission.

Over the last year, policy changes at the federal and state level have been introduced that will have financial and operational impacts to our services. While the full effects of these changes are not completely known, AHEDD continues to maintain our dedication to service and the relationships we have forged. These relationships will continue to endure but they will be joined with additional considerations. Our strategic planning will have us identify challenges and opportunities, as well as tap into the expertise of our board members, the individuals we serve and their families and, one of our greatest assets…the staff in the field.

I look forward to seeing where our collective effort takes us as we enrich existing relationships, explore new industries to bring into the fold, identify new business champions, be awarded new funding opportunities, and most importantly, continue to help our participants reach goals they never thought were possible.

Very truly yours,

Brandy F. Burnham
President
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

REVENUE

$3,764,958.66

SPONSORSHIP

- PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) - 531
- Social Security Administration (SSA) - 145
- PA Office of Mental Health (OMH) - 151
- PA Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) - 92
- Secondary Schools - 10
- Other Sponsors - 5

NEW PARTICIPANTS PER SPONSOR AT TIME OF SERVICE

WE SERVE MUCH OF PENNSYLVANIA THROUGH A NETWORK OF FIELD OFFICES

Locations of Work Incentive Counseling Experts
Locations of Employment Experts

AHEDD WORKS REMOTELY AND IN-PERSON TO COVER LARGE TERRITORIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH
OUR WORKFORCE IS OUR GREATEST ASSET

AHEDD’S TEAM

Suzanne Swanson
Community Work Incentive Coordinator

“Every day I enjoy speaking with Social Security beneficiaries, hearing their stories, and helping them understand how their Social Security disability benefits may or may not be affected when re-entering employment. It’s been a great challenge to learn my position, but I enjoy it, and I love working with a great team.”

Anana Rice
Employment Specialist

“Working at AHEDD has allowed me to utilize my transferable skills from the legal field in the nonprofit sector, and also help disabled individuals in a meaningful way. It is always gratifying to hear the great news that a participant “got the job” or maintained employment. I am grateful for the opportunity to make a positive impact on people’s lives through my position with AHEDD.”

Ian Waite
Employment Coordinator, MS, CRC, CESP, Certified to Provide Discovery Services

“The opportunities at AHEDD have allowed me to grow professionally and to better support the individuals with whom we work. Being empowered to make a positive impact on the vocational goals of others is highly rewarding.”
WE ARE COMMITTED TO OUR STAFF AND QUALITY SERVICES

AHEDD employees have the opportunity for development and training through in-house orientations, local mentoring, a six month series of weekly training webinars, and our annual meeting.

In addition, the following investments in staff development continue to be provided: APSE’s Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential; ACRE-approved Discovery and Customized Employment training and certification programs; and Virginia Commonwealth University’s certification program for Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs) Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors (CPWICs).

RECRUITMENT

AHEDD’s best recruitment strategy is still word-of-mouth. In addition to our employee referral program, we’ve had excellent employees referred to AHEDD by stakeholders who understand and value what we do daily. We know that our employees are ambassadors to the community and we’re proud of how they represent our organization.

“Kelsey (an AHEDD participant) and I worked together at Giant for 5 years. I was Kelsey’s supervisor for a while and in that time I got to learn more about her and see first-hand the types of support provided by her AHEDD Employment Specialists. Kelsey informed me that AHEDD was hiring, but I wasn’t quite ready for a new job at the time as I wanted to finish college. Once I graduated, I asked Kelsey if AHEDD was still hiring and she eagerly said, ‘I’ll find out for you.’ Within the next week Sarah Guyer-Marshall (Area Manager, Chambersburg Field Office) came into Giant searching for me. Sarah encouraged me to send my resume to her for consideration. If it was not for Kelsey, I would have never heard of AHEDD or thought about this position. Kelsey was my ‘employment specialist’ and helped me land my right job match.”

—Natalie Stein, Employment Specialist
CHLOE SAYS “I LOVE MY JOB”

Chloe is a youth who, while still in High School, sought services from AHEDD to receive some short term work experience and participate in career exploration activities during the summers of 2015 and 2016.

After graduation, Chloe secured part time employment with Fenner Drives of Lancaster County. In January 2018, Chloe’s request to become full time was granted. Each week she now works two days to assist with operating a machine that rivets/ connects conveyor belt links together and another three days to hand assemble and pack drive parts. AHEDD provided Chloe with On-Site Training to assist her in achieving production quotas.

YVETTE THANKS AHEDD

Yvette is a single mother of two who had been out of the workforce for almost two years as she battled cancer. In January of 2017, she began moving forward with AHEDD to receive assistance in returning to work, with some physical restrictions, and navigating her responsibilities as a SSA beneficiary who was receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). By early February of 2017, Yvette obtained a job in an administrative assistant position and was working toward greater independence as she completed her Trial Work Period.

“Cathy (AHEDD’s Employment Coordinator) was there every step of the way, making calls, sending emails and speaking directly to her various contacts at Social Security. Using her knowledge of the system, she coached me on who to speak to, what verification to provide and helped me to stay positive at a time when my health and finances were wavering”, says Yvette.

ABM INDUSTRIES, INC.
A GRATEFUL EMPLOYER

“I have been meaning to send you a quick email thanking you for everything your company has been doing. Your clients have been great additions to our team, and your Job Coaches have been great to work with. You have made my job of recruiting people much easier. Thank you for everything.” - Arlin Yons, Account Manager, ABM Industries, Inc. | Technology and Manufacturing
RYAN–CO-WORKER OF THE MONTH

Not long after starting at Embrovac in 2017, Ryan attended the Co-Worker of the Month certificate presentation. He told his supervisor, Ken Miller, that he wanted that award. Ken told him “You need to earn that award” and explained the ways in which he could go about it. Ryan took this into consideration and began working toward this goal. He achieved this goal in March 2018 and was presented with the certificate during a safety meeting.

Ryan’s employer has said, “He (Ryan) has changed the entire culture of our company. Before Ryan was hired, people would talk about one another and the environment just was not friendly.”

JERRY WANTS TO BE AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS

Jerry was excited to be part of AHEDD’s Success Spotlight. While he said he had worked with other resources since 1976 (when he got out of high school), he reports, “AHEDD was my first success with work.” His life has been full of challenges regarding his mental health and past criminal charges, but his outlook is positive. He added, “Thanks for giving me a chance...A whole ton of weight has been lifted off of me.”

Through funding from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, AHEDD assisted Jerry in getting a part time position at a local theater in 2015. His work schedule at the theater wound up being inconsistent and didn’t offer many hours. AHEDD continued working with Jerry to achieve his employment goals and he found another job in security in the Fall of 2016. Unfortunately Jerry was unable to accept this security job because he relies on public transportation and SEPTA was on strike at the time. Finally in March of 2017, Jerry secured a full time housekeeping job at Walmart; This job is his first with benefits. He continues to work at the local theater on an as needed basis.

AHEDD supported Jerry in navigating the application process for Walmart and has provided him with on-site support to address training needs and report his earnings to Social Security. Due to Jerry’s status as a beneficiary, AHEDD will continue to deliver flexible and ongoing support to Jerry under Social Security’s Ticket to Work Program.

Jerry is an inspiration, noting “A lot of people don’t have anything good to say for themselves. Then one day they can wake up and have something positive [to say].”
AHEDD had 783 beneficiaries enrolled in SSA’s Ticket to Work program at the time of June 30, 2018. Of this total, 37% achieved earnings of at least Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) and 17% earned enough money to have SSA cash benefits suspended or terminated.
PLACEMENTS

NEW PLACEMENTS OF YOUTH VS. ADULTS

ADULT
YOUTH (21 and younger)

TOTAL

397
307

256
222

PLACEMENTS & EARNINGS

PLACEMENTS BY DISABILITY

MENTAL HEALTH
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY
OTHER
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER
LEARNING DISABILITY
ORTHOPEDIC

402 TOTAL

132
62
92
61
31
24

EARNINGS INCREASE OVER INITIAL SSA BENEFITS
37.17% MORE PER MONTH

AVerAGE DAYS TO PLACEMENT
131 DAYS IS THE AVERAGE

*32.24% of Placements took less than 30 Days
RETENTION AND IMPACT

AHEDD commits to provide support and guidance to our program participants for at least the first 12 months after work begins. This commitment to ongoing (follow along) support is a great benefit for both our program participants and employers. We not only want people to get a job, we want them to stay employed.

While the level of support is customized according to need, providing such Follow Along services helps the individual to maintain employment, address career development issues, and enhance their economic well being. AHEDD is there to help with any type of issue that could impact someone’s ability to maintain employment successfully. We can make a difference by guiding our participants on ways to address conflicts with co-workers, solve performance deficiencies, handle the reporting of earnings to SSA, and much more.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

FOR EVERY DOLLAR SPENT AT AHEDD, WE ESTIMATE THE ROI TO BE $5.65

This ROI looks at earnings and savings to SSA. It does NOT include the additional impact from payroll taxes.
In response to the business community’s needs for a diverse set of qualified workers to fill its labor needs, meet its compliance requirements, and respond effectively to the needs of its diverse customers, AHEDD began coordinating a statewide business initiative, The Pennsylvania Business Leadership Network (PA BLN), in 2000.

In 2018, the Pennsylvania Business Leadership Network is rebranding this business initiative as Disability:IN Pennsylvania.

We are still an employer-driven program designed for business leaders to promote hiring practices that enable qualified people with disabilities to enter and succeed in the workplace. This rebrand is just a way to better communicate that our efforts are empowering businesses to achieve true disability inclusion and equality.

The support provided to companies through Disability:IN Pennsylvania is definitely connected to our employment expertise at AHEDD, but it also goes beyond just the assistance that can be offered by our agency. This business initiative can connect companies to other community resources that can help them to identify candidates, deliver required training, determine viable accommodation solutions, and more.

Work Incentives Counseling is a service that helps social security beneficiaries to understand how employment earnings will impact their benefits. Currently AHEDD has 11 certified staff who can help individuals to identify work incentives which can maximize their income and healthcare options as they achieve greater financial independence. AHEDD provides this service through various sources of sponsorship to encourage employment and working to one’s potential.
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