



AADD ALASKA

Sept/October — 2019

Tributes to Frontiersmen of Alaska Disabilities



On June 29, 2019, a pioneering friend of Alaskans with disabilities, Mike Renfro passed away. He was a leading force in person-centered

planning in the State of Alaska long before recent CMS rules. Mike moved from the State of Texas to Alaska, filling the role of superintendent of Harborview Developmental Center in Valdez, Alaska. He transitioned to become the Division Director for Developmental Disabilities, instrumental in the deinstitutionalization of the State of Alaska using home and community based services. As Division Director, Mike established divisional service principles and operational values that were focused on seeing each person as an individual and giving them choice over the services they received. During his tenure, the cost of services per individual dropped as people often requested less. Before retiring from State Government, he combined divisions of both developmental disabilities and mental health services, and ushered in the HCBS waiver services. Mike established and operated the Renfro's Lakeside Retreat on Kenai Lake near Seward, Alaska. He enjoyed international travel, and time with his family on the Kenai Peninsula and in Texas.

Mike will always be fondly remembered as a champion of flexible services delivered in a person-centered manner, whose legacy remains alive in many Alaskans outliving and exceeding societal expectations of 30-40 years ago.



Duane as director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

On September 12, 2019, Duane French, a longtime champion of the rights for individuals with disabilities passed away in Olympia, Washington. Injured in a diving accident at age 14, Duane

overcame his initial despair and became a tireless advocate for independent living and the right to access in public places. Working from his wheelchair, he held the position of Director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and fought for the Americans with Disabilities Act in Washington DC, being twice removed from the halls of Congress and even spent one night in jail. Signed into law by President George H.W. Bush in 1990, the act established a clear and comprehensive prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability.

His sister said "He was about making life so much better for people with disabilities. He just wanted everyone to have a chance to have the best life they could, just like he did. He loved life to the fullest and wouldn't let anything stop him."

Duane rose to the role of Director of Disability Service in the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Duane will always be remembered as a trailblazing man of action who inspired many, and who exemplifies the power of focusing on a person's differing abilities instead of disabilities. We remember him with humble gratitude.

DHSS UPDATE

Caroline Hogan, Chief of Programs shared the following update at the September 27th face-to-face meeting.

Assistive Technology project has funded 20 mini grants (up to \$10,000) through out state and 11 in Mat-Su.

Family Habilitation model is being reviewed to meet federal requirements with active AADD participation.

Care Coordination difficulties articulated from limited availability, to, especially in rural areas to heavy paperwork and some taking on unreasonable case-loads (e.g. 70 waivers). When care coordinators are overloaded providers have more responsibilities.

EVV—Electronic Visit Verification

PCA compliance extended to Jan 2021. Home Health Care (HCBS) in Jan 2023.

SDS will choose an open model that will aggregate information from providers.

Waitlist and ISW waivers:

DD Waitlist at 683

IDD waiver: 15 drawn July/August

ISW waiver: 729 offered

280 ISW's fully approved

319 Plans of Care submitted

537 Levels of Care completed

23 folks receiving safety net funds

InterRAI—This is an evaluation tool being evaluated and researched to possibly replace the ICAP.

NCI—National Core Indicators

Alaska will be come the 47th state to support embrace the NCI face to face interviews with individuals receiving services for their input on self determination, choice, respect and dignity.

DD Shared Vision

At the Sept 27 face-to-face meeting, Kim Champney facilitated a discussion on the DSP Workforce needs. A key piece of the conversation involved reflecting on what core beliefs may be impacting our ability to effectively address workforce shortages. Thoughts of the group about how to address core beliefs:

- ⇒ Include DSPs in agency leadership/asking DSPs what they need
- ⇒ Create a more formal career path
- ⇒ Share what DSPs actually do
- ⇒ Create ongoing public recognition/appreciation
- ⇒ Establish a universal occupational title
- ⇒ Re-consider DSP as an “entry level” position

It's human nature to return to our daily responsibilities without continuing to be reflective of the need to dig deeper and re-frame for ourselves and our organizations how we view direct support professionals. In the words of one of the greatest change agents ever—Mahatma Ghandi: *“Be the change you want to see in the world.”*

ANCOR UPDATE

Remember the Overtime Rule? A final ruling was signed by the President September 24, 2019 raising the “standard salary level” to \$684/week or \$35,568/year. All employees earning this amount or less may not be considered exempt.

The Autism Cures Act is signed into law providing supporting funds for Autism research and pilot projects.

ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

The Monthly Teleconference on Oct 10th will be dedicated to communication with other associations and advocacy groups regarding access to services and workforce issues to develop an aligned advocacy platform

Foraker Emerging Leadership Training 2020

Watch for applications coming out Nov 5 and due back December 2nd. Training will take place Feb. 17 & 18 and April 20 and 21st with 1:1 consultation offered post training.

Calendar for

- October 17th No CFO or compliance group call
- October 24 Hot Topics— Rep Payee Crisis
- Oct 24 & 25th Employment Empowerment Conf.
- Feb. 6—7, 2020 Key Campaign in Juneau.

DSP Spotlight



ASSETS, Inc.
DSP
Jonathon
Barnes

Assets, Inc. has simple Core value nomination slips available everywhere in the company. Employees who “observe” a coworker exemplifying one of the four core values fills out a form with the name of the employee observed, the core value exhibited and the nominator’s name. It is collected in a box or emailed to the Executive director and the DSP is awarded a certificate of recognition and a gift card to the local grocery store. A company-wide email announcement is made as well.

A recent example was Jonathon Barnes who works as a Mentor and DSP. Jon was nominated for the core value “making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities” for his repeated volunteerism in assisting clients and their supporters in unexpected and immediate needs, like delivering a much needed piece of new furniture, providing a ride to a special event at the last minute or traveling to a site to provide person centered training to a peer on positive teaching strategies for their specific client.



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