



The disability community is diverse. The LEAD Center is committed to being intentionally inclusive of race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and disability in our research, programs, and partnerships. Talking about “intersectional identities” is important, and we strive to foster a learning environment. Therefore, we invite you to join our events with **empathy and open-mindedness**. You can learn more about [our dedication to DEIA](#).

# Partnerships to Support Successful Customized Employment

**July 25, 2023**  
**LEAD Center**

*The LEAD WIOA Policy Development Center is led by National Disability Institute and is fully funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant No. OD-38977-22-75-4-11.*



## Moderator

### Nancy Boutot

Subject Matter Expert on  
Advancing Economic Self-  
sufficiency for People with  
Disabilities

(Facilitator)

LEAD WIOA Policy Development  
Center

National Disability Institute

# Housekeeping I: Captioning

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- Click the “Live Transcript” button on the Zoom panel to find the Hide Captions option or adjust caption size under the “subtitle settings...” option.
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  - Adjust the background color, text color, and font using the drop-down menus at the top of the browser. Position the window to sit on top of the embedded captioning.

# Housekeeping II: Questions

## Content questions?

Click on the Q&A button and type in your question.

**Tech support questions?** Type your question in the Chat box.





# Welcome and Opening Remarks

**Rose Warner**

Senior Policy Advisor

Workforce Systems Policy Team

Office of Disability Employment Policy  
(ODEP)

U.S. Department of Labor



## Learning Objectives (1)



Following this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Identify a variety of approaches to achieving Customized Employment outcomes through partnerships.
- Implement Guided Group Discovery, adapted as needed to their clientele, through partnerships with vocational rehabilitation, schools, Centers for Independent Living, American Job Centers, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, and more.

## Learning Objectives (2)



Following this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Explore funding options and ways to blend, braid, and sequence resources across systems.
- Discuss success stories about people who have benefited from Customized Employment, including how it worked and why it was important, from the perspectives of the jobseeker, employer, and employment staff.



## Presenters

- [Toni DePeel](#), Pre-Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS) Coordinator, State of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation
- [Wendy Parker](#), Manager, Postsecondary Transition, Division of Specialized Instruction, Office of Teaching and Learning, District of Columbia Public Schools
- [Jhiya Cooper](#), Former Guided Group Discovery participant
- [Tikeya Milburn](#), Project Manager, Transition Services, DC Rehabilitation Services Administration, DC Department on Disability Services





# Customized Employment



# WHAT IS CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT (CE)?

- Customized employment (CE) for an individual with a significant disability is:
  - based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests...
  - designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer, and carried out through flexible strategies...

Section 7(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



# WHY CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

- ❖ Supports people with barriers to employment to attain their employment goals when traditional strategies do not succeed.
- ❖ Assists in the implementation of on-going supports that promote employment retention.





# WHAT IS DISCOVERY?

- A first step in Customized Employment
- Discovery seeks to find who a person is right now:
  - Interests and preferences
  - Skills and contributions
  - Conditions of employment
- Used to match jobseeker to employer needs



# COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMIZED APPROACH



- Discovery (Gathering Information)
- Profile or “Employment Blueprint” (Written summary of what was learned in Discovery)
- Meeting and Customized Employment plan development
- Informational Interviews and Networking (Discovering Employer and Community Needs)
- Proposing and/or Negotiating Employment Opportunities



# CE CIRCUMVENTS A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

## **Traditional Job Development:**

- ▶ Vocational Assessment
- ▶ Resume development
- ▶ Interview practice
- ▶ Responding to posted jobs (the public workforce, want ads, Craig's List, etc.)
- ▶ Applications and Interviews

## **A Customized Approach:**

- ▶ Discovery
- ▶ Profiles. May include portfolios, picture or video resumes, etc.
- ▶ Informational interviews/connections
- ▶ Match skills and employer needs
- ▶ Employment Proposals

## Formats for Discovery

- ✓ Facilitated Discovery
- ✓ Self-Guided Discovery
- ✓ Guided Group Discovery





# BUILDING A JOB SEARCH TEAM

**A job search team is a group of people on whom you can rely on (who you know well and trust) for job-related advice, support and feedback:**



FAMILY

FRIENDS



TEACHERS



COUNSELORS



NEIGHBORS



OTHERS?







# THE DISCOVERY PROCESS LEADS TO A BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

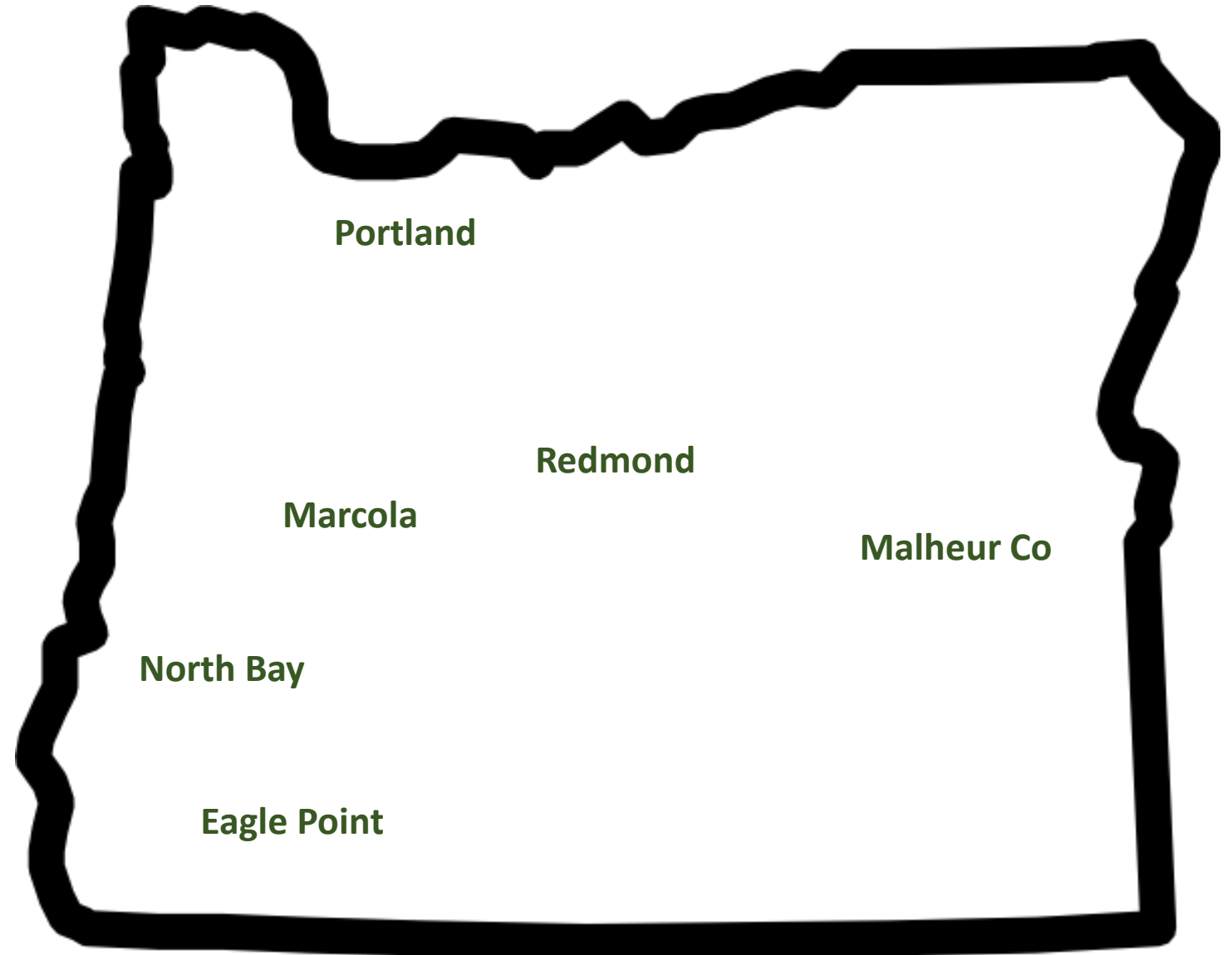
A Blueprint for Employment :

- Summarizes what you learned about yourself during the discovery process
- Provides you with some structure as you take your first (or next) step towards employment



# Oregon Guided Group Discovery Project

- Focused on Youth in Transition
- Piloted in six selected sites
- Used Transition Network Facilitators to assist with implementation with support from LEAD
- Evaluated and expanded the Project



## Guided Group Discovery Series

*A journey in self-exploration*

5 workshops—40 minutes to 1 hour—virtual

# Discovery Helps Answer the Following Questions



WHAT TYPE OF WORK  
ENVIRONMENT DO I  
WANT TO WORK IN?



WHAT TYPE OF WORK  
TASKS ARE MY  
STRENGTHS?



WHAT TYPE OF WORK  
TASKS DO I WANT TO  
DO?



WHAT TYPE OF  
EMPLOYER DO I WANT  
TO WORK FOR?



WHAT INDUSTRIES  
MIGHT I LIKE TO WORK  
IN?

*A Free Service Offered By:*

Vocational Rehabilitation

And the Transition Technical Assistance Network

**To Register Contact:**

**Toni DePeel—**

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# Who Are You?

- Name:
- Are you:
  - Currently working?
  - Looking for work?
  - Thinking about work, but not sure what to do?
- If you could get paid to do any type of work, what would it be?





Toni DePeel  
Pre-Employment  
Transition  
Service Coordinator  
Favorite Place to be:  
*Walking by a Lake*





## Activity Project



On one side of your activity worksheet, take a few minutes to draw or write out a description of your present self. On the other side, draw or write out a description of yourself in the future, being as descriptive and vivid as possible.

Some things to consider for the future

- *Where will you live?*
- *What will you do for work?*
- *What things would you want to have?*



# Worksheets Developed for Lessons



Guided Group Discovery Lesson 1

Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

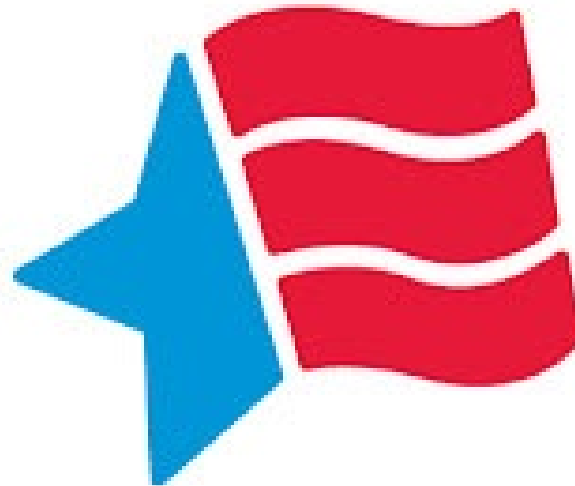
Take some time to think..... Why Work?

Check the box for reasons why you want to work.





Career OneStop  
Video's used  
(Nonfarm Animal  
Caretaker Career  
Video)







# What about you?

- What kinds of environments/places do you like?
- What kind of environments/places do you not like?





# SKILLS AND TASKS

Skills: The ability to do something well or the combination of knowledge, abilities and talents to perform a task.

Task: A piece of work that needs to be done, the specific things you perform to complete your job.

# Vocational Themes

## What is a Vocational Theme?

**Vocation**: A trade or profession

**Theme**: A group of like items or thing

So.... a vocational theme would be a profession or job group.





# Guided Group Discovery Lesson Worksheet 4 Part 1

## Vocational Themes

Choose 3 that interest you, or that you would be willing to try and mark the box

Construction



Mechanical



Health Care



Transportation



Customer Service



Culinary



Child Services



Custodial/Maintenance





# Who is on Your Job Search Team?

- Who do you know that can help you get a job?





# GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY



**Tikeya Milburn**

**DC Department on Disability Services  
Rehabilitation Services Administration**



# Collaboration with other services

- ❑ DC's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) works collaboratively with local schools to ensure uninterrupted services for students transitioning from the secondary education environment to post-secondary education, training and employment.
- ❑ To determine a person's needs and prepare them for employment, RSA partners with qualified service providers.
- ❑ RSA also partners with the workforce system, the Workforce Investment Council, state education agency, the child welfare system, the Department of Behavioral Health, and more.

# Origins of Program

## LEAD Center

- The Guided Group Discovery program was developed by the LEAD Center in partnership with ODEP and DOL
- Program was piloted in Oregon

## District of Columbia

- First urban area to implement program
- RCM of Washington customized and adapted the program to fit the needs of the DC's population and job market
- Adapted to virtual learning using the Nearpod platform



# Guided Group Discovery (GGD) Pilot History (1)

- During Spring 2021, DC RSA partnered with a supported employment provider, RCM of Washington, and the River Terrace Education Campus to introduce the Guided Group Discovery project to teachers and students with the support of the VR Counselor assigned to this school.
- Participants created individual blueprints to guide them as they navigated their journey toward employment. GGD provided a peer-to-peer opportunity for jobseekers to jointly identify their interests, skills, and accommodations for employment.
- GGD helped address the need for youth with disabilities to develop work skills, and work opportunities while they were still in school, and to identify needed supports to get and keep a job.

# Guided Group Discovery (GGD) Pilot History (2)

- At the conclusion of the pilot, 33 of 44 participants (75%) completed individual Blueprints for Employment and gained the knowledge, skills and confidence to pursue their future employment endeavors.
- Due to the success of this program, the GGD process was extended to the general vocational rehabilitation (VR) population to provide adults with access to GGD. The pilot adult program started in November 2021 with 3 participants who completed blueprints for employment.

# A Peek into the Blueprint



**TRE'SEAN ROGERS**

*BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT*

PAGE | 1

# Blueprint for Employment Contributions: It's All About You

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
<p><b>INTERESTS</b> <i>What do you like to do?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Football</li> <li>• Basketball</li> <li>• Spending time with Father</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Going for rides in the car</li> <li>• Going out to eat</li> <li>• Video Games</li> <li>• Being out in the community</li> <li>• Animals</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Cooking</li> </ul>	<p><b>SKILLS</b> <i>What are you good at?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Cooking</li> <li>• Good with hands</li> <li>• Computer skills</li> <li>• Athletic</li> <li>• Handwriting skills</li> <li>• Notetaking</li> <li>• Good listener</li> <li>• Taking care of plants</li> </ul>
<p><b>TASKS</b> <i>What tasks can you complete?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares meals</li> <li>• Completes assignments on the computer</li> <li>• Takes complete notes for classwork/assignments</li> <li>• Waters plants</li> <li>• Plants a variety of plants</li> <li>• Arranges plants for proper sunlight</li> <li>• Keeps score of different sports</li> <li>• Cleans around the house (sweeps, mops, washes clothes)</li> <li>• Washes hands</li> </ul>	<p><b>POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS</b> <i>How would you and others describe you?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respectful</li> <li>• Mannerly</li> <li>• Quiet (Fire)</li> <li>• Good listener</li> <li>• Participatory</li> <li>• Punctual</li> <li>• Nice</li> <li>• Good person</li> <li>• Fast learner</li> </ul>

# Blueprint for Employment: Vocational Themes and Accommodations

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
EMERGING VOCATIONAL THEMES:	WHERE WOULD PEOPLE WITH SIMILAR THEMES WORK?
Books	Public library, bookstore, University library, museum, poet
Retail	Target, Best Buy, Walmart, Amazon, Grocery Store
Organization	Stocker, Mailroom, Inventory

## ACCOMMODATIONS, DISCLOSURE, FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

I may need additional time/training to learn new tasks.

Needing more time does not mean I will not be good at my job. In fact, once I learn my tasks, I am good!

I am hesitant to share my disability with others (do not want to be looked at differently) but would share with my boss if it was affecting my work so they can better understand me. I want to be the person to share this personal information, not someone else.

## SUCCESS STORIES (1)

### Story 1: Adam

Adam finished GGD in 2022 and graduated from River Terrace. While in the program, he explored his skills and interests. An emerging theme was an interest in helping others and working with children or youth. He was able to use the skills he learned in GGD to apply for, interview, and secure a job on his own as a cafeteria worker in a local elementary school. His main role is to assist with preparing the fruit for lunches. He received job coaching from RSA at the start but has now fully faded supports and is still doing well. He has maintained this job since September of 2022 and his case is successfully closed. He loves helping with the kids and loves having summers off.

## SUCCESS STORIES (2)

### Story 2: Tyrone

Tyrone finished GGD in 2022. He then enrolled in NAF Academy of Hospitality and Tourism at River Terrace Education Campus in 2022-2023 to gain additional career skill development. He graduated in June 2023. While in the program, he identified skills and interests. An emerging theme was an openness to many areas of employment, including cleaning, security, and customer service. Using the skills learned in GGD, he successfully applied for, interviewed for, and attained a summer job at Six Flags as a Ride Operator. He is maintaining this position while he pursues permanent employment. Tyrone is enjoying the job and feels confident about attaining future long-term employment. Tyrone advocates for himself well and, because of GGD, can clearly identify supports he needs and knows how to request them.



## Jhiya's GGD Interview





**QUESTIONS?**



# SUCCESS STORIES FROM OTHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN GGD

[Video: Meet Trevon and learn more about his experience as part of the Guided Group Discovery Process](#)



[Video: Meet Marcus and learn more about his experience as part of the Guided Group Discovery Process](#)



[Video: Meet Joseph and learn more about his experience as part of the Guided Group Discovery Process](#)



## DISCOVERY RESOURCES (1)

### [Guided Group Discovery Resources: Introduction and Course, Participant Workbook, & Facilitator Guide](#)

Materials include a Facilitator Manual, an accompanying PowerPoint slide deck (Introduction and Course), and a Participant Workbook.

### [Guided Group Discovery Online Participant Workbook](#)

This tool allows you to complete the workbook through your web browser. A Workbook you started can be re-opened to add, edit, or review information at any time through a link sent to you via email.

### [Self-Guided Discovery Facilitator's Guide: Helping People Discover Their Own Path to Employment](#)

This Facilitator's Guide provides step-by-step guidance and highlights the ways a self-directed or family-guided approach may differ from a guided or facilitated approach. The Guide explains the similarities between the two approaches.

## DISCOVERY RESOURCES (2)

### **Guided Group Discovery – Veterans Edition – Facilitator Guide**

This Guided Group Discovery – Veterans Edition Facilitator Guide trains people to facilitate Guided Group Discovery sessions with Veterans, people with disabilities, and/or others who experience barriers to employment.

### **Guided Group Discovery – Youth Version – Facilitator Guide & Supplemental Slide Deck**

This Guided Group Discovery Facilitator Guide trains people to facilitate Guided Group Discovery sessions with youth and/or adults with disabilities. Materials include a Facilitator Manual, an accompanying PowerPoint slide deck and a Participant Manual.

# CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT (CE) RESOURCES

## [The Essential Elements of Customized Employment for Universal Application](#)

Developed to identify the essential elements of customized employment (CE) as a guide for the universal application of these elements across service delivery and training providers.

## [Customized Employment Works For Veterans Brief](#)

The jobs Veterans obtain through CE are varied and represent every sector and industry of our society. They even include self-employment. In this document, you will meet a few men and women who have proudly served, successfully negotiated the transition into civilian life, and are productively employed in customized employment through the assistance of some amazing peers and the strategies of CE.

## RESOURCES: LEAD WIOA POLICY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

### [Effectively Serving Native Americans with Disabilities – Inclusion and Partnerships](#) (May 2022)

From the 42nd National Indian and Native American Employment and Training Conference where non-profit and tribal grantees serving people with disabilities share promising practices and stories about participants served.

### [In-Depth Q&A Event: Blended, Braided, and Sequenced Funding for Employment, Equity, and Inclusion](#) (August 2022)

This Q&A event brought together professionals from Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, North Carolina, and multiple federal agencies to answer implementation and policy questions related to blending, braiding, and sequencing resources and funding including “How can states and localities intentionally partner with programs serving Native Americans?”

## LEAD CENTER WEBSITE

**LEADCenter**

WIOA POLICY DEVELOPMENT

[LEADCenter.org](https://LEADCenter.org)

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JOINING!**