# August 8, 2018 Advisory Council Meeting Notes

Council Members Present: Mario Eiland, Kimberly Meck, Lee Olsen

WATAP Staff and Partners Present: Scott Canaan, Alan Knue

Council Members Absent: John Bresko, Krista Bulger, Francisco Felan, Sandra Goodwick, Kamran Rasul, DJ (Daniel) Lindberg, Andrew Pettersson, and Tyler Schrenk

## WATAP Activity and Partnership Updates

Alan reported the National Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP) is continuing to advocate for full funding for the AT Act in the FY 2019 budget. Currently, AT Act (Section 4 programs) level funded at $34 million for FY 2019 in both House and Senate bill.

WATAP’s award for FY 2018 is $521,111 and is an increase of about 7.412% over the FY 2017 award. WATAP is using the additional funds to continue its statewide outreach and demonstration efforts and to provide more support to community partners.

## We have a new contact at DVR for 2018-2020 (start date of August 1, 2018) provides $54,000 for professional training on AT, $12,730 to support new equipment and replacement/repair of existing equipment for the WATAP Lending Library, and $5,800 to support quarterly device lending fees.

## iCanConnect WA received the following details for services provided under iCanConnect in Washington July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018.

* Assessment: $17,265.09
* Equipment: $102,379.31
* Training: $175,692.07
* Demo: $16,947.19
* Outreach: $12,931.46
* Total: $325,215 (annual allotment for direct services was 145,315- 179,900 was reprogramed)
* There has been 721 training hours in the past program year. 76 customers served.
* Washington’s allotment for 2018-2019 is 203,991 (177,383 for services)

## We have 1 more training (Bellingham, September 13th) for the ALTSA (Aging & Long-term Support Administration) network in our current agreement. We are working with ALTSA to potentially create kits for the 13 AAAs and an introductory video to go with the kits.

Washington State University Skagit County Extension’s proposal for the AgrAbility grant was not funded and we are waiting to see the feedback. The proposal would have assisted WSU and its major partners, the Northwest Access Fund and WATAP, to expand their combined reach through education, networking and assistance, and marketing activities to better serve the AT needs of agricultural workers.

The NW Access Fund is still waiting to hear about the application for an Alternative Financing Program grant funded through the Administration on Community Living. As mentioned in the June notes to both expand the Fund’s affordable loan fund with a new home modification loan product that has market equivalent terms of up to $35,000 loaned and maximum term to ten years, and to develop and launch an AT Funding Navigator Program in Washington state, which will provide up-to-date funding resources and information to help inform and target guidance and referral to other statewide programs. The latter program will involve deep collaborations not only with WATAP, but also DVR, DSB, NW ADA Center, ALTSA/Home and Community Services/No Wrong Door, Education entities, and others. This effort will be supported long term with an increased contract amount form WATAP to the NW Access Fund.

We are providing training to the City of Seattle staff (public information officers, communications staff and ADA Coordinators for all departments) these next few weeks around creation of accessible documents and overall information and communication technology accessibility.

WATAP is now a part of SECURES, a call-down system operated by the Department of Health (DOH) with support from the Coalition on Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP). And for those of you who may not know, CIEP is a statewide disability advisory group that provides technical advice on physical and programmatic accesses and effective communication strategies in emergency planning and service delivery.

* This is a scenario provided by Jim House, Disability Integration Manager for the CIEP:

“When DOH declares an emergency, CIEP will monitor the situation. Requests will go out to the CIEP stakeholders when needed. For example, if someone from DOH encounters a disaster survivor who needs Durable Medical Equipment such as a wheelchair, they will send me an alert. I will pass on the alert to the CIEP group of those who are on the SECURES list. Those who receive the message will have up to five days to reply and let others know if they found the equipment or not. Once a match is confirmed, we will try to connect the requestor with the person who has the equipment. There is no travelling involved for the most part.”

* The plan would be that if any requests are sent out through SECURES, WATAP would then forward the request to the Evergreen Reuse Coalition to see if anyone has the equipment available. If a member responds in the affirmative, WATAP would provide the member’s contact information to DOH and they would connect the person requesting the equipment with the member.

## Council Member Updates and Upcoming Events

Mario provided the following updates:

1. DSB is implementing Order of Selection starting October 1. See announcement sent out:

Dear Community Partner:

You are a valued partner in serving individuals with disabilities and, in particular, individuals with visual disabilities.

Because of our shared partnership within the community, the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) is sending this letter to inform you about some changes we are experiencing, and to open dialogue about how you and/or your agency could be impacted.

On October 1, 2018, DSB expects to implement a wait list system for all newly eligible vocational rehabilitation individuals. This is a requirement when a vocational rehabilitation program does not have adequate resources to serve all eligible individuals. Newly eligible individuals are prioritized by significance of need and functional limitations to prioritize those with most significant needs. The formal term for this wait list is “Order of Selection” or “OOS”. The agency will continue to provide comprehensive services to those individuals who are actively engaged in their current vocational plan.

Most state vocational rehabilitation agencies have implemented a similar wait list in order to manage a mandated 15% set aside from adult VR services – essentially a 15% cut in funding.

When the agency determines someone eligible for services and places their case on a wait list, DSB staff are required to provide Information & Referral services to the individual to initiate progress towards vocational goals while awaiting vocational rehabilitation services through DSB.

Our staff may potentially refer such an individual to you and your services. However, the coordination of timing for providing joint case services may prove challenging for those individual cases on the wait list. It will likely be difficult to know when a particular case might come off the wait list and be moved into planned services.

We want to actively connect any appropriate referrals to you, and explore with you the best method for that. Other people may find you independent of us while on the wait list. It would be good in each case to check in and determine if the person has already applied for services at DSB. If yes, it can save the person from feeling bounced back and forth among us; if no, they might benefit by getting their application in as soon as possible in order to come off the wait list sooner.

DSB staff can continue to act as a resource for you, and provide information and/or referrals to assist your work with an individual with a visual disability.

We want to collect any questions you might have, and develop a strong process to streamline connections for individuals on the wait list. Please feel free to contact us at [info@dsb.wa.gov](mailto:info@dsb.wa.gov) or 1-800-552-7103 at any time and with any questions. We will be glad to meet in person or via phone to give the information you need and explore best options for potential referral situations.

You can find a more detailed explanation of Order of Selection, and how the agency’s services are impacted, on the DSB website at <https://dsb.wa.gov/about/order-selection-information.shtml>. There will be an opportunity to provide public comment on Tuesday August 14th at 4:30 PM at DSB Seattle offices or conference call 1-855-929-3239 (access code 802 180 864).

We at DSB really appreciate your passion and work that aligns with our mission of Inclusion, Independence, and Economic Vitality for People with Visual Disabilities. We have a heavy heart that a wait list is necessary at this time, and appreciate all we can do, with your assistance, to make the experience for the individual as positive and streamlined as possible.

Thank you so much,

Lou Oma Durand

Executive Director, Department of Services for the Blind

1. The Bridge Program took place in Spokane; this is a transition program for children interested in college/ post-secondary education. About 15 enrolled in program
2. SKILS (ages 6-11) and High Ability Camp (ages 12-16) took place at the School for the Blind-. These programs provided activities related to independent living, safely (fire, First aid), and water skills.

Kimberly provided the following updates:

1. Alliance of People with disAbilities is registered with SECURES as well.
2. The Alliance is moving its Seattle location hopefully to 2nd Ave in Belltown.
3. The Alliance has received an additional $42,000 in combined federal funding in FY 2018.
4. Kimberly is working with Seattle Metro to form an advisory committee on accessibility in transit.
5. Kimberly continues to participate in the Travis Act Workgroup around providing disability awareness curriculum to all first responders and emergency personnel.
6. The APRIL annual conference will be October 5-8 in Denver, CO.
7. Kimberly was re-elected to the Region 10 position on the National Council for Independent Living (NCIL).
8. Working with the NCIL partner in Alaska to host an IL conference in that state and has been in talks with DVR to co-host a WA State IL Conference. Rob Hines suggested potentially integrating an IL conference into a larger DVR conference but there are challenges to having a large inclusive conference.

## Discussion about the Council’s August meeting

Historically, Advisory Council members have had difficulty participating in the August meeting whether in person or through teleconference due to vacations, school out of session, etc. Alan proposed that the Council cancel having a meeting in August and that he can provide a WATAP update via email and solicit any member updates to share at the time as well. The council members present were in consensus with this proposal and this is moved to the rest of the members for discussion.

## Other Announcements

1. ABLE is here!  Sign up for a Washington State ABLE account [online](https://www.washingtonstateable.com/) or by filling out an [Enrollment Form](https://www.washingtonstateable.com/forms/).

* If you have questions about the Washington State ABLE Savings Plan, call 1-844-600-2253 9am-5pm PT or 1-844-888-2253 (TTY), 6am-5pm PT, Monday-Friday.
* Stay up to date on ABLE news through [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/WAStateABLE/) or [Twitter](https://twitter.com/wa_able).
* Want to know more about ABLE?  ABLE allows individuals with disabilities to save money for qualified disability expenses without losing their federal benefits.  From the [ABLE National Resource Center](applewebdata://E4B56730-1BCF-4AF8-BADD-3DFEE9C91640/ablenrc.org/), 10 Things You Should Know About ABLE Accounts:  <http://www.ablenrc.org/about/what-are-able-accounts>
* ABLE Accounts, which are tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities and their families, were created as a result of the passage of the Stephen Beck Jr., Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 or better known as the ABLE Act. The beneficiary of the account is the account owner, and income earned by the accounts will not be taxed. Contributions to the account, which can be made by any person (the account beneficiary, family and friends), must be made using post-taxed dollars and will not be tax deductible for purposes of federal taxes.
* A "qualified disability expense" means any expense related to the designated beneficiary as a result of living a life with disabilities. These may include education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, **assistive technology**, personal support services, health care expenses, financial management and administrative services and other expenses which help improve health, independence, and/or quality of life.

1. Join Northwest Access Fund's Board and staff at a Friends Appreciation Social for some light refreshments and drinks in downtown Seattle.

* RSVP for Event: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/northwest-access-fund-friends-appreciation-social-tickets-48571439483>
* Where: SURF Incubator, 999 3rd Ave, Suite 700, Seattle, WA 98104
* When: Thursday, August 30, 2018 5:30—8:00 PM
* Cost: The event is free to attend.
* RSVPs are appreciated but not required. You may also register over the phone by calling 206-328-5116.

1. Save the date: Northwest Access Awards Dinner on November 15, 2018 at the University of Washington’s Center for Urban Horticulture. Please join the Northwest Access Fund’s staff, friends, and supporters to celebrate the individuals, businesses, and organizations making a significant impact on the lives of people with disabilities in our community.

## Next Advisory Council Meeting:

October 10, 2018: via Zoom 11am-noon; Meeting ID: 797 617 850