JOE MICHNER: All right everyone, welcome back, welcome back.

Good morning again.

How's everybody doing after that quick break?

Ready to go?

Okay.

So again, we are now going get into that part that I know you've all been dying for, the nuts and bolts.

Our fine friends from ABLE are going to help us out.

Yesterday we gave you the quick rapid fire of all of the different programs we have.

We didn't get into how they're funded and how they evolved.

Those are the kinds of things we want to talk about during this portion of the session.

We're going to touch on things like partnerships with funders.

We're also going to talk a lot about partnerships this afternoon.

Okay, so we are really going to delve into stuff.

After every little program we talk about, we're going to open it up to a couple questions from you if you have them about the programs, and we're really going to try to get into specifics.

We're going to try to slow everything down.

So we're going to talk about fee for service ventures.

We are going to talk about contract development.

We are going to talk about how to work with schools.

We are going to talk about how to get into schools and all of that fun stuff.

And most importantly, we're going to talk about how that youth and their voice is essential to the development of all of these programs.

With that in mind, I think we have to take a group selfie.

All right?

Group selfie.

I don't know how to do this at all, so Kim's going to tell us how to do it.

KIMBERLY TISSOT: So social media is very important, obviously.

We make sure that all of our services, not all of the services, but what we're actually doing in the community and at conferences like this are put on our social media just so that our followers can see how busy we are educating the world about IL.

We're going to take a selfie.

We're going to turn around and do a selfie with you all in the background, so do something fun in the background.

Put your hands up, make funny faces, whatever you want to do.

Are you ready?

JOE MICHNER: This is the aspect of being kind of dorky around young adults and they really appreciate that.

We're still trying to figure this out.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Am I in there.

KIMBERLY TISSOT: Making fun faces?

Are you ready?

One two three!

Another one.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Get your head in there, Joe.

KIMBERLY TISSOT: One two three!

Fantastic.

Thank you.

JOE MICHNER: Okay.

I don't know if you want my face like that.

High altitude, what fun.

So we'll get that on the hash tag.

What's the hashtag again?

#CILyouthmatter.

Okay.

Let's get going.

SETH HODEREWSKI: I'm sweating.

JOE MICHNER: So, if you remember yesterday, we talked really quickly through these programs.

We're going to first start with our first youth transition program that is S2L and Real World, and was started about eight years ago, so long before the WIOA stuff was put into place.

I'll turn it over to Seth.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Just to give a little back- ground on what S2L is.

S2L group is our young adult group that gets together a few times a month and we do different types of activities that the young adults choose that they want to do.

So social activities, advocacy, you name it.

Whatever they are looking for is what we are looking to do.

And our summer program is the off-shoot of that, our Real World Lehigh Valley.

That is our six-week intensive program that has morphed over time into becoming more of an employment type of program.

Really looking at teaching employment skills in a very creative way.

But, it initially was started, both of those two programs were together, funded through a grant by the Developmental Disabilities Council.

I know every state has a DDC.

They are a great resource and a great option to look at for funding for different types of work.

They have a very similar philosophy to a center for independent living.

They are generally a good group to work with.

For us, we've worked with them in this regard and many other projects from looking at things like accessibility to cross-disability thinking to leadership in schools that we talked a little bit about.

You know, so they're, I think we have a pretty progressive DDC in Pennsylvania as well.

But it really started with that grant, you know?

And having a grant to be able to build off of is, for us, we have seen it time and time again where it's just totally vital to putting programs together and, you know, you have that little bit more leeway where you're not having to look at all the specifics all the time.

You have the deliverables and everything that you need to accomplish, but it isn't as, it may not be as strict as some of the fee for service stuff, and some of the fee for service stuff that we do too.

JOE MICHNER: Let me jump back a little bit.

We're talking about eight years ago, but these kinds of opportunities are available out there.

That's why we're kind of highlighting how our programs evolve.

Just by a show of hands, how many people in the room are really starting from scratch coming out of this conference?

Okay?

So about a third maybe?

A third of the room?

How many of you have some transition programming, but you want to build it?

Okay.

Big amount.

Three quarters of the room.

And how many of you have really well established transition programming and you just want to see what other options are out there to maybe do something different?

Nada.

Oh, maybe one.

Two.

Okay.

So that gives us an idea of where you're at when we talk about these things.

I think as we go through the slides you'll see that there are some things you could start out fee for service at this point, but that's a challenge, right?

Because you don't have the time to set up the program, the infrastructure to go out there and do the outreach.

The grant is always the ideal.

And we are going to talk to you about most of our programs, until we had a solid infrastructure, were started through a grant.

And then we made those programs sustainable through a fee for service model after the grant ended, and we were able to build other programs off of those.

I wanted to put that out there right up front so you could see how that evolved.

SETH HODEREWSKI: So we had those funds, four years, $100,000 each year to do the group work, to do the summer program.

It was something like we saw the need.

Lehigh Valley Center saw the need in the community for young adult transition programming.

And, you know, that was something they initially tried to get a grant.

It didn't work.

It doesn't always work, unfortunately.

But when it does, so many good things can come out of it.

We were seeing things like, we do a peer support group.

So we had some young adults interested in that type of thing.

They would join that on occasion which was awesome.

And we also had another group run out of our core services that was called our FAN group, Future Advocates Now.

Now that group has morphed into, we will talk about a little later, what we call our Community Club, but that kind of thinking, that kind of work along with the fact that in the fall our community supports coordinators would get phone calls from parents saying, our young adult is done with school.

They're at home sitting and doing nothing now.

What do we do?

That was the thinking behind all of that of why we decided to go in there.

I was fortunate enough to get hired in November 2008, and I never heard of a CIL before.

You know?

Like I actually, I worked in the sheltered workshop for many, many years, and I saw some young adults that would come there right from school, and I always had it in the back of my mind of, what's going on?

Why are these young adults not in the community getting jobs?

When I saw this ad for work in a place called a CIL, I thought it sounded pretty cool and that I should check it out.

We were able to, we were fortunate enough to get that grant.

It started off as just me in a room and my executive director.

We were the only ones working on the transition services.

I always like to tell Joe, it was me and a box of one of those self-serve candy boxes.

I always like to tell Joe that was my favorite co-worker and best worker ever that I got to work at.

JOE MICHNER: When I came, he had to move his candy dish.

But the question is, so what do we do with the $100,000.

And I want to say, too, for those of you if you have a grant writer, that's awesome.

If you don't, you need to invest a lot of time into looking and seeing if the grant, these funders have requirements and have their ideas of what you're going to do with the grant.

You've got to make sure the grant will work for what you do and that's a whole other process.

That could be a three-day training on how to research these grants.

But we're certainly happy to talk to you about the process and how we've gone about it in the past.

SETH HODEREWSKI: How to go about writing those grants.

We really take a team approach when we go to write the grants and our grant writer has some specific language where our Developmental Disabilities Council told us that our grant writer should be doing the training for their grant writing.

And write down to our financial folks, you know?

And having a person that really understand.

We were fortunate enough to have someone that was able to look at and take the programming piece and then, kind of put numbers to all of that.

She's amazing in the way that she did that.

We actually got too big for her.

She worked part time and was doing pretty much a full work on a part time schedule.

Having those two pieces really were huge with us when we've gone into all of this work especially around grants and into fee for service stuff.

JOE MICHNER: So what did we do with the 100,000 that first year, that was Seths position?

A ton of outreach.

Seth was going out everywhere to talk about these programs.

To find the young adults and talk about the programs.

Several months then before, in the fall, we started up the actual services.

So you need that time to get everything prepared and ready to go.

I know a lot of you are thinking, I already have a full-time job, how do I find that time, right.

It is an investment, we are not going to lie to you.

The reality is Seth and I work a lot.

I know Charlie and Kim do, too.

She's working all the time, right?

It's definitely an investment.

But again, as you see as we build these programs, we're building layers in.

We're bringing new people in the door and finding those right people as things build up.

We did it very quickly over the past few years, probably too quickly in some cases.

So we're playing a bit of catch-up right now at our agency to get people up to speed and everything.

But you have to constantly be thinking about logistics for these programs and how they're going to happen.

You might be the person investing all that time up front, but you can't do that forever, right?

So you have to be able to make it sustainable and to build those layers, and that's a whole other training but something we'd be happy to talk to you about and help you with.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Going into it all, I had no idea.

I was really clueless.

I didn't know how to put a group together.

I did not know how to do this, it just came, you know?

There were these deliverables that we had to meet.

We went out and promoted the heck out of this thing, got young adults involved, got them excited, got them talking to other young adults and talking to parents about transition and what the CIL is.

And to me, that was just a natural hook, you know that whole IL philosophy, that consumer control piece, along with transition was just a hook for young adults and for their parents.

They got to see what could be.

And like I said in one of the other presentations, we actually were able to decrease our advertising budgets because our young adults got so good at promoting the program that we almost didn't have to.

It was just amazing to me in the way that that kind of naturally happened.

JOE MICHNER: So four-year grant, that's a pretty awesome grant right?

You don't usually get that much time.

So four years to build this up and sustain it.

But from day one, and again it was before I got there, Seth and Amy, our executive director were talking about sustainability for after the grant, okay?

But as Seth got that program built up and as he was working on that full-time and got better at it, we brought in summer staff to help with the summer program, things started going smoother and the program was established.

Word of mouth, other agencies started paying attention to it.

We actually had an agency steal a lot of the ideas word for word on their website.

That happens.

That means we're doing something right, okay?

So we're going to stick with S2L and Real World and then we'll open it up for questions.

On to the next slide.

So starting to talk about the sustainability piece.

This is where you need good fiscal people.

This is where you need people that understand numbers.

What kind of rate do you have to have?

How much do you have to charge for a young adult to attend the program after the grant goes away and you don't have that funding?

What other funding ideas can you come up with to continue the program?

We're going to get into a lot of that this afternoon, different ideas for fund raising and partnerships and all sorts of different stuff.

On this slide, you can see as the program developed, the young adults, some decided that one portion of the program or the other was best for them or they only wanted to attend maybe the bi-monthly meeting the S2L portion of the program and some only wanted to come to the summer program.

SETH HODEREWSKI: We had the thinking if another outside agency was going to pay for a young adult to attend a program, you all right there, Joe?

JOE MICHNER: I'm okay.

SETH HODEREWSKI: If there was an agency that was going to pay for a young adult to take part in this, potentially VR, we would have to make it more based on employment.

And we were fortunate to have that foresight to do that because then the pre-employment transition services where VR has to put 15% of their budget to transition came along and they saw the summer program and was like, yes.

This totally fits with the thinking around pre-employment transition services.

We were fortunate enough to make that switch where we broke out the S2L group on its own fee for service program and Real World Lehigh Valley where that was also broken out.

Young adults could take part in one or take part in both or really whatever worked for them.

Going from that grant to the fee for service piece, that can be really tricky.

That is where the whole, it's so important to have the good fiscal folks that can put all of that time and thinking into that.

And that was, I remember that being a little bit of a challenge for us.

Especially because we were going from a grant where we had a ton of money and we could do all kinds of stuff with it, to now what?

How are we going to have funds because we knew that these groups had to be sustained in some form or another because they led to so many different types of programming and so many different types of options for young adults.

You're going to see that here as we progress on.

JOE MICHNER: So some of the things you have to think about, when you are working through that grant phase, when the grant is over, how are you going keep the costs down?

A lot of times you have the money in the grant and you can play and do a lot of things, but all of a sudden that money goes away, how do you keep the cost down?

Is there going to be a private pay element?

And how is that going to affect things?

What kind of fund raising are you going to do?

You're continuously seeking funders throughout the process.

Your potential contracts, do you have somebody who understands how to do an agreement or a letter of understanding or a memo of understanding with a potential funder for a program?

And then you have to think about, okay, now we have a new funder, what are they requiring from us?

And does it still fit with the CIL philosophy?

Can we still do this program we want under the restrictions of a new funder?

Changing the program design, reporting and other responsibilities.

So the DDC, they were, Development and Disabilities Council, they were just happy to see the program going.

We didn't have a lot of requirements as far as reporting goes.

But now working with VR, it takes on a whole different beast.

You got to have that administrative time to do the reporting and documentation.

Staff responsibilities.

If you're going to fee for service model, how much time realistically, can your staff spend doing billable time.

We talk about billable time a lot at our agency and I hate that we have to, but it's a reality of what we do when we're working with various funders.

Staff responsibilities, scheduling and logistics.

Keeping it person-centered and keeping the youth voice.

Again, we all know that funders have their own goals and objectives.

How do we negotiate, I would say fight, but maybe negotiate is a better word.

To keep it youth-driven.

To keep that CIL philosophy through everything we do.

And then continuously searching for funders.

Not just stopping, if you think you got the right funder, because you never know, tomorrow that funding might go away.

How can you supplement your services and we'll talk about that again this afternoon.

We've had some luck even through some private corporations who are looking to do good work and dump some money into a program that they're excited about because they want to see us to take it to the next level or do something a little bit different.

SETH HODEREWSKI: And write down the relationship building on every single level.

From that relationship with the young adults to the relationship with the parents.

Our parents, they saw this, they saw the grant phase coming to an end, and they were like this needs to continue on.

What can we do?

How can we keep this going?

And they, themselves, put on a Gala to raise funds for both of these programs.

They raised, I forget what it was, 15,000 in the first gala.

30, 40,000 over a couple of years.

Because they saw the need and saw the importance.

They saw what it was doing for young adults, they saw what it was doing for parents.

Relationships right down to working with the businesses, and we're getting into a whole bunch of this kind of thing, too.

We were fortunate enough to keep the summer program going in one facet or another, to the point where we've continued to build relationships and now, I mean, it just blows me away.

That we are going to be running a program out of a major amusement park this summer with potential for legitimate employment options and paid work for young adults this summer at Dorney Park.

So we are really excited about that.

And those are the kinds of things, some of those relationships take years and years.

You know, we have done work with project searchs and finding sites to do that is not always easy.

So, to be able to do, find those kinds of relationships that are really impacting young adults and the community are just huge.

JOE MICHNER: With that said, logistically, it started with Seth, right.

Some summer staff, but the program is consistently funded across the time of the grant and then moving into fee for service.

Does anybody have questions?

That hand went up real fast.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I actually have just a couple of questions.

Number one, you started the program with your grant from the DDC.

This is all DD, those 25 people were all focused towards DD, correct?

And as the program has grown, has it gone cross disability with the funding stream and does DDC also fund cross disability or only single disability?

SETH HODEREWSKI: When we were, it was for anyone.

It was a cross disability thing.

They have developed their thinking over some time as well here too, and we have done some cross disability thinking projects with them, too.

From our point of view, we were looking at anybody, any disability.

And working with the DDC to promote that, they were about the program.

They were about the systems change more than anything else.

JOE MICHNER: Yeah, that was, they were in line with what we were trying to do, which I understand is not always the case.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: My question back here is what were some examples of the outreach that you did to recruit the participants for your programs?

SETH HODEREWSKI: Anywhere, everywhere there was young adults.

We were fortunate, too, and it comes back to our relationship with VR.

Our executive director has a really, really positive relationship with the district administrator at the time.

So he was on our advisory board, so I would go to OVR staff meetings and talk about the program, voc rehab.

I'm sorry.

I keep saying OVR.

I keep thinking I'm still in Pennsylvania.

We have transition councils in Pennsylvania as well and I would go to those, they are on a quarterly basis.

There are employment coalitions too, where different agencies that provide employment services.

They get together and talk about employment-related options.

I would go to those types of meetings.

I would go to IEP meetings, I go to county meetings, whoever would let me come in and talk, I would talk.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: My question is around fee for services.

So for core services, and I don't know if there is any federal regulations around this, but we provide all those for free.

With youth transition being a core service, we are trying to figure out, okay what do we set up potentially as a fee for service down the road versus what do we provide for free as part of the core services?

Do you guys know much about that?

JOE MICHNER: I think that's a great question and a question that a lot of people have.

Where is the line where core services ends and these fee for services ventures that can include your core services begin.

Your core services dollars only go so far.

Right.

And so we are looking at these other options to extend those services beyond what you can do to the core service dollars.

Most of these programs, you will note, have some element.

Maybe it's employment driven or something like that, through voc rehab, where we have a specific focus, but we're still doing things in our CIL way.

And deciding even when you're working with a consumer, what are we doing here?

Are we doing a core service or particular to voc rehab?

Very confusing, logistically a nightmare.

But again, as Paula said, you have to make those decisions as you design these programs.

And right up front you have to make those decisions, so you kind of have those guidelines as to how you're going to map it and report it and all those kinds of things.

Helpful?

I think we'll talk more about that as we go through.

SETH HODEREWSKI: We took a lot of time.

JOE MICHNER: We're going to take a couple questions for each slide.

Use your post-it notes.

Some of the other questions may come up as we go through some of the other programs and certainly we're available to talk more about these things.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Stop us.

We love talking about this stuff.

At any time, we would love to talk more about this stuff individually.

JOE MICHNER: So we've gone through two slides in 20 minutes.

SETH HODEREWSKI: We're doing great! JOE MICHNER: We will move faster as you guys get into the groove of the stuff.

SETH HODEREWSKI: That was really base.

That set the tone for everything we were looking to do, you know, programmatically, systematically, financially.

That thinking really helped us build into doing everything else that we were looking to do.

JOE MICHNER: Taught us a lot.

So a couple years into S2L and Real World, that's when I came on board.

Because, again, our executive director was having conversations with voc rehab about wanting to do some sensitivity trainings for other providers of voc rehab services.

And the district manager said, you know, by the way, we have these grants to start some innovative programs.

Why don't you guys look into those?

Me and Seth said, yeah, that might be a good idea.

They applied for an innovation and expansion grant through voc rehab to start a unique supported employment program.

And I talked a little bit about this yesterday, the Career Path program was started, it was completely focused on young adults 18 to 25 years old that were out of school.

And we added those unique elements.

It gives me chills to think about it.

The skills training portion that I talked about yesterday, which is really focused on helping the young adults understand the new expectations they may face in employment.

But also elements that are dear to the CIL, the person-centered approach, person-centered planning, those kind of things got added into a voc rehab program right from the start because they were looking for something unique.

So an awesome opportunity.

Cool thing about working with places like voc rehab is they're not very timely.

So we applied for a year of grant funding and by the time it all went through, we had about six months to do it.

That was awesome.

So I came in and they hired me.

SETH HODEREWSKI: We stalked Joe.

JOE MICHNER: They stalked me.

I had a background with voc rehab many years before I came to a CIL.

I love the idea of the person-centered approach, the consumer control.

How to do that within voc rehab's requirements is a challenge unto itself.

We all know that voc rehab, we're fortunate.

We have a great voc rehab office in our area.

Most of the counselors get it.

But you still have restrictions on how much funding they will give you, right.

So if you are trying to help somebody find a job and we want to empower that person to find a job.

You want to teach them the skills they need to find a job is not always easy to do through voc rehab funding.

SETH HODEREWSKI: And not just any job but jobs that young adults are interested in and are specifically and individually interested in, because that's the CIL thinking right?

JOE MICHNER: This program is about six years old.

I came in and I replaced Seth's candy dish.

He was running his program smoothly.

So a little bit of his time was entered into this program.

He was my supervisor, which is a time in my life I don't like to talk about much.

SETH HODEREWSKI: I don't know what I did.

JOE MICHNER: You yelled at me about candy every day.

Okay.

So, you know, we had six months to start up this program.

Awesome.

Thank you.

We had to develop the skills training, the curriculum and all of that kind of stuff.

Developing really quickly in these six month.

We had to think about in six months when we go fee for service, how are the staff going to handle their time?

What can we bill for?

What can't we bill for?

What's our rate going to be?

When you think about developing a rate for a fee for service program, it's not just your staff time.

It's the rent you pay.

How much of the staff's time can be billable and how much is administrative time?

You have to have good fiscal people who understand what it truly costs to run a program, okay?

We had to develop a LOU, in six months, a letter of understanding, or as some people call them, an MOU, a memo of understanding.

We had to ensure the youth voice as we went fee for service.

The grant was like you guys do it your CIL way and we'll see how it goes.

We had to show how successful that could be.

Fortunately, we were successful.

We worked with 25 young adults initially and we had really great results.

I think we ended up working with 40 or 50 young adults by the end of the six months.

We showed that the CIL approach, the person-centered approach could work and that people could maintain their jobs if they liked them.

Which was, sometimes, an unusual concept for voc rehab.

So quickly on to the next slide, now this number's actually wrong because I did this a few months ago.

Now we've taken that program that was working with 25 young adults and now active is around 240 young adults going through various processes in the program.

Maybe they're doing community-based work assessments, maybe they're in skills training, maybe looking for a job.

Maybe they are getting some support on a job.

It just depends on the various things.

We went from when we started the program it was myself, Seth as my supervisor and two job coaches.

One was full-time and one was part time.

Now you can see we have 14 full-time staff, one part-time staff.

The initial grant was $150,000 and now has an annual budget of $650,000.

So my full-time job six years ago was running a very small program.

Okay?

Over time, we had to add layers.

We're not at $650,000 with just me supervising this program anymore.

I now have a coordinator and a program manager.

These are all things you have to think about as you're building things up.

And again there's the goal.

We are a very successful program.

80% job placement rate.

These are voc rehab objectives, okay?

85% retention rate.

We exceed those regularly.

Okay?

Again, we're doing that, we're doing person-centered planning and we are helping young adults explore and find jobs that they're actually interested in.

So it's a big part of why we're successful.

Do we want to ask a couple quick questions or are we okay to wait and we can keep going?

Okay.

All right.

I'm going to start moving a little quicker because I got the sign already that we're running out of time.

So the vocational and independence program, once we had the infrastructure of the Career Path Program, we had the staff.

We had the layers needed.

We have the right rate for our services.

We are providing the services and we had this rhythm with everything.

We could start branching out into starting some things not through a grant but even just jumping right into them fee for service.

So this vocational and independence program, it's a program that is housed at a local business, working with just nine students in their last year of high school.

They come every day, all day for their school day, doing work experiences, getting skills training, they are doing person-centered planning.

We had one full-time staff, our staff working with two school staff at that program.

Okay?

We are about to, this is a smaller program, $75,000 a year.

We're about to branch out and do another site in another county because it's been very successful as well.

And this was actually, even though we started it a few years ago, just when the WIOA stuff was coming out, voc rehab funds our staff person to be there, and they tab pre-employment transition service dollars to this program.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I ask what the site is?

What your initial site was and how you got the buy-in?

JOE MICHNER: We built this program off of Project Search.

We had a Project Search site that we were working with at a nursing home.

Cedar Brook Nursing Home.

But again, that's a great question, because to start a program like this from scratch, which we'll talk about when we get to our transition experience program, you need time to develop a site.

So, you know, if it wasn't for our infrastructure, if we were starting from scratch, we would need a grant to start something like this because you got to spend a year just developing a site.

Great question.

Pre-employment transition services, and this gives me the chance to clarify something from yesterday, but I'll say right up front, we could not have jumped head over heels into this stuff if it wasn't for the infrastructure that we already had with Career Path programming and some of our other programming.

Cause this is fee for service stuff that we're doing through voc rehab through a standard agreement in Pennsylvania where we can support young adults on work experiences, paid work experiences while they're in school, job shadowing experiences while they're in school and going into schools and doing group presentations based on the curriculum that we developed for our Career Path Program.

I think there was a misunderstanding yesterday.

Eligibility requirements for voc rehab pre-employment transition services, young adults ages 14-21 with an IEP or a 504 in either secondary or post-secondary education setting.

Some of the voc rehab pre-employment stuff you have to go through the voc rehab eligibility process, okay?

Everybody good on that?

Okay.

Because of our infrastructure again, with Career Path, we could jump right into providing these services.

We've been doing it for what?

About a year and a half?

SETH HODEREWSKI: Just under.

JOE MICHNER: Right.

And that says 16-21 up there, clarify that too, 14-21, you're eligible for voc rehab pre-employment transition services.

These individual things that we're doing, the work experiences, the job shadowing, the group presentations, you have to be between the ages of 16-21 for those specific services.

Read the regs for voc rehab under WIOA.

It's a lot of fun.

Right now we're at an annual budget of about $150,000.

We are actually working on a letter of understanding, another one, with voc rehab to fund our S2L and Real World program, through these dollars, to do individual work place readiness, through these dollars.

To do person-centered planning through these dollars.

To do independent community travel training through these dollars.

Again, we couldn't have jumped into this unless we had that infrastructure.

But I will say to you, for those of you starting out program, there are options in this that you could start out very small with.

Okay, one of the things that we do is go into schools and do group presentations.

Typically on work essential skills, based on our curriculum that we developed.

And had approved by the Dept. of Labor.

That's a nice, small way to start, because we're going into schools and maybe we do a presentation once every couple weeks in one of the local school districts, and it's a great way to start meeting teachers.

We are going to talk about how to establish relationships with schools.

We haven't had a lot of success talking to administrators.

Where we've had success is getting our foot in the door and talking to teachers because they know their students and then they advocate to get CIL services to their administrators for us.

That's just another avenue that you're going to take to approaching schools.

SETH HODEREWSKI: And as Joe is talking about the infrastructure of things, and as we've continued to grow and as we have continued to look at different programming, we're looking at other administration work that needs to be done.

Billing, which has increased big time.

Training with more staff, you know?

Like keeping true to the IL philosophy in all that we do, and you know, seeing different things like working more with mental health and other, working more with Autism and that type of thing.

Our staff needed more training and that's other areas that we really had to look at and develop as we continued to grow and expand.

JOE MICHNER: Yeah.

Okay.

So then this opportunity came up through, again, this new WIOA pre-employment transition funding through voc rehab.

And this is a huge program for us.

We call it the Transition Experience Program.

It's similar to the Project Search kind of model.

Students are doing, coming to the college campus, we are at Cedar Crest College, coming for nine weeks and during those nine weeks they are exploring post-secondary options, they are exploring job options, so they are doing work experiences on campus.

They're also taking part in skills training and touring other colleges.

It's a very intensive program.

Even with our infrastructure, we knew we couldn't start a program like this without a grant.

We applied for a grant and got a year of funding.

They extended it for another year because this is one where we had to develop a site to do the program.

That question that was asked earlier, you need time to develop those relationships, right.

To promote the program and put everything together.

We had to create new curriculum for this.

Because there is the post-secondary exploration element.

Our Career Path curriculum only focused on the employment piece.

We had to really develop curriculum on how to do stuff at a college campus.

Or at another post-secondary education.

So this is $250,000.

This is five staff.

A supervisor and four direct service staff working on this program.

Now we're in the second year and working towards that sustainability for after this year is over and how to sustain the program and keep it going.

SETH HODEREWSKI: To get a site, Cedar Crest College was huge.

That came from our relationship from someone that I got to know over the years as I was out promoting over services, saw what we were doing, I was over at Cedar Crest and was able to help advocate for us to get on campus.

It boils down to those relationships again.

JOE MICHNER: I know we're going pretty fast here.

But you know just adding the layers, and the most important thing you can do as you develop these programs, is bring in people that get it.

Right?

That get what we're trying to do and that continuously advocate for it.

We work with individual OVR counselors and every one of them wants something different.

We work with individual schools, every one of them want something different.

There are times we have to put on our advocate hat.

There are times that we're a resource.

But learning, the relationship is just so essential to everything.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Absolutely.

And our next slide is our LIFE program, Living Independently For Everyone, and that is where we are contracting with school districts to promote whatever services they may be looking for or need for their students.

You know, everything from learning to ride the bus to studying for a permit test to pretty much independent living skills, whatever you think they may need.

We do a lot of person-centered planning in this programming, and we recommend that often because that helps to see what kind of programming may be needed for the student moving forward.

So this is another one that because of our infrastructure, and because it was very similar to maybe a young adult who had employment goals that we could work directly with them.

But again, it boils down to setting those rates, looking at staffing needs.

A young adult could have one hour to be with us all week and how does that work for staffing?

It takes a ton of coordination, work and support.

JOE MICHNER: I know we're running out of time for our end of things.

I just wanted to hit on a couple of things with this.

Working with school districts, we understand how tough it is.

This program is a little older than the last couple of slides we looked at.

It's about four or five years old.

We were initially approached by a student and their family who felt they weren't getting the services they needed from the school district.

That's kind of how this program was born, so to speak.

We worked with them and with the school to provide some of those services.

From there it was a lot of word of mouth.

A lot of word of mouth.

Teachers hearing about it and talking about it.

Transition councils.

All of those kinds of things.

Now we have schools seeking us out for this program.

Again our biggest customer for this is cyber schools because they can't do anything hands-on.

So they're coming to us and looking for those types of services.

Funding with each individual school is a nightmare.

Okay?

SETH HODEREWSKI: Reporting with each individual school.

JOE MICHNER: Just the contracts.

We have some that are one-page contracts with the school and others that are 40, 50-page legal documents from the school.

Are you going to take responsibility for the IEP?

That's a big question.

We don't.

We will work on IEP goals but we don't have somebody on staff that writes the IEP.

Those are all decisions that you have to make and there are so many questions.

I think, as we talk about the rest of the day and get into tomorrow, we will spend time at your tables answering your questions and talking about these things.

To think about all the different questions and all the different things you have to plan for.

SETH HODEREWSKI: Some schools are really strict on how they are checking us out and what we're doing and other schools are like go ahead.

Do it.

JOE MICHNER: We're going to skip a couple slides here, because the last one I wanted to talk about a bit.

A couple of years ago, we were approached by a partner of ours that we know very well at a local community college to start up our SEED program.

This is where we are on a college campus supporting students going to college.

It's not like a side program where they're doing special programming.

These are students going to college classes.

We're supporting them on campus, facilitating a structured study lounge, providing, you know, help navigating the campus or using campus resources, exploring jobs, all of those kinds of things.

This is a small program at this point.

It was initially funded by the DDC as well.

That funding has gone away, so now we're working with voc rehab again to get some pre-employment transition service dollars to support the students that are under the age of 21 in this program, to make it sustainable.

This is two part-time staff on campus plus a little bit of help from one of our program managers and myself.

It's an awesome program.

We're seeing these types of programs pop up around the country and it's long overdue.

Right.

Providing some support and empowerment services to folks at college.

SETH HODEREWSKI: This, I know we're out of time here right?

I mean this, the leadership in schools is another grant-funded project.

I could talk specifically about this with folks.

But the really neat thing about all this, is they all tie in together.

There are so many options for a young adult.

Our staff know each individual program so when they're out promoting and talking to parents, say hey, you might want to check out this, or this.

And different program managers and ourselves are out there promoting the different programs based on what a young adult may need.

It's between this and core services and other services and it's all mish-moshed to what a young adult can be from the point where they can be part of our CIL programming as a 14-year-old and be with us through employment or a board member or anything else.

So thank you.

I'll pass it over to you guys now.