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## **Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) Minutes November 8, 2022**

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**CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was held virtually via the GoToMeeting platform. DART Co-Chair, John Fiore called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Galyn Barnum (HRI)	Ramona Lumpkin (Recovery Institute)
Hank Bostic (Disability Network)	Karrie Messenger (YOU/KRESA)
John Fiore (MRS)	Kathy Olsen (MWSW)
Max Hornick (Disability Network)	Sheldon Schwitek (ArcCommAdvoc)
Sarah Hutchinson-Chee (Goodwill SW MI)	Shelby Springett (MWSW)
Kathy Lentz (ISK)	

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The DART meeting agenda for the November 8, 2022 was approved by consensus of members present.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The DART meeting minutes of September 13, 2022 were approved by consensus of members present.

### **PROGRAM – 2022 Advocacy and Inclusive Employment Practices**

**Presenter:** Max Hornick, Community Education Specialist at Disability Network Southwest Michigan shared information regarding Disability Network’s advocacy program, as well as inclusive employment practices. Several exhibits regarding the presentations were sent to members with the agenda packet prior to the meeting.

Max Hornick presented information regarding the summer jobs program for youth with disabilities ages 16-29. She reported the program was part-time for eight weeks. The youth learned about disabilities and created an advocacy project to work on. They chose to advocate for a Disability Awareness Education (DA&E) State holiday in Michigan that would be celebrated annually on the third Friday in October. Their work included creating a flyer and brochure, posts on Facebook and Instagram social media platforms, and a web petition. The students met with state legislators and Michigan Senator Sean McCann introduced a resolution to create DA&E Day. Senate Resolution #167 passed and declared Friday, October 21, 2022 as Disability Awareness and Education Day.

Max Hornick also presented information on Inclusive Employment Practices. The presentation included a list of recruitment resources; information that should be included in job descriptions; additional pertinent job information; discussion of essential functions; and information regarding how words used in the job description matter. The presentation also covered information as to how to be inclusive during the interview process and an

explanation of reasonable accommodations. Additional resources were shared at the conclusion of the presentation.

## **AGENCY UPDATES**

**Arc Community Advocates** – Sheldon Schwitek reported Arc Community Advocates recently added a few new board members. Staff are currently working on preparing their agency’s annual report and organizing the next Inclusion Conference which is scheduled to be held on March 15, 2023. The theme for the conference is Advocacy in Action. He also reported the work of Arc includes a lot of advocacy education. Arc is seeking to fill a full-time educational advocate position; information regarding the job posting is available on the Arc website.

**Michigan Works! Southwest** – Kathy Olsen reported Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES) funding is available for support services to assist individuals gain or retain employment. The flyer with further information will be sent in the meeting follow-up email.

**Integrated Services Kalamazoo (ISK)** – Kathy Lentz reminded members that ISK is now a Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC).

**Recovery Institute** - - Ramona Lumpkin reported the Recovery Institute has dropped the mask mandate and walk-ins are welcome as no appointment is necessary. Staff are working with OWI and drug courts to help customers resolve issues.

**Kalamazoo RESA** – Karrie Messenger reported she works with the youth programs at Youth Opportunities Unlimited. A large group of youth recently began a paid, seven-week work experience. YOU is also seeking additional applicants for the youth program.

**Disability Network Southwestern Michigan** – Hank Bostic reported Disability Network Southwest Michigan recently hired Sarah Cagney as the Director of Development and Communications. Disability Network continues to offer community education programs on topics related to serving individuals with disabilities. A link will be sent to members in the meeting follow-up email.

**Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Michigan** – Sarah Hutchinson-Chee reported the Goodwill programs in the six counties served by Goodwill of Southwestern Michigan have been very busy. Staff are aligning the Goodwill work with the community needs. The current fiscal year has ended, and staff are working on budgets and planning for the next fiscal year. There will be limited services the week of Thanksgiving and the week of Christmas.

**Housing Resources Inc. (HRI)** – Galyn Barnum reported renovations at the Housing Resource office in the Goodwill Alcott building are still being done; however, HRI is fully operational and there are case managers in the community. Staff can be reached by phone or via the contact information on their website. The windfall of funding available through the COVID Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) Program has ended. She noted this was over \$44 million that was allocated to the Kalamazoo area to assist with

housing, eviction prevention, utilities, and a one-time internet stipend. Over 2,400 households were assisted in 2022. In 2023 operations will be like what it was prior to COVID-19, and she estimated that approximately 300 households will receive assistance. A Community Development Block (CBDG) grant awarded to the City of Portage and the City of Kalamazoo is expected to assist approximately 125 households with back rent for cases already in the court system. HRI has a few staff openings, information regarding the positions is posted on the HRI website.

**Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)** – John Fiore reported MRS staff are settling in and adjusting to a hybrid work schedule. Applications for MRS services are increasing. MRS has two open counselor positions, both require a MA in counseling. One is in Kalamazoo and the other is in Benton Harbor. Staff are also ramping up to bring MRS services back into the schools and community partners have been very helpful. The goal is to serve more schools and offer more services than in the past. Mr. Fiore also reported that MRS is restarting the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) class in partnership with the Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) and the Northside Neighborhood Alliance. They are currently seeking candidates for the next cohort of students that is expected to begin in January, 2023. The class operates at a much slower pace than most CNA classes, it is a ten-week training program, instead of four. They are seeking referrals of individuals who want to work and have a disability and there is also a focus on recruiting from low to moderate income neighborhoods. Applicants need to pass a drug test. MRS counselor, Carrie Healy is overseeing this effort. Interested individuals should contact MRS.

## **WORK GROUP UPDATES**

**Emerging Issues Related to Employment and Advocacy** – Sheldon Schwitek reported there is a push in Behavioral Health to combine the Shirkey Bill with one other to privatize mental health. He will forward the Action Alert to Kathy Olsen to be shared with the group in the meeting follow-up email.

**Collaboration – Partner Matrix** – Kathy Olsen reported a few updates were made to the Partner Matrix prior to emailing it with the agenda packet. Members should send her any additional updates as they occur, and she will continue to keep the document current.

**Curriculum- At Your Desktop Trainings** – Kathy Olsen reported the At-Your Desktop Trainings are posted on the Michigan Works! Southwest website. The staff person who was reviewing them and checking to ensure hyperlinks work has left Michigan Works!; the review of the trainings will be assigned to a new staff.

## **UNIQUE CUSTOMER NEEDS**

Ramona Lumpkin reported she has been working with many individuals from the Latino community and is struggling communicating with them. She asked what translation services are available. Members shared some of the resources they are using which included Language Line, El Concilio, Voces, and Google translator. Members were asked to also check what resources their agency was using and to send the information to Kathy Olsen. A compiled list will be included in the meeting follow-up email. It was noted that the list should also include resources for American Sign Language (ASL).

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A list of professional development opportunities was included on the agenda. They included

- Disability Network Southwest Michigan <http://www.dnswm.org/>;
- Incompass Michigan <https://incompassmi.org/>; and
- the DART Desktop Training Modules <https://www.michiganworkssouthwest.org/about/board/> (Scroll down on web page to the DART tab.)

Additional professional development opportunities added to the list included:

- The Inclusion Conference sponsored by Arc Community Advocates was added to the list. It will be held on March 15, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the WMU Fetzer Center. The link for more information and to register is <https://communityadvocates.org/inclusion-conference>

## DART SCHEDULE For 2023

The proposed DART meeting schedule was included with the agenda packet. The proposed dates were February 7, April 18, June 20, September 19, and November 14, 2023, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. It was noted that the meetings usually do not last the full two hours. There were no objections to the proposed schedule, and it was accepted by consensus of members present. The meetings will be virtual or a combination of virtual and in-person and a determination for each meeting format will be decided prior to each meeting.

## NEXT MEETING

The next DART meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 7, 2023, from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Kathy Olsen, Quality Assurance/Project Coordinator and WDB Liaison  
Michigan Works! Southwest