What we have accomplished so far: 4 Unit Course “Introduction to Direct Support In the Developmental Disabilities Sector” at the College of Alameda
California – Except for CPR/First Aid and Universal Precautions almost no requirements for training in community based services

• And no funding for training
How we got there

• Started with one small/medium sized agency testing the College of Direct Support.

Small Pilot Projects, tried a bunch of different things over a few years
Tried to get $ from Workforce Investment Board

- Completely Shut us down
- Not interested in the low wages of the field.
We finally got organized

• Labor/Management workgroup made up of DSPs and Managers as well as the union rep.
• Looked at job descriptions, thought about needed competencies, matched them with CDS courses.
• Analyzed current career ladder, made modifications to increase opportunity.
Went back to the workforce investment board

• Showed how training would help move people up a career ladder that would result in higher wages

• By using the competency based College of Direct Support that is accredited by the NADSP, there was no question about the quality of our training.

• This time we got the funding
Very successful

• 2 cohorts of 15 each.
  – CDS lessons – OJT with Supervisor – Portfolio type assignments
  – All received raises
  – Most received promotions
  – New supervisors in Agency started to come exclusively from within the agency instead of hiring from the outside.
Key is development of partners

- Labor Union (SEIU)
- Local political representatives were pulled in to support our efforts to get funding from the WIB
DSPs said they wanted college credit
Brought in more partners

- Other agencies, both providers, as well as, advocacy organizations
- Got support from the Career ladders Project of the California Community Colleges
Meeting with President of college of Alameda

• She was very interested in the participation of the community – but again the problem of funding
Targeted unemployed workers for the training because that’s where the money is

- Received a Grant from the Chancellor’s office of the California Community Colleges
• Intro course (using CDS as the text)
• English reading and writing course
• Computer literacy class
• Internships with Providers
• At first Student’s were very unhappy with not having a hardback text book; complained bitterly – by the end they were true believers; many students came up to me and told me how much they appreciated my using CDS.
• 80 % of those who completed program received job offers

• Bureaucracy of school very challenging, without the support of the president it would have been very difficult.
• – need to really support this population – with bus vouchers, etc. Big need for case management.
• Need to be hard core on basic employment skills – not place if they cannot get to class on time or if have attendance problems.
Internships only as good as the agency

• High quality agencies who provided a high quality experience and who expected a lot of their interns had higher rates of hiring program graduates.
Money still an Issue

- Currently President of College funding Program
- Plan to approach WIB for funding
Partners are key to success

- Need to put work into developing further and maintaining the network of partners.
- No need to limit group just to folks who like each other, people are willing to work together toward a common goal even if they don’t like the idea of working together.
- In other words, Lot’s of complaints about SEIU. But in the end, people got over it. And it was a good thing because both the Workforce Investment Board, the funding we received, and the College President’s support may not have occurred without the union’s support.
Moving Forward

• We want to create classes for incumbent workers
• 2 unit hybrid online/in-class Positive Behavior Support Class is our next goal.
Lynn Rivas Ph.D.

- Executive Director
  Consumer Directed Services Network
- Adjunct Faculty
  College of Alameda
- Training & Outreach Coordinator
  Public Authority for IHSS

- Please feel free to call 510-577-3554