

# Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities BIOGRAPHIES

## Federal Official Members

**David Weil, Administrator**  
**Wage & Hour Division**  
**U.S. Department of Labor**



Dr. David Weil was sworn in as the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division on May 5, 2014. Dr. Weil is an internationally recognized expert in public and labor market policy; regulatory performance; industrial and labor relations; transparency policy; and supply-chain restructuring and its effects.

Prior to this appointment, Dr. Weil served as professor of economics and the Peter and Deborah Wexler Professor of Management at Boston University School of Management. He also served as co-director of the Transparency Policy Project at the Ash Institute at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. He has written three books on labor market policy, including the recently published *The Fissured Workplace*. He has authored numerous articles and publications in a variety of economics, public policy, management, and industrial relations journals and books, as well as numerous publications in non-academic outlets.

No stranger to the Department's mission or its work, Dr. Weil has served as an adviser to both the Wage and Hour Division and to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as to a number of other government agencies. He also has served as mediator and adviser in a range of labor/union and labor/management settings across the globe. In addition to his work for the Department, his research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Russell Sage Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, among others. Dr. Weil received his B.S. at Cornell University and M.A. and Ph.D. in public policy at Harvard University.



**Jennifer Sheehy, Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Office of Disability Employment Policy  
U.S. Department of Labor**



Jennifer Sheehy is the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of Disability Employment Policy, US Department of Labor. Prior to her current position, Jennifer spent ten years at the US Department of Education in many roles, including Director of Policy and Planning in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), acting Director of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), acting Deputy Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration and Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of OSERS. Jennifer came to the Department of Education from the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities where she was Senior Policy

Advisor and served a detail as Associate Director in the White House Domestic Policy Council. Before she joined the task force staff, Jennifer was Vice President of the National Organization on Disability and Director of its CEO Council. Jennifer earned a BA from Cornell University and graduated with honors from Georgetown University, where she received her MBA.

**Portia Wu, Assistant Secretary  
Employment & Training Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor**



As the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training, Portia Wu works to advance job-driven skills training. Previously, she served as Special Assistant to the President for Labor and Workforce Policy at the White House Domestic Policy Council (DPC). From 2011 to 2012, she served as the Senior Policy Advisor for Mobility and Opportunity at DPC. Prior to joining the Administration, she was the Vice President at the National Partnership for Women and Families from 2010 to 2011. From 2003 to 2010, Ms. Wu worked at the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee in a number of roles, including Labor and Pensions Counsel, Chief Labor and Pensions Counsel, and Labor Policy Director and General Counsel.

Prior to working in the U.S. Senate, Ms. Wu was an attorney at Bredhoff & Kaiser, PLLC, and clerked for Judge Richard A. Paez in the United States District Court for the Central District of California. Ms. Wu received a B.A. from Yale College, an M.A. from Cornell University, and a J.D. from Yale Law School.



**Bob Williams, Deputy Commissioner  
Administration on Disabilities  
Administration on Community Living  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**



Bob Williams is the Deputy Commissioner, Administration on Disabilities and Director, Independent Living Administration. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Williams served as a Senior Advisor to the Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy in the Social Security Administration's Office of Retirement and Disability Policy. Mr. Williams formerly served as a Senior Advisor to the Acting Associate Commissioner of the Social Security Administration's Office of Employment Support Programs. Immediately prior to this, he was the Special Assistant to the Director of the Washington, DC Department on Disability Services.

He has also advised the Kaiser Foundation, the Commonwealth Fund and others on policy issues affecting the health, independence and economic well-being of Americans with disabilities of all ages.

From 1993-2000, Williams served as Commissioner on Developmental Disabilities and then as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Disability, Aging and Long Term Care Policy in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 1990, he worked on enacting the Americans with Disabilities Act and began his career serving on a court appointed monitoring team charged with closing Forest Haven, the District of Columbia's institution for people with developmental disabilities.

**John O'Brien, Senior Policy Advisor and Elderly Health Programs Group  
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
U.S. Department of Health and Services**

John O'Brien is the Senior Policy Advisor for the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Previously, John was the Senior Advisor to the Administrator on Health Care Reform at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). John O'Brien was the Director of several national projects funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to develop strategies for coordinating funding for human services from federal, state and local dollars. Prior to his work at SAMHSA, Mr. O'Brien worked with the Technical Assistance Collaborative for fifteen years as a Senior Consultant. He has provided consultation to over 30 states and local human services authorities. He has worked with Medicaid, state mental health and substance abuse authorities. He has worked with states to develop federal Medicaid Waivers, Medicaid state plan amendments, and federal grant applications (e.g., children's system of care).

Mr. O'Brien has also been a manager at KPMG Peat Marwick and worked for the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, the Massachusetts Developmental Disability Council, the Illinois Governor's Office,



and the Illinois Legislative Commission on Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse. He was a program staff at Thresholds, Inc. in Chicago.

**Janet LaBreck, Commissioner  
Rehabilitation Services Administration  
U.S. Department of Education**



As commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Janet LaBreck oversees programs that help people with disabilities find employment and live more independently. Prior to that role within the U.S. Department of Education, she was the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), a position she held since 2007.

Ms. LaBreck joined the MCB in 1985 as Consumer Advocate. She has served in a number of positions at the MCB since then, including Independent Living Coordinator, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, and Regional Director of Central Massachusetts. Since 2005, she has worked as an Adjunct Professor at Assumption College, where she teaches courses in rehabilitation of the blind and case management in rehabilitation. She was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the New England College of Optometry. She received a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts and an M.Ed. from Springfield College.

**Robert Pfaff  
Deputy Associate Commissioner  
Office of Research, Demonstration and Employment Support  
U.S. Social Security Administration**

Robert Pfaff is the Social Security Administration's Deputy Associate Commissioner in the Office of



Research, Demonstration and Employment Support (ORDES) where he has served since 2013 as the executive responsible for the administration of SSA's Ticket to Work Program. Rob began his career in 1995 at the Maryland Disability Determination Services where he conducted medical claims reviews and authorized determinations for individuals applying for Social Security disability benefits. In 1999 he was selected to become Unit Supervisor where he managed a unit of 8 disability adjudicators and 2 clerical staff. In 2001, Rob was selected by the Social Security Administration to draft disability policy and regulations including medical Listings, vocational policy, and the conversion of disability application forms into electronic format. In 2004, Rob was selected by the Office of Program Development and

Research to serve as a certified Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) leading disability





research projects. He subsequently became the component lead on homeless initiatives by serving as the SSA representative on the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH).

In 2012, Rob was selected as the Division Director in the Case Management Office in the Office of Medical and Vocational Expertise (OMVE) where he led a unit of 45 disability adjudicators, clerical staff and managers in the adjudication of disability claims in support of state disability agencies and federal Hearings units. Rob served in this capacity until his selection as Deputy Associate Commissioner in ORDES in 2013. Rob is a 1994 graduate of Towson University where he majored in History and Social Science and minored in Secondary Education.

## Public Citizen Members

### Self-Advocate Category

#### Patrick Hendry – Mental Health America



Patrick has worked as a mental health advocate for the past twenty-four years. His areas of expertise include social inclusion, self-directed care, recovery-based trainings, peer workforce development and peer-run programs. In his capacity at Mental Health America he is currently developing the first national certification program for employing people living with psychiatric disabilities in private behavioral health care. In 1992 he co-founded the first peer-run organization in Florida to contract directly with the State for the provision of services and has, since that time, assisted with the development of numerous peer-run programs. He is a strong supporter of the inclusion of mental health consumers in all aspects of the mental health system.

#### Karen McCulloh – McCulloh & Associates Consulting



Karen McCulloh understands firsthand the opportunities and challenges in the workforce development system for the disability community. A professional registered nurse (RN) specializing in neurosurgical intensive care who also worked in community health nursing, as a nurse executive and as a nurse entrepreneur, McCulloh was initially informed that she was being considered for sheltered employment after developing multiple disabilities before her first in-person meeting with her vocational rehabilitation counselor. McCulloh's personal experience spurred her in a new professional direction. Unable to find employment as a healthcare professional after becoming disabled, McCulloh became the first RN in the state of Illinois who has multiple disabilities to set up a for-profit practice while creating her own specialty in nursing, Community Health Disability Education. She also co-founded the National Organization of Nurses with



Disabilities, NOND, [www.nond.org](http://www.nond.org) in 2003. She has worked for the past 24 years in the workforce development arena for and with people representing cross-disabilities. She has worked with local, state, national and global corporations focusing on CEO education. McCulloh's work extends to the promotion of healthcare careers for qualified veterans and civilians with disabilities and to the development of supports and best practices for healthcare professionals who are mature workers that become disabled after licensure.

In 2005, McCulloh accepted the founding Executive Director position of disabilityworks, an initiative set up at the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce where she focused her work in the Northeast Region of Illinois on the employment of people with disabilities, an initiative that went statewide in 2007. In 2006, McCulloh accepted a federal appointment from the U.S. Secretary of the Department of Labor to the National Job Corps Advisory Committee and was appointed as the Chair of the Disability Subcommittee. She was the only person with a disability to serve on this advisory committee.

In 2008, McCulloh resigned from her federal appointment to serve on President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden's Transition Team in Washington, D.C. while continuing as executive director for disabilityworks. In 2010, she resigned as the executive director of disabilityworks to reestablish her own independent contracting business, Karen McCulloh & Associates Consulting. She received a Presidential Appointment from President Obama to the U.S. AbilityOne Commission in 2011.

In October 2012, McCulloh joined National Disability Institute as the founding Project Director for the LEAD Center while telecommuting, a position she held until resigning in October 2013. Karen is a graduate of Loyola University of Chicago and Grant Hospital School of Nursing in Columbus, Ohio.

### **Santa Perez - People First of Nevada**



Statewide President, People First of Nevada Live, Laugh, Love, Advocate Santa Perez – Advocate Co-coordinator for the People First of Nevada Project funded by the Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) Santa Perez is from Southern California where she was very active in the self-advocacy movement. She earned her Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology from Cal State Northridge. When Santa moved to Las Vegas in the mid-1990s, she discovered that there were no advocacy groups for people with disabilities. This was unacceptable for Santa and she started her quest to bring a self-advocacy group to Nevada. Santa completed the Partners in Policy Making program in 1999 at The University of Nevada, Reno. Their UCEDD had just started a new project, AmeriCorps Vista (Volunteers in Services to

America), and she was informed that they wanted her to become a member. This became her golden opportunity to fulfill her goal of bringing a self-advocacy group to Nevada. Through this project, Santa co-founded People First of Nevada and her dream is now a reality with 7 chapters all around the state. Santa is a very proud and active President of the People First of Nevada. She has testified before the state legislation and was instrumental in getting the Signature Stamp Law and the People First Respectful Language Law passed. Santa is currently working for Community Chest of Nevada,



reporting through the NGCDD as an Advocate Co-Coordinator for the People First of Nevada Project. She has given many presentations at national conferences around the country. In her personal life Santa has accomplished many things. She has her own home and is a part of her community, but in her eyes, her greatest accomplishment is her son Noah.

## Provider Organizations

### **Brian Itzkowitz** - Goodwill Industries of Arkansas



Brian Itzkowitz, President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to help build lives, families and communities by assisting people with disabilities and other special needs reach their highest potential through training, education and employment services. Itzkowitz joined the agency in August 2008, and has over 16 years of experience in the Goodwill network. Since his arrival, Goodwill has seen the people served increase by over 500%, people placed in employment increase 40 fold, and has created more than 500 jobs internally. Currently, he oversees more than 700 employees and 38 retail and donation locations across the state.

Prior to Goodwill Industries of Arkansas, Itzkowitz served as Vice President of Retail Operations at Goodwill Industries of Southwest Florida. He began his nonprofit career at Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake in Baltimore, Maryland as director of retail operations. Collectively, Itzkowitz has over 20 years of senior management experience. Itzkowitz maintains active involvement in several professional and community service organizations.

Currently, he serves on both the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and the Little Rock Workforce Investment Board, Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council and Goodwill Industries International's board of directors. He is also involved in other local nonprofit organizations, serving on the Boards of the CARTI Foundation, Arkansas Society of Association Executives, University of Miami Alumni Board of Directors, University of Arkansas – Little Rock College of Business Advisory Board and serves on the leadership team for Arkansas Walk Now for Autism Speaks. Itzkowitz is also an active member of the Rotary Club of Little Rock. He holds a bachelor's degree in international finance and marketing from the University of Miami. Additionally, he has been certified as Chief Executive Officer, and is a graduate of Goodwill's Executive Development program.



## Christine McMahon – Fedcap



Christine McMahon joined Fedcap in 2009 and has championed the organization's strategic growth, significantly increasing the nonprofit's size as well as its service delivery and reach among people in need throughout the Northeast.

Ms. McMahon has more than 25 years' experience in social and mental-health services in New York and New England. She is nationally recognized for the breadth of her strategic vision and her expertise across a wide range of social programs, for the implementation of numerous social-service-delivery and community-based initiatives, and for influencing state and local healthcare and social policy. She previously served as Senior Vice President and COO of an Easter Seals region that encompassed New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Rhode Island, New York and Massachusetts.

Ms. McMahon received her Master of Health Administration from the University of New Hampshire and her BA in Psychology from New England College. Her numerous honors include the New Hampshire Business Review-Outstanding Women in Business Award, the National Easter Seals – Lou Lowenkron Award for Program Innovation, the Division for Children, Youth and Families – Director's Choice Award, and the Riverbend Community Mental Health – Rainbow Award.

## National Disability Organizations

### Alison Barkoff - Bazelon Center



Alison Barkoff is the Director of Advocacy at the Bazelon Center. She works on policy and litigation related to community integration and inclusion of people with disabilities, including Olmstead, Medicaid, employment, housing, and education. From 2010 to 2014, she served as Special Counsel for Olmstead Enforcement in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. In that position, she led the Division's efforts to enforce the right of individuals with disabilities to live, work and receive services in the community. Under her leadership, the Division issued its first Olmstead guidance and was actively involved in Olmstead litigation across the country, including numerous cases culminating in statewide system reform settlement agreements.

During her time with the federal government, Ms. Barkoff also worked with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on finalizing rules governing Medicaid-funded community-based services and with the Department of Labor on implementation of its new home care rule in Medicaid-funded disability service systems. Prior to her time with the government, she worked at the Bazelon Center





and at other public interest organizations on Olmstead enforcement, disability discrimination, Medicaid, employment, and education cases. She clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor when she was on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and for Judge William Pauley of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. She is a graduate of Cornell University and Emory University School of Law. Ms. Barkoff also is a sibling of an adult brother with a developmental disability.

#### **Ruby Moore – National Disability Rights Network**



Ruby Moore is the Executive Director of the Georgia Advocacy Office, the designated Protection and Advocacy System for People with Disabilities in Georgia. Moore is nationally known for her work in the disability field over the past 39 years, particularly in the areas of employment, augmentative communication, and the design and implementation of supports necessary for people with significant disabilities to live, work, play, and go to school in the community. Her experience includes growing up with family members with disabilities, working in both institutional and community settings, running provider organizations, working within and outside government bureaucracies, individual and systemic advocacy, directly supporting individuals to obtain employment, housing, and other supports necessary to

live in the community, and working to improve local, state and national disability policy.

Moore has over 30 years of experience helping people wrongly considered “unemployable” due to type or level of disability, to get jobs and build careers. She was one of the original architects of the national supported employment initiative and was one of a small group of people working on early national technical assistance grants to the states for their statewide systems change initiatives. She ran an employment institute in MA, and was an employment provider for 16 years. She helped to set up statewide employment institutes and technical assistance centers in NH and CT. Moore also ran a federally-funded model demonstration program securing high quality employment for people with dual sensory impairments (“deaf-blindness”) in New England, replicated the project in California. She has provided technical assistance across the United States and in several other countries. Moore hosts a statewide employment initiative in GA.

#### **Ari Ne’eman – Autistic Self Advocacy Network**



Ari Ne’eman is the President and co-founder of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, an advocacy organization run by and for Autistic adults seeking to increase the representation of Autistic people across society. In 2009, President Obama nominated Ari to the National Council on Disability, a federal agency charged with advising Congress and the President on disability policy issues. He was confirmed by the Senate in July 2010 and currently chairs the Council’s Entitlements Committee. From 2010 to 2012, he served as a public member to the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee, a Federal advisory committee that coordinates all efforts within the Department of Health



and Human Services concerning autism. Ari also served as an adviser to the DSM-5 Neurodevelopmental Disorders Workgroup convened by the American Psychiatric Association.

Appointed by Governor Jon Corzine, Ari served as Vice Chair of the New Jersey Adults with Autism Task Force, where he represented autistic adults in reviewing the state's autism services. He also previously served on the New Jersey Special Education Review Commission, where he authored a minority report on the topic of aversives, restraint and seclusion. He is also a board member of TASH, an advocacy organization focusing on advancing social justice for people with significant disabilities. In addition, he was named by the New York Jewish Week as one of their "36 by 36" in 2010. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, where he studied political science in the Sondheim Public Affairs Scholars Program.

## Academia/Research

**Vicki (Valerie) Brooke, M.Ed.** – Virginia Commonwealth University



Ms. Brooke has been with Virginia Commonwealth University since 1979 earning a M.Ed. in Special Education with an emphasis on employment for people with disabilities. Ms. Brooke was one of our country's original job coaches and has served as the Center's Director of Training for over 20 years. In addition to these responsibilities, in the last several years she has also managed an employment services program as a vendor with Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services and Virginia Medicaid Waiver program, serving individuals with intellectual disabilities, autism, brain injury and spinal cord injury. Ms. Brooke has served as the Project Director/Principal

Investigator for multiple national and state grants all related to employment of people with significant disabilities and has gained close working relationships with vocational rehabilitation managers, public school systems, and community businesses both through the vendorship and as a Board member of the Virginia Business Leadership Network.

Ms. Brooke has served on the editorial board for Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation since 2000 and is a frequent speaker, consultant and contributor to the literature with numerous book chapters, journal articles, newsletters, and briefing papers. She is committed to creating opportunities that support the full partnership of people with disabilities that are achieved through community integrated competitive employment.



**David Mank, Ph.D.** – Indiana Institute on Disability and Community; **Committee Chair**



David Mank, Ph.D., is the Director of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University, Indiana's University Center for Excellence on Disabilities, and Full Professor in the School of Education.

As a writer and researcher, Dr. Mank has an extensive background in the education and employment for persons with disabilities. He has authored or coauthored numerous articles and book chapters. His interest also includes a focus on the transition of persons with disabilities from school to employment and community living.

Mank holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and English from Rockhurst College in Kansas City (1975), a Master's from Portland State University in Special Education (1977), and a Doctorate in Special Education and Rehabilitation from the University of Oregon, Eugene (1985).

Mank is a member of the editorial boards of the Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities (TASH), the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Journal of Disability Policy Studies, Siglo Cero, and Associate Editor for the journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

He has served on the Board of Directors of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. He is Past President of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities. He was a founding board member of APSE, The Network on Employment. He was recipient of the Franklin Smith Award for National Distinguished Service from The Arc of the United States.

## Employers

**Jim Brett** – President and Chief Executive Officer, The New England Council



James T. Brett, President and Chief Executive Officer of The New England Council, was appointed to those positions by the Council's board of directors in October 1996. Mr. Brett has been a leading voice in advocating for public policy issues such as health care, education, financial services and energy throughout New England and Washington, D.C.

Before joining the Council, Mr. Brett served for more than fifteen years as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He held a succession of important leadership positions, including the chairmanship of two of the most significant committees in the Massachusetts legislature, Banking and the Committee on Taxation. In these positions, he brought together various constituencies to create economic opportunity for the Commonwealth's citizens and businesses. He previously served as Chairman of the Joint Committee on Banks and Banking, the Joint Committee on Criminal Justice, the Joint Committee on Congressional Redistricting, the Joint Committee on Counties, and the House Committee on Legislative Redistricting.



Mr. Brett recently served as the Chairman of The President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities and continues to serve as a member, as well as serving as Chairman of the Governor's Commission on Intellectual Disability. Mr. Brett is Past President of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health.

In addition to a Bachelor's degree from American University, Mr. Brett holds Master's degrees in Public Administration from both Suffolk University and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

### **Oswald ("Oz") Mondejar - Partners Continuing Care**



Oz Mondejar is the Senior Vice President of Mission and Advocacy for Partners Continuing Care (PCC). Comprised of the Spaulding Rehabilitation Network and Partners HealthCare at Home, PCC is a member of Partners HealthCare and one the largest not-for-profit post-acute providers in the country. In his role, Mr. Mondejar touches on many areas from community outreach to workforce development as well as implementation of key initiatives such as "Working Partners", recognized as a first of its kind public/private partnership between Spaulding Rehabilitation Network and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission that works to break down barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

Over his distinguished career in the private and public sector, Mr. Mondejar has served in numerous leadership positions with a focus on human resources and community relations. A significant focus for him has been on work force development opportunities for the community with disabilities and employer education by striving to demystify the obstacles both real or perceived, to considering qualified candidates with disabilities.

With a practical result based approach, he has continually demonstrated the significant economic value to businesses and society as a whole of engaging this largely untapped talent pool. Mr. Mondejar has worked with a wide variety of businesses from small local employers to large global corporations to develop models and processes to enhance their recruitment and retention programs by incorporating the community with disabilities. He has been recognized numerous times by public and private organizations for his work in this arena as well as for a lifetime of mentorship and youth development.





**Steve Pemberton** – Divisional Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Walgreens



Fortune 50 Executive, Author of “A Chance in the World” & Voice of Change for Youth. A ward of the state for much of his childhood, Steve Pemberton has made opportunity, access, and equality pillars of his personal and professional life. One of America's most inspiring executives, he is recognized as a leader on matters of diversity and inclusion and their importance to the growth of the American industrial complex.

Overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds, Pemberton has gone from being a forgotten ward of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to becoming a trailblazing Divisional Vice President at Walgreens and the first Chief Diversity Officer for the 113 year old company. As such, he directs activities to help serve diverse markets and populations, including customers in medically underserved areas, food deserts, and urban areas, as well as strengthens relationships with diverse suppliers and communities. Prior to that, he made history as the first Chief Diversity Officer and Vice-President of Diversity and Inclusion for an Internet start-up while at [Monster.com](http://Monster.com).

His memoir, *A Chance in the World: An Orphan Boy, a Mysterious Past, and How He Found a Place Called Home*, chronicles his difficult path through foster care and his determined search for his family. Pemberton’s story has garnered nationwide attention and has been captured in major media outlets such as *People Magazine*, *The Steve Harvey Show* and multiple news networks.

Hollywood has taken notice and is currently adapting *A Chance in the World* into a screenplay. In the corporate world, Pemberton is recognized as an enlightened executive driven by his commitment to diversity and the capacity to lead through adversity. As founder of the non-profit *A Chance in the World*, he focuses on connecting people who are in need of a chance with people willing to give them one that will help move them in their desired direction in life. He also serves on several boards including *The Home for Little Wanderers* where *The Pemberton Fund for the Future* has been established in his name. Furthermore, as a board member of *UCAN*, he assists in providing guidance and offering inspiration to children in need.

## Other Experts

**Cesilee Coulson** – Washington Initiative for Supported Employment



Ces brings 20 years of experience in training and development to her position, including, leadership development, Employment First strategy development and non-profit management. She designs, implements and manages employment training and technical assistance projects that increase employment opportunities and outcomes. She holds certifications as an Executive Coach by the Hudson Institute and a Somatic Executive and Leadership Coach by the Strozzi Institute. She is a past



board member for National APSE, the National APSE Foundation and is a current board member with the Community Employment Alliance (a WA State Association of Employment Agencies). She holds a Master's Degree in Social Psychology/Exercise and Movement Science from the University of Oregon. Ces lives in Bellingham, WA where she enjoys sailing in the San Juan Islands, golfing, camping and gardening with her family and two dogs.

#### **Sharyn Hancock – Workforce Essentials Inc.**



Sharyn Hancock is assigned as the Disability Resource Coordinator at Workforce Essentials, Inc. a non-traditional, private, non-profit organization delivering workforce development services for Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development in middle Tennessee overseeing the Tennessee Career Center System and delivery of Adult, Dislocated and Youth programs to Job Seekers and Employers.

Sharyn Hancock has been charged with addressing accessibility issues or other barriers preventing individuals with disabilities from fully utilizing Career Center services at the 9 county career centers, as well as managing their Workforce Investment Board Employment Network through the Social Security Administrations Ticket to Work Program. Her 20 years' experience in the public workforce system has led Sharyn to obtain strong expertise in working with job seekers, employees, employers and youth of all levels and backgrounds. Sharyn holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Everest University, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

#### **Rita M. Landgraf – Delaware State Department of Health & Social Services**



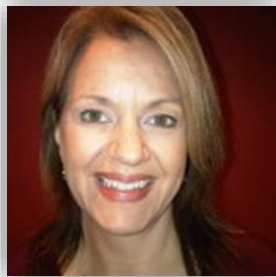
Rita M. Landgraf was sworn in as Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services on Jan. 22, 2009. As Secretary, she leads the principal agency charged with keeping Delawareans healthy, advancing initiatives that promote self-sufficiency while ensuring that those citizens who are most vulnerable receive the appropriate services and supports that produce quality of life outcomes. She oversees one of the largest departments in the Delaware government, with an annual state budget of more than \$1 billion.

Landgraf, who has spent more than 30 years of her career in support of individuals with disabilities, served as a key adviser to Gov. Jack Markell during his yearlong initiative as Chair of the National Governors Association to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The Governor's 2012-2013 initiative, "A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities," culminated with the release of a [blueprint](#) for his fellow governors specifically focused on the role that state governments and businesses can play in creating more employment opportunities for people with disabilities and on improving employment outcomes. Landgraf continues to work with the Governor to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Delaware's private, nonprofit and public sectors.



Secretary Landgraf has been a leader on health care, disabilities, and senior issues, including formerly as executive director of The Arc of Delaware, where she was instrumental in creating a community based job development and placement program, and during her tenure at The Arc provided guidance to self-advocates in creating Delaware People First. Landgraf also served as the Executive Director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness in Delaware, and president of AARP Delaware. For her efforts, the University of Delaware inducted her into the University Of Delaware Alumni Wall Of Fame in June 2011, and she will be inducted into the Delaware Women's Hall of Fame this March.

#### **Lisa Pugh – Disability Rights Wisconsin**



Lisa Pugh is the Public Policy Coordinator for Wisconsin's Disability Policy Partnership and Policy Director for the state's Protection and Advocacy agency, Disability Rights Wisconsin. In this role she educates policymakers at the state and federal level and coordinates and informs the work of other advocates, coalitions and organizations that support people with disabilities in Wisconsin. The policy partnership is a unique collaboration of Disability Rights Wisconsin, the Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and People First Wisconsin. As a Joseph P.

Kennedy, Jr. Foundation Public Policy Fellow in 2009-2010, served as a disability policy advisor in the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor and in the Office of the Under Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education.

Lisa has worked to advance initiatives and train advocates, including people with disabilities, on a variety of issues. In the past year she was instrumental in coordinating support for significant investments in integrated, competitive wage employment initiatives for people with disabilities and extending access to long-term care programs throughout Wisconsin. She is currently the policy lead on Wisconsin's youth Partnerships in Employment systems change grant - Let's Get to Work - funded through the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and serves as Education Issue Team Lead for the statewide Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations. In May 2014 Lisa was appointed by President Obama to serve on the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Lisa lives in Madison, Wisconsin. She has three children, one of whom has a developmental disability.

#### **Fredric Schroeder – Interwork Institute at San Diego State University**



Dr. Fredric K. Schroeder was born in Lima, Peru, in 1957. He and his brother Steve were adopted and moved to the United States when he was nineteen months old. Born with normal vision, Dr. Schroeder became blind at the age of seven after suffering a severe allergic reaction known as Stephens-Johnson's Syndrome. As a result, his vision deteriorated over a nine-year period, leaving him totally blind at the age of sixteen.

Following graduation from high school, Dr. Schroeder attended the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany, California. There he joined the National Federation of the Blind, and his involvement in the disability



consumer movement has been central to his life and work ever since. His professional achievements are impressive. In 1980, Dr. Schroeder returned to New Mexico to work as a teacher of blind children for the Albuquerque Public Schools. Six years later, Dr. Schroeder was appointed the New Mexico Commission for the Blind's first executive director. In 1994, President Bill Clinton appointed Schroeder to serve as the ninth commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) within the US Department of Education. As RSA commissioner he administered a \$2.5 billion dollar program providing services to more than one million people with disabilities each year. He focused on high-quality employment—better jobs, jobs with a future, jobs enabling people to achieve a good and equitable standard of living. His crowning achievement as RSA commissioner was ending the practice of having state vocational rehabilitation agencies place people with disabilities in segregated employment settings, often at subminimum wages.

Following his service as RSA commissioner, he joined the faculty of the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University. He now works as a research professor specializing in leadership and public policy in vocational rehabilitation. He also serves as the Executive Director of the National Rehabilitation Association, a grassroots organization of rehabilitation professionals. His involvement in the National Federation of the Blind also continues. On July 5, 2006, Dr. Schroeder was unanimously elected first vice president of the National Federation of the Blind, and he often represents the Federation at national and international meetings and conferences. Dr. Schroeder has also held a number of leadership positions internationally. He was the founding president of the International Council on English Braille and presently serves as the first vice president of the World Blind Union.

Dr. Schroeder attended San Francisco State University, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology in 1977; a master's degree in Special Education in 1978; and a Ph.D. in Education Administration from the University of New Mexico in May 1994.

