

Executive Summary

- I. Partnerships in Employment, a regional employment collaborative, is a network of community partners working to expand and improve employment opportunities for young people with disabilities.
- II. Berkshire County Arc (BCArc), the Lead Agency, is a non-profit, human services organization providing a broad range of services to individuals with disabilities.
- III. Contact Person: Leslie Olin, Project Coordinator, Advantage Employee Network, 20 Taconic Park Drive, Pittsfield MA 01201 – (413) 443-1038 x32 (413) 443-8065 F
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- IV. Mission, Vision and Value Statements
 - A. Mission Statement: Berkshire County community partners lead an effective and creative collaboration to expand and improve employment opportunities, and promote a life of self-sufficiency for young people with disabilities.
 - B. Vision Statement: Partnerships in Employment is a vibrant network of services designed for developing and matching a skilled workforce to identified labor needs. In a dynamic local economy, young people with disabilities are inspired to pursue a path towards employment and self-sufficiency through an integrated system of individualized community supports.
 - C. Value Statements:
 - Inclusion: Respect individual rights, dignity and contributions.
 - Youth Empowerment and Leadership:
 - 1) Maximize potential of young people with disabilities to be self-sufficient through full employment.
 - 2) Young people with disabilities are valued by the business community as a workforce solution.
 - 3) Change perceptions of youth with disabilities *to* people with abilities.
 - D. Collaboration:
 - 1) Develop community trust and participation through partnerships working together to expand employment opportunities.
 - 2) Share resources and knowledge to advance community and Collaborative priorities.
 - 3) Seek improvement recommendations from all to ensure “no wrong door.”
 - E. Mutual Benefit: Ensure that employers, young people with disabilities, collaborators, and the community all benefit from this collaboration.

Partnerships in Employment, *Abilities at Work in the Berkshires*

V. Major Partners:

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Developmental Services, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, Division of Transitional Assistance, Department of Mental Health, United Cerebral Palsy, Berkshire Works, Consumer Advocate from Adlib Center for Independent Living, Berkshire Vocational Services, The Reconnect Center, Berkshire County School Districts; Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, Jiminy Peak Mtn Resort, Prime Outlets, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Craneville Place of Dalton, Mayor City of Pittsfield, State Senator, Commissioner for Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, and Berkshire County State Representatives.

VI. Major Goals

1. To improve and enhance school-to-career transitions for young people with disabilities to better prepare them for employment.
2. To increase the collaboration of all stakeholders to expand and improve employment opportunities for young people with disabilities, and build future relationships to support community development.
3. To increase awareness and knowledge about the benefits of employing young people with disabilities through community engagement and support of stakeholders to include political and business leaders, employers, schools, employment service providers and young people with disabilities and their families.
4. Enhance the data collection and program evaluation process for agencies, employment providers and schools.

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WorkWithoutLimits
Putting abilities to work in Massachusetts.