

2006 Technical Assistance Institute

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Washington, D.C.



Youth Information,
Training and
Resource Centers

Administration on Developmental Disabilities

Presenter Biographical Sketches

Josie Badger

Josie Badger is a senior at Geneva College, in Pennsylvania, majoring in Disability Law and Advocacy. Beginning in August, Josie will serve as the President of the National Youth Leadership Network. On the state level, she is the co-youth coordinator for the first Pennsylvania State Independent Living Council's Youth Initiative. Josie is also a founding member and youth coordinator of the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network. Locally, she is the vice president of the Lawrence County Committee on Disability. Josie was recently named Glamour Magazine's 11th Top College Women of 2006. Josie will graduate this May and will attend graduate school in pursuit of a Master's degree in Public Policy. She hopes to work in the disability policy field.

Michael Beers

Michael has been performing as a stand up comic for about four years. He started out doing small gigs at open mics in the Missoula Montana area getting stage time between hundreds of college bands. He graduated to more glamorous gigs, playing mostly his own family reunions and some very lucrative performances at retirement homes.

A large portion Michael's act is based on his own life growing up in Montana with his mother and three his sisters, their dogs, and a disability. He also ventures into some social and political commentary.

Michael is currently traveling around the country performing mostly at conferences. He won the Norman G. Brooks comedy competition at the Hollywood Improv in 2005 and was the winner of the 2003 Brickwall amateur comedy competition in Spokane, WA.

His humor is based on the subtlety of everyday life and is perfectly paced by his tempered on-stage composure that is hilarious and wholly likeable. Mike

has a unique gift of being able to pull out a full set of comedy that is not obscene in its content, but still leaves crowds filled with laughter.

Jayne R. Chase

Jayne Chase has been a passenger riding alongside many people in her life. With J. Paul, her son, as the driving force, her journey has taken many directions. She has been the coordinator of Alabama Project RISE (Responsive Initiative, Supported Employment), coordinator of TechNet, a component of the Alabama Assistive Technology Project and is now the coordinator of Partners in Policymaking® of Alabama, a leadership course for individuals with developmental disabilities and families of children with developmental disabilities. She has served on numerous boards and councils and has made presentations throughout the United States, England, and Ireland. In 2002, Jayne received the Mentor of the Year award by Alabama's Early Intervention System.

Theresa Cooper

Theresa A. Cooper is a parent of a child with a learning disability and a sibling of an adult person with a developmental disability. Theresa is Director of Loving Your Disabled Child (LYDC), Project Coordinator of South LA Youth and Young Adult Self Determination Center (SLAYD) and is a founding member of Grassroots Consortium on Disability. She is known for her frankness on disability awareness in the inner city. Theresa and the work she does with LYDC have been featured in *Families, Professionals, and Exceptionalities*, (Ann and Rud Turnbull's textbook that is used in many colleges and universities nationwide), *Exceptional Parent Magazine*, and *Tapestry Journal*.

Before Theresa became the executive director of LYDC, she volunteered for 5 years as a childcare provider during LYDC's parent support group meetings, provided transportation for parents to attend the meetings, and volunteered in the office. As a result of her volunteerism and working with parents, she has developed an eye for identifying strengths in families and has become an advocate for families of children with disabilities who live in underserved communities.

Theresa lives with her three young adult children Krysten, Ashley and Eric in Hawthorne, CA.

Jeannette Doty, BS

Jeanette Doty has worked for The Center for Disability Education and Training at The University of Oklahoma since 1989. She has been involved in leadership training for adults as well as youth with disabilities. Jeanette

currently directs *The Oklahoma Alliance for Youth (OKAY Project)*, Oklahoma's youth information, resource and training center, and *Play Matters*, a recreational leadership program for youth with special needs in the Oklahoma City public school system.

Jeanette received her BS in Sociology from the University of Oklahoma in 1972.

Jason English

Jason English is a graduate of Youth Center for Youth, Information, Education and Leadership for Developmental Disabilities (Y.I.E.L.D.D) The Power! Youth Leadership Project at Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago. He is a member of Advance Youth Leadership Power, an advocacy group of young leaders with disabilities. In May, he spoke before the Chicago Public School's Board of Education to oppose \$ 26 million in budget cuts to Chicago Public Schools special education. Jason is one of the original named plaintiffs in *Corey H. et al. vs. the Chicago Board of Education and the Illinois State Board of Education*, which led to a settlement agreement calling for adequate aides and supports for Chicago students with disabilities.

Nichole Goble

During her time as the youth co-director and side-SALYD (Self-Advocacy and Leadership for Youth with Disabilities) liaison for SALYD) Nichole has been part of many presentations and panel discussions on disability topics. A few of the topics she has been privy to share on are volunteerism, self-advocacy, and issues around the transition stages. These topics fit especially within some of the group's goals and she says it was great to share and hear how others are addressing these areas. Nichole feels that much of her knowledge on these topics comes not only from her personal experiences but also from the expertise of those she works with as partners and fellow advocates. Outside of SALYD, she has been fortunate enough to work with Iowa's Youth Leadership Forum, serving as a staff member in 2003, 2004 and 2006. Nichole also helped out in the Welcome Room in 2005. The purpose of the Welcome Room is to make sure the youth who have just arrived feel comfortable in their new setting and begin meeting the fellow delegates. They also talk with parents about any issues or concerns they have so that they can leave with a peace of mind.

"As a youth with a disability, these experiences have shaped my self-advocacy skills and have had an impact on how I view my disability. It has been important for me to pass on what I have learned to others."

Joy Gordon, BA

Joy Gordon is a Youth Organizer at Inclusion Research Institute a non-profit organization located in Washington, DC. She graduated from Pine Manor College in Massachusetts receiving a Bachelor of the Arts in Communications with a minor in marketing. As a young professional with a learning disability, Joy uses her life experiences to assist teens and young adults with disabilities in the District of Columbia. She also has a strong interest in working with faith-based organizations.

Rebecca Hare, BS

Rebecca Hare is the Project Coordinator for the National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth located at the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, DC. An enthusiastic advocate for youth-led models of leadership development, Rebecca has worked with a number of groups such as the National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN) and the National Council on Disability (NCD) where she served as the Vice-Chair of the Youth Advisory Committee. She has consulted or given expert testimony to the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the World Bank, the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Advisory Panel, the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disability, and the committee for the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization. She currently serves as a grant reviewer for the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation and was recently appointed to the editorial board of the "Riot!" (a newsletter for and by self-advocates with disabilities).

Her publications include "Youth Development and Youth Leadership: A Background Paper" from the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, articles on civic engagement, sexuality, and youth development/leadership issues for the newsletter *Impact*, "the 411 on Disability Disclosure," "Paving the Way to Work: A Guide to Career-Focused Mentoring," and various policy agendas for the National Youth Leadership Network. She is currently developing a guide to assist youth with disabilities in a number of states in passing legislation to dedicate part of the school year to teaching Disability History and Awareness.

Rebecca spent four years as manager of top ranking Victoria's Secret stores and that experience has given Rebecca an informed perspective of both the employer side and employee side of workforce issues facing people with disabilities. She received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 2001 and has plans to continue her education in the near future.

Loretta Hobbs, MS

For more than 20 years, Loretta Hobbs has been a human effectiveness professional with experience in change initiatives, organizational diagnosis, strengthening organization capacity, internal communication, group process facilitation, building effective work teams, coaching and training.

Throughout her career, she has worked as a Director of System Development in Washington, DC for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), television entities and producers to strengthen organizational capacity and support the professional development of station and production personnel. She is the founder and president of her own organization, the O'Neal-Hobbs Associates in Washington, DC. O'Neal-Hobbs and Associates is a development and management consulting practice that helps build capacity, strengthen team effectiveness and individual performance, and provides training in multiple areas, including diversity, systems, emotional intelligence. Loretta works with domestic and international clients among non-profits, government, academic institutions, broadcast entities, private sector, management teams, Boards, and staffs.

In other areas, Loretta has led a consulting team of three to conduct a national stakeholder study that contributed to a new strategic plan with the Legal and Human Rights Center in Tanzania, East Africa. Has contributed to the Center for Basic Research, Uganda Wildlife in Kampala, Uganda to help them in capacity building, strengthening internal processes, infrastructure development, board development, strategic planning. She has also assisted the Administration of Developmental Disabilities (ADD) with their teambuilding activities and facilitates an annual grantee meeting.

Loretta is a Doctoral Student at the Fielding Graduate University, Human and Organization Development, holds a Masters of Science in Organization Development from American University, AU/NTL and a BA in Sociology from Howard University

Michael Hoenig, MA

For the past 13 years, Mike Hoenig has developed and implemented a variety of advocacy training initiatives for the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa. In his present role with the Center's State and Community Projects office, Mike is responsible for training grants on health promotion, community capacity-building, youth leadership, and disability awareness. He has a BA in psychology from Central College, Pella, Iowa, and an MA in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Iowa.

Having experienced blindness from birth, Mike has first-hand knowledge of many of the barriers, which persons with disabilities must overcome. This personal experience, combined with professional experience as an advocate and program administrator, has given Mike the knowledge to be a strong advocate and teacher of self-determination. During his term with the Center for Disabilities and Development, he has provided self-determination training for over 3,000 adults and adolescents with disabilities. Because of Mike's strong commitment to leadership development and peer support, many of these individuals are now taking charge of their lives and creating change in their communities.

Carlo Ignacio, BA

Carlo Ignacio is the founder and creative director of Studio Métis, LLC, headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland. Studio Métis specializes in delivering graphic/multimedia-based services for established companies, independent consultants, and clients from the private and non-profit sector. He has worked as a conference coordinator, social researcher, grant-writer, web designer, publications editor and multimedia consultant.

Prior to Studio Métis, Carlo worked for the Institute for Educational Leadership's Community-Based Systems Reform Division, where he was a research associate for the Systems Improvement Training and Technical Assistance Project. Funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the project was designed to develop, expand, and enhance the skills and abilities of juvenile justice and child welfare systems and communities to make systemic changes leading to an included system of care for at-risk and delinquent youth and their families. As a Research Associate, he was involved in a variety of activities that support the initiative's mission, including grant tracking and accounting, graphic design, web development, qualitative research, writing, and program implementation/planning.

Carlo's adventure as multimedia designer began in 1999. Soon after, he began taking freelance assignments for diverse clientele that includes local businesses, artists, musicians and non-profit organizations. In his free time, Carlo also moonlights as an occasional Fundraising Event Planner, Public Relations Coordinator and DJ.

A graduate of Duke University, Carlo has a background in Cultural Anthropology, Latin American Studies and the African Diaspora. A native of Puerto Rico he has extensive experience in the Caribbean.

Marissa Johnson, BA

As the Director of Training at the ADA & IT Information Center for the Mid-Atlantic Region, Marissa Johnson conducts trainings on the ADA and disability awareness and coordinates ADA Coalitions for each of the six states in the Mid-Atlantic region. Prior to coming to the Center, Marissa worked at Centers for Independent Living coordinating education and transition efforts for youth with disabilities. Marissa has served on numerous national committees, including as Member at Large of the National Council on Independent Living Board of Directors, Chair of the National Youth Leadership Network, and member of the Youth Advisory Council for the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. In 2002, Marissa was a recipient of an American Association of People with Disabilities' *Justice for All Award* for her "extraordinary leadership in support of the economic and political empowerment of all people with disabilities. Marissa is finishing her Masters of Education in Deaf Education at the University of Minnesota. In the future, she plans to write children's books and curricula about the history of the disability rights movement.

Julie Kenney, MPA

Julie Kenney who is the Project Director, is the Executive Director of IPSII a 501(c) (3) formed in 2002 whose mission is to increase IPSII (Independence, Productivity, Self Determination, Integration & Inclusion) for people with disabilities and their families through our projects, analysis of public policy and advocacy. The majority of members of IPSII Inc.'s Board of Directors are parents of children, youth and young adults with complex developmental disabilities and graduates of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities Partners program.

As a 2001 Bush Leadership Fellow, Julie studied leadership and disability law at the Kennedy School of Government and Harvard Law School earning an MPA. During her Fellowship, she presented at the 2002 Diversity Conference at the Graduate School of Education Harvard University, and her Harvard Law School paper 'Our Forgotten Children' was a finalist for the Colorline Conference, Harvard Civil Rights Project, and August 30, 2003.

Julie's personal experience gives her the grounding needed to develop projects like the Pathways Center. Textbooks, workshops and professional experiences can never replace the day-to-day challenges with which all parents struggle. Her greatest challenge and reward, has been caring for her son Joseph, a young adult with complex needs. Joseph was rated by the State of Minnesota in 1987, as the most difficult and costly child to serve in the State of Minnesota.

Joseph graduated in 2001 from Hopkins High School with a standard diploma. Joseph lives in Richfield Minnesota with his mom and dad, working part-time for IPSII Inc. printing dissemination materials for projects.

Julie and her husband Mike have been married for 33 yrs. in Richfield Minnesota.

Jonathan Lyn-Shue, BS

Jonathan Lyn-Shue is the Technology Director of Studio-Metis, LLC headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland. He also serves as the VP of Marketing for Trans-mesa International, a wholesale distributor of consumer electronics and computer components.

Jonathan has been designing and programming websites since 2000. In addition to his many past positions, he has served as a free-lance web designer and programmer for several companies across many industries: fashion, music, e-commerce, non-profit and legal.

Jonathan holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from George Washington University with a concentration of study in computer graphics and animation.

Faith McCormick, MPA

Prior to joining ADD, Faith McCormick worked closely with State legislators as the Department's liaison to the National Conference of State Legislators. She has worked with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for most of her public service career, during which she has worked in the Office of the Inspector General, Office of the Secretary and the Social Security Administration. She has also worked for the U.S. House of Representatives on Capitol Hill assisting in legislative affairs.

Faith started her tenure at ADD as the Executive Assistant to the Commissioner in October 2001, and is currently the Director, Office of Programs, overseeing formula grants and staff involved with the Developmental Disabilities Councils, Protection and Advocacy agencies and the Help America Vote Act.

Early in her career, she had the privilege of being a respite provider for four years for a young lady with an intellectual disability. Faith holds a Masters of Arts in Public Administration.

Ophelia McLain, MS

Ophelia McLain, serves as Program Analyst at the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD). ADD's mission is to improve and increase services to and assure that individuals with developmental disabilities have opportunities to make their own choices, contribute to society, have supports to live independently, and are free of abuse, neglect, financial and sexual exploitation, and violations of their legal and human rights. As Program Analyst, Ophelia is the lead on the youth information, training and resource centers, project officer of the logistics and technical assistance contract as well as University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) in Regions 2 and 3, and serves in the rapid response capacity of the Office of the Commissioner.

Prior to joining ADD, among other duties, she developed standard operating procedures for a health system. Her focus was to improve processes to better serve internal and external customers.

Patricia Morrissey, PhD

Dr. Patricia Morrissey came to the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as Commissioner in August 2001.

Her career in Washington, D.C. dates back to 1976 where she worked in both the public and private sector. Pat worked for the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions for five years. In this position she oversaw or played a central role in the drafting of major disability legislation: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997; the Developmental Disabilities Act Amendments of 1996 and 2000; the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998; the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; the Education of the Deaf Act Amendments of 1998; and the Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act of 1999.

She also worked for the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Education and Labor (currently the Committee on Education and the Workforce), also drafting disability legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She has written four books, assisted in the production of six training videos on the ADA and served as a consultant to Fortune 200 companies on ADA compliance.

Prior to her current Presidential appointment, Pat was a senior associate at Booz Allen Hamilton where she provided consulting services to federal agencies. Her focus was strategic plans that would facilitate agencies' compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. That provision of law

requires federal agencies to purchase electronic and information technology that is accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities.

Presently her leadership is focusing on promoting the adoption of universal design principles to all human service delivery programs and on encouraging implementation of one-stop centers to facilitate comprehensive services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. She is an asset to individuals with developmental disabilities, because she passionately advocates for those we serve, regardless of what setting she is in. She believes that, if the focus in any situation remains individuals with disabilities, consensus among diverse perspectives is achievable.

Iris E. Pettigrew, RN, MS, ScD, CPHQ

Dr. Iris E. Pettigrew is a registered nurse with Doctor of Science in Public Health and a Masters and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She is also a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality. She has held several administrative positions and as an independent consultant has interacted on a regular basis with management and all staff levels within an organization. Her experiences include review, analysis/research/evaluation and provision of recommendations concerning organizational management, governance, education, performance improvement, and project outcomes. Iris has performed tasks that involved analytical writing, research, and oral and written communication of results to varied audiences. She has experience in both the government and private arenas on projects that have broadened her knowledge base and ability to assist others in applying and understanding research and evaluation methods to improve their program.

Iris's 15-year-plus experience in government contracting has afforded her opportunity to participate in various types of program evaluation and population-based research activities in health and social services areas on a small and large scale. The methods she uses for program evaluation have included epidemiologic, survey, quasi-experimental, the logic model, and quality improvement models.

Iris received her doctorate from the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health and Hygiene. Prior to entering the doctoral program, Iris was a Robert Wood Johnson nurse faculty fellow.

Anne Marie O'Keefe, PhD, JD

Dr. Anne Marie O'Keefe, Chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Morgan State University School of Public of Public Health and Policy, is a clinical psychologist and an attorney with more than 25 years

of experience in almost every aspect of health, including service delivery, research, health promotion, education, and training. She is a widely recognized leader in social marketing, entertainment education, policy and media advocacy.

While at the Advocacy Institute in the late 1980's, Anne Marie designed, launched, and directed the Smoking Control Advocacy Resource Center (SCARC), the first centralized support center for tobacco control. She continued to provide leadership in the tobacco control movement for most of the next two decades. She has designed and implemented communication systems for large health promotion projects, including managing media advocacy for ASSIST, the 9-year cooperative project that partnered National Cancer Institute, American Cancer Society, State health departments, and community coalitions across the country.

Anne Marie has delivered more than 300 papers and keynote speeches, published more than 100 articles, chapters, and opinion pieces. She has testified before Congress, federal regulatory agencies, State legislatures, and in legal proceedings; and appeared on numerous radio and TV news and public affairs shows. She has produced many videos and educational curricula, and trained health department personnel and citizen advocates in almost every State. She is a primary author of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's CDCynergy: Social Marketing Edition.

Anne Marie received her JD, cum laude, from Harvard Law School, and her PhD in clinical psychology from The Ohio State University.

Curtis Richards, BA

For more than two decades, Curtis Richards has worked in the public policy arena at the state and national levels. Known as an "advocrat," Curtis blends his advocacy skills with his knowledge of governmental operations to address education, workforce development, disability, and health public policy issues with a particular focus on youth and adults with disabilities.

He is currently a Senior Policy Fellow with the Institute for Educational Leadership, a Washington, DC-based think tank. He also maintains a public policy consulting firm known as The Advocrat Group. Curtis served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the U.S. Department of Education and as an Assistant Director for the California State Department of Rehabilitation. He has also served as a state legislative staff person, for both policy and fiscal committees, in California.

Curtis has spoken extensively on disability issues throughout the country on a wide range of topics including education, employment, and disability policy. As a freelance writer, he has a number of magazine, journal and newsletter articles in his portfolio.

Curtis is a nationally-recognized leader in the disability community. Among his numerous awards are: a *2000 Certificate of Appreciation* from the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, a *1999 Disability Rights Activist Award* from the California Foundation of Independent Living Centers, and the *1997 Lanterman Award* from the California Association of Postsecondary Education and the Disabled.

Curtis, who has been visually impaired since he was a toddler, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government-Journalism from California State University, Sacramento.

Amber Smock

Amber Smock is the Youth Leadership Coordinator for Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago and a proud member of the Chicago disability community. She oversees the YIELDD the Power! Youth Leadership Project. Amber also advises Advance Youth Leadership Power, (AYLP) an advocacy group of young people with disabilities that includes many graduates of YIELDD. In addition, Amber coordinates the Access Living Youth Advisory Board and developed the young men's support group DUDES, which stands for Disabilities United in Determination, Education and Strength. She is a former peer mentor the Empowered Fe Fes. Amber is also a graduate of the NTIC Core Organizer's Training Seminar.

Outside of work, Amber is currently an active member of Chicago ADAPT, as well as co-founder of Feminist Response in Disability Activism (FRIDA). She is the Government Regulations Committee chair for the new Chicago Deaf and Hard of Hearing Cultural Center.

Colleen Wieck, PhD

Colleen Wieck, PhD, is Executive Director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities of the Department of Administration, a position she has held for the past 25 years. The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities is a federally funded, Governor appointed group of 25 members whose mission is to provide information, education, and training to increase the independence, self determination, productivity, integration and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Prior to her work with the DD Council, Colleen was a researcher at the University of Minnesota for four years conducting national surveys of group homes and state institutions with an emphasis on comparing costs of different types of facilities. She was also a direct services provider for five years in the area of day programs for adults and early intervention for children.

She earned her BA and BS degrees in psychology, political science, social studies and special education with summa cum laude honors and her Master's degree is in school psychology. Her PhD is in Educational Psychology with supporting areas in Public Affairs and Industrial Relations from the University of Minnesota.

Colleen has produced over 135 publications with the DD Council, five videotapes and a two disk CD ROM winning several national media awards. She produced a series of 30 public policy papers about the Welsch consent decree, eight public policy papers about planning for the closure of the state hospital system in Minnesota, five public policy briefing books for public officials including *A New Way of Thinking* and several publications devoted to personal futures planning and self determination. The CD ROM includes 10,000 digitized pages of publications as well as a six-hour training session on the History of Disabilities, the History of the Parent Movement, the History of Independent Living, and the History of Self Advocacy.

She is the primary creator of Partners in Policymaking, a leadership training program for adults with disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities. Partners in Policymaking began in Minnesota in 1987 and has now been modeled nationwide and in several locations in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and New Zealand. Approximately 15,000 individuals have graduated from Partners in Policymaking nationally and internationally.

She has served as an evaluator and consultant to over 60 states, national and international organizations; she has given over 850 speeches and received over 55 awards. She has worked on numerous public policy issues including deinstitutionalization, supported employment, family support, self determination, and education issues. She has been active in the Arc, TASH, Schools are For Everyone, AAMR and the National Association of Developmental Disabilities Councils.

On May 6, 2006, Colleen received one of 100 Distinguished Alumni Awards for the Century (1905-2005) from the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota.

Michael Winer

Michael has more than 25 years of national experience in working with a wide variety of organizations throughout the country. He works with all organizations, partnerships and communities that want to grow the resources they have into results they can achieve.

Michael is the author of *Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining and Enjoying the Journey*, a practical guide to making effective joint efforts work. He is also the author of the forthcoming manual "ResultScaping: Growing Resources You Have into Results You Want", an easy to use handbook that provides eight tools for achieving dynamic results with the resources you have in your organization, partnership or community.

Michael has presented at international conferences on such topics as collaboration, partnering, keys to effective community and economic development, and leadership.

Michael makes his home in Portland, Oregon. He works with all organizations, partnerships and communities that want to grow the resources they have into results they can achieve.

Karen Wolf-Branigin, MSW

Karen Wolf-Branigin is the Training and Technical Assistance Manager for Easter Seals Project ACTION and is responsible for the project's national training and technical assistance services provided to members of the disability community and transportation industry.

Karen came to Washington, D.C. as a 2001 Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Public Policy Fellow and worked for Senator John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia. Prior to her fellowship, Karen served as the Associate Director for Community Support at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI. She has held positions at a number of private non-profit organizations where she enjoyed the privilege of supporting individuals with disabilities and their families to achieve their dream of community inclusion.

She learned her greatest lessons about oppression and injustice when she worked at a large institution for people with developmental disabilities, which was finally closed in 1984. Karen has an MSW in social welfare policy and planning from The University of Michigan.