



NEWS &
ANNOUNCEMENTS



Williams Participates in AFP Summit Town Hall: Real Jobs - It's Everybody's Business

The Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) is a formal partnership of leading developmental disabilities organizations with a common vision: to create a better and more fulfilling quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. The 2011 AFP Summit, Real Jobs - It's Everybody's Business, was held November 17-19 at the Gaylord National Harbor, just outside of Washington, D.C. The Summit featured dynamic speakers including opening remarks by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary, Kathleen Sebelius. Frank Sesno, former CNN Special Correspondent, moderated an interactive Town Hall presentation that featured self-advocates, employers, direct support professionals, providers, and state and federal leaders. The Summit also included active participation and idea-sharing by state teams; dynamic, in-depth breakout sessions; roundtables; technology forums; a value-packed exhibit hall; and most importantly, the 1,250 attendees who brought with them inspiration and dedication to disability-employment issues.

Bob Williams, Associate Commissioner for Social Security's Office of Employment Support Programs, was an integral part of this year's Summit highlight, an interactive Town Hall presentation, in which panel members engaged in a challenging and frank conversation about what is needed to make integrated employment a reality for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Attendees were vocal about the critical issues and echoed a common theme in that they want to see more collaboration among government, employers, and service providers. For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, "real jobs" mean an end to sheltered workshops and result in fully integrated employment. Real jobs also equal real paychecks, which enable individuals to afford housing, food, clothing, and the supports and services necessary for them to live and work in the communities of their choice. In a very concrete way, real jobs support people to live out their dreams and aspirations, a goal with which everyone, disabled and non-disabled, can identify. Unfortunately, the employment rate for people with developmental disabilities is 22 percent, compared to 79 percent for typical Americans. AFP's goal is to double the employment rate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to 44 percent by 2015. [James F. Gardner, PhD,](#)

About the Alliance for Full Participation

AFP is united in its commitment to the successful inclusion of people with developmental disabilities into the mainstream of American life. By bringing together organizations dedicated to this cause, we will work together to make this vision a reality. Founders of the Alliance for Full Participation include:

- [American Association on Intellectual and Development Disabilities AAIDD](#)
- [The American Association of People with Disabilities AAP](#)
- [American Network of Community Options and Resources ANCOR](#)
[APSE: The Network on Employment](#)
- [The Arc of United States](#)
- [Association of University Centers on Disabilities AUCD](#)
- [Autism Society of America \(ASA\)](#)
- [The Council on Quality and Leadership](#)
- [Human Services Research Institute \(HSRI\)](#)
- [National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities NACDD](#)
- [National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals NADSP](#)
- [NISH](#)
- [The National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services NASDDDS](#)
- [TASH](#)
- [United Cerebral Palsy UCP](#)

[President, AFP states](#), “Just as the problem affects us all, and its resolution benefits us all, we all have a role to play in making "real jobs a reality .”

Social Security’s Ticket to Work program can assist AFP in achieving the 44 percent employment goal by providing disability beneficiaries who have intellectual and developmental disabilities supports and services to obtain real jobs. Beneficiaries with disabilities ages 18 through 64 qualify for these free and voluntary programs. Social Security works with more than 1,200 rehabilitation and employment service providers across the country. These organizations provide support to beneficiaries through career counseling, job placement, ongoing employment support, and in some cases, more. Many individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have achieved success through the Ticket to Work program and are now working in real jobs.

Social Security is committed to collaborating with AFP to achieve the goal of increasing employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. If you feel strongly about entering or reentering the workforce, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/work, e-mail us at support@chooseworkttw.net, or call our Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY/TDD).