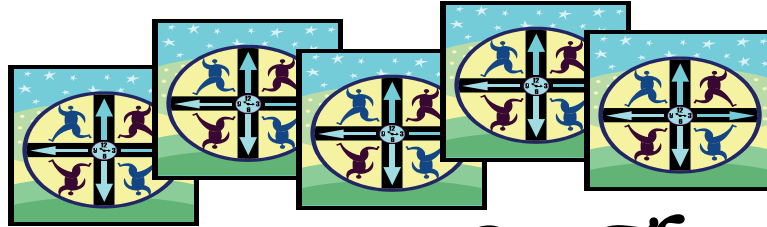


New Directions



On The Move

January 2008

New Directions Profile

*DDA would like to profile the creative ways in which **New Directions** Waiver participants are designing and directing their services. If you have a story you would like to share, please e-mail Catriona Johnson at CatrionaJ@dhmh.state.md.us.*



Rebecca's Story

Some of the cornerstones of self-determination have traditionally been: an individual budget over which the person themselves has authority; a fiscal intermediary that enables the person to access their individual budget; and a Support Broker to assist in facilitating and managing supports and services. Rebecca's story exemplifies the importance of a good Support Broker. It shows just how full a person's life can be when he or she has the opportunity to self-determine those things that we all desire – a lifestyle consistent with our dreams, interests, and priorities.

Rebecca Harter is a spirited, pleasant woman. She was born and raised in Florida with her parents and her sister, Jewell. Rebecca's family was very dedicated to each other; family values were very important to them. Rebecca also happened to need supports as a result of having a disability.

Rebecca's mother was a pioneer. She advocated for education for children with disabilities before the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was enacted. Then she organized other parents to bring their children to school. She paved the way for other people with disabilities to expect more, achieve more, and enjoy more.

Living with her family, Rebecca experienced life like most other people. She participated in sports, she learned computer skills and she walked around her home and community with the assistance of crutches or a walker. After the death of her mother,



Rebecca Harter (center) recently presented to a group of college students about her experiences self-directing her services.



Rebecca's Story, continued...

however, Rebecca lived in a group home in Florida. There she became limited in her activities because the group home staff had her use a wheel chair rather than walking with the use of her crutches or a walker. She lived there until her father passed away; then she came to Maryland to live with her sister, Jewell. Unfortunately Jewell injured herself and was not able to support Rebecca, so Rebecca went to live in a group home in Maryland.

Following in her mother's pioneering footsteps, it's no wonder that Rebecca applied for the *New Directions* waiver the first year it was offered after learning about it from her Resource Coordinator.

Through the *New Directions* Waiver, Rebecca was able to move in with Jewell and Jewell's daughter, Vanessa – her family. Rebecca has returned to an environment that's important to her and that she enjoys. Through planning with Jewell, Vanessa, her Support Broker, and her Resource Coordinator, Rebecca will soon be attending computer classes, concerts, and bowling – all community activities – as a result of the *New Directions* Waiver.

The Support Broker's role in *New Directions*, is to support people as they *dream* about what they would like their life to become. *New Directions* is guided by the individual: Where he or she wants to live and with whom; what he or she wants to do during the day; what his or her leisure activities will be, etc. Jessica Pearsall,

Rebecca's Support Broker, facilitates these discussions with Rebecca and those closest to her, documents Rebecca's dreams and vision for herself, creates a person-centered plan containing key elements, and then facilitates the action plan to make it all happen for Rebecca. Rebecca and Jessica work together to develop a budget that supports the action plan. They meet monthly to ensure that Rebecca's

budget is balanced, action items are being implemented, her staff are getting the support and direction they need, her plan is meeting her desires, and any paper work or tasks that Rebecca would like Jessica to accomplish is completed. Basically, Jessica, as the Support Broker, is the underlying support in making Rebecca's dreams come true!

Over time, as Rebecca becomes more proficient in her own abilities to self-direct her services, she will likely require Jessica for reduced amounts of time (thus saving her some money). To Rebecca, self-direction through the *New Directions* waiver is one of the few models of support where you spend your money where it makes sense. And, it's been through this model of effective support brokerage, and the partnership between Rebecca and Jessica, that Rebecca is leading the life of her dreams.

Rebecca Harter is a self-advocate and participant in the New Directions Waiver. Jessica Pearsall is Rebecca's Support Broker and works for Shared Support Maryland.



Rebecca Harter jokes with college students as she tells her life story and explains how she has benefited from self-direction.

People

Tony Sampson, a *New Directions* participant, received an award from the Maryland Association of Community Services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (MACS) at their May 2007 Awards Banquet. Tony is pictured here with Laura Howell, Executive Director of MACS (left) and Cathy Raggio, Secretary of the Department of Disabilities (right).



Upcoming Deadlines

The *New Directions* waiver approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) specifies that all Plan and Budget Modifications, except those that address immediate health and safety needs, must be made by the end of the third quarter of the fiscal year. **This means that all Plan and Budget Modifications must be submitted to your Fiscal Management Service (FMS) by March 31, 2008.** After that date, all Plan and Budget Modifications submitted to address immediate health and safety needs must be approved by your *New Directions* Regional Coordinator. Plan and Budget Modification forms are available on the DDA website at www.ddamaryland.org. Notification of the March 31 deadline was mailed to all *New Directions* participants and their Support Brokers in late December.

Transitioning Youth who have turned age 21, are leaving school in June 2008, and who are planning to self-direct their services, were to have completed Support Broker training by January 15, 2008. If you or your Support Broker were not able to



complete the training by the deadline, please talk to your *New Directions* Regional Coordinator. Transitioning Youth and their families are reminded that those who begin their supported employment or day services through a traditional service delivery model can change to a self-directed model through the *New Directions* waiver after traditional services through the *Community Pathways* waiver have begun. Likewise, individuals who haven't previously considered self-direction, but determine, after working with a DDA-licensed service provider, that they want to take more control over the design and delivery of their services, can switch from the *Community Pathways* waiver to the *New Directions* waiver. Transitioning Youth who will be leaving school in the summer of 2009 should check the Transitioning Youth Timeline available on DDA's website at www.ddamaryland.org/transitioning.htm for deadlines and steps associated with both of DDA's waivers.

Advocacy

Individuals applying for or enrolled in the *New Directions* waiver who need assistance from an advocate can contact Edward Willard at 410-767-5634 or willarde@dhmb.state.md.us.



Training

Individuals interested in *New Directions* are invited to attend the following trainings:

***New Directions* Orientation Workshop**

- Monday, January 28, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, Hagerstown, Maryland

***New Directions* Support Broker Training**

- Saturday January 12, 9:00 am-4:00 pm, Laurel, Maryland
- Saturday February 16, 9:00 am-4:00 pm, Hagerstown, Maryland

Please contact Edward Willard for information or to register at willarde@dbmb.state.md.us or 410-767-5634. Training information is available on the *New Directions* page of the DDA website at <http://www.ddamaryland.org>. While there, remember to check DDA's training calendar for other upcoming training workshops that may be of interest to you and your staff.

Numbers

New Directions continues to grow! As of December, 71 *New Directions* Individual Plans and Budgets (IP&Bs) had been approved by DDA.

Regional Coordinators

Central Maryland Regional Office:
Sara Crigger, 410-902-4500

Eastern Shore Regional Office:
Mike Wool, 410-334-6920

Southern Maryland Regional Office:
Kim Bennardi, 301-362-5100

Western Maryland Regional Office:
Tina Swink, 301-791-4670

Coming Soon!

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) has just completed a Support Broker Manual for *New*



Directions participants, their family members, and their Support Brokers. The Manual brings together in one easy-to-read publication all of the information provided at Support Broker trainings, as well as updated forms for developing and monitoring your *New Directions* Individual Plan and Budget (IP&B). Support Brokers will be mailed a copy of the manual in early 2008 and a copy will be placed on the DDA website at www.ddamaryland.org.



Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Martin O'Malley, Governor

Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

John M. Colmers, Secretary

Michael S. Chapman, Director

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