

Maine APSE Membership Meeting
January 18, 2011
1:00 – 4:00 pm
Frances Perkins Room, Commerce Center, Augusta

Board Members present: Gayla Dwyer (AMHC), Gail Fanjoy (KFI), Chris Flynn (KFI), Debbie Gilmer (Syntiro), Betsy Hopkins (BRS), Janet May (CCIDS), Deborah Rousseau (MMC), Avery Olmstead (disability activist) and Sally Sweeney (KFI). **New Board Members elected:** Catalina Lacourse (MMC), Eric McVay (self-advocate), Ashley Moore (MMC), Patricia Salvatore (MMC).

Other Maine APSE members present: Rachel Merriam (VR), Kevin Owen (VR), Chris Robinson (OAMHS), Brandy Dow (MMC), Renee Doble (MMC), Karen Fraser (BRS), Deborah Thibodeau (MMC), Anne Marquis (MMC), Mary Campbell (MMC), Rachel Dyer (Maine DD Council).

Welcome to APSE: Board President Debbie Gilmer gave the opening address.

Election of Officers: A ballot was distributed which stated “The following officers and members agree to stand for election to the Maine Chapter of APSE Board for the period of January – December 2012”:

Debbie Gilmer, President
Chris Flynn, Vice President
Sally Sweeney, Secretary-Treasurer
Gayla Dwyer
Gail Fanjoy
Betsy Hopkins
Janet May
Avery Olmstead
Deborah Rousseau

In addition, there were four nominations from the floor:

Catalina Lacourse
Eric McVay
Ashley Moore
Patricia Salvatore

Deborah Thibodeau moved that the entire slate of officers be voted in, including the four new nominees. Rachel Merriam seconded the motion. Welcome new Maine APSE Board members!

Panel Presentation: Alliance for Full Participation Conference: Betsy described the purpose of AFP – to get people motivated to improve employment outcomes in their state. The sole focus of the AFP this year was employment. AFP teams were organized from each state. There were eighteen (18) people on the Maine team. Teams were then to go back to their respective states and share the message and the mission. Jodi Benvie of the Disability Rights Center took the lead role for the Maine team. Betsy noted that www.allianceforfullparticipation.org has all the powerpoints and handouts from the conference.

Avery: shared his background and said he liked some parts of AFP including the workshops he attended, especially the small business panel and the presentation on Kansas Employment First. He was able to network with many cool “disability activists”, a term he prefers over “self-advocate”. Avery says he feels a lot more hopeful about options than he did five years ago.

Chris F.: enjoyed Jim Meehan’s presentation on integrated employment (especially because he realized it would be the last time he would see Jim as a presenter due to his imminent retirement) and said it was a confirmation of what we’re all struggling to do. He also attended the session “All Means All”, which focused on technology; for job accommodations and adaptations, there is something out there for everybody. The final session he reported on was “Meaningful and inclusive activity for when people are not working”, that focused on volunteerism and pathway to employment activities.

Betsy: stated that her goal in attending AFP was to learn more about Employment First. She was disappointed that a keynote was Tim Shriver promoting Special Olympics. What she took away from the three EF sessions she attended was that it can’t only be a grassroots movement or only a legislative movement – but something in the middle. Although Washington State has been an EF state for many years, they continue to struggle to make it all work. She also reflected that there are so many things we have going for us in Maine! We have a Labor Commissioner who consistently promotes the hiring of people with disabilities. We’re starting from a pretty good place. Sub-minimum was the “elephant in the room” not talked about at AFP.

Rachel D.: reported that the secret in Washington State was buy-in from the governor on down. She was most impressed with the “data guy”, Rob Cimera from Kent State, who has come up with some really robust evidence that community employment for people with disabilities is now less expensive and there are better outcomes. Debbie added that he has expressed that he’d be glad to come to any state and help them crunch numbers.

APSE Statement on Employment First: “Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly-funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of the level of ~~disability~~ *ability* (Maine language).

Facilitated Discussion: Integrated Employment – What’s on Your Mind?
(see attachment)

Next Maine APSE Board teleconference meeting: Thursday, February 23, 2012 at 3:00 p.m.
Dial up info. 1-213-416-6650; passcode: 736423

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Sweeney

Secretary-Treasurer