



Message from the AIVRTTAC Director



P.O. Box 5630 Phone: 928-523-4791
 Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5630 TTY: 928-523-1695
 ihd@nau.edu Fax: 928-523-9127

About the Institute

The Institute for Human Development is a research and training program located on Northern Arizona University. Our program is part of a national network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). In Arizona, we are designated as one of two Arizona University Centers on Disabilities (AzUCD).

Lomatalongva! It's a beautiful day!

The first project year for the AIVRTTAC staff and consultants was indeed a challenging and learning experience to launch the new and exciting training and technical assistance (TA) services for the AIVRS programs! Just as exciting was the opportunity to use technology and engage with the AIVRS programs in real time during the webinars and the community of practice discussions. Excellent exchange of information on Tribal vocational rehabilitation practices, examples of culturally appropriate VR services and extensive resources demonstrated that there is a wealth of knowledge among the AIVRS programs that needs to be shared. Another highlight during the first year was meeting with the AIVRS programs during the regional "talking circles" to discuss the AIVRTTAC's new approach to provide three different types of training and TA (intensive, targeted, universal) and to gather information on other program training and TA needs.

With the input and guidance from our RSA partners, we're refining our training and TA activities to be more robust, engaging, and customized to improve AIVRS programs' performance and tribal consumers' employment outcomes. We'd appreciate your feedback on how we're doing and how we can improve our training and TA services. Keep in mind that the AIVRTTAC is your program and your success is our mission!

With Respect,

Lee R. Gaseoma, Ed.D.
 AIVRTTAC Project Director

Summary of Year I Activities

AIVRTTAC Website: aivrttac.org

The AIVRTTAC staff and consultants conducted five content webinars and community of practice (CoP) identified by the AIVRS programs in the RSA survey conducted in January 2015. If you didn't have a chance to participate in the webinars and CoPs, we encourage you to visit the AIVRTTAC website www.aivrttac.org, and view and/or download other resource materials.

Regional AIVRS Programs' "Talking Circle"



Caption: Images from AIVRTTAC's various Talking Circles this year, which took place across the United States.

The AIVRTTAC conducted four regional AIVRS program "Talking Circles" in Portland, OR, Anchorage, AK, Durham, NC and Albuquerque, NM with 38 AIVRS programs in attendance. During the 1.5 days meeting, information was shared on AIVRTTAC's purpose, goals and objectives; three different types of training and TA (intensive, targeted, universal); AIVRS programs' priority training and TA topics identified through the RSA January 2015 survey; and anticipated outcomes of training and TA on AIVRS programs' grant management and successful consumer employment outcomes. Focus group interviews were also conducted to obtain additional information on AIVRS programs' training and TA needs. Here's what the "talking circle" participants had to say:

"The talking circle was a wonderful experience. In talking with other participants I believe we all agreed we would hope for an annual opportunity. Thank you."

"Very good dialogue. Enjoyed the meeting and we are looking forward to all the good things coming from the AIVRTTAC."

"Great way to communicate what AIVRTTAC can provide and the additional support given to AIVRSP."

AIVRTTAC Year 2 Plans

Priority Training & TA Topics

Eight (8) AIVRS programs' priority training and TA needs for Year 2 were identified through the RSA survey conducted in January 2016:

1. Assistive Technology,
2. Data Collecting and Reporting: a) Case Management and Record Documentation and b) AIVRS Annual Performance Report,
3. Program Planning: a) General Overview of Program Management and Staff Development, b) Staff Development in Current Issues in Physical and Mental Disabilities and c) VR Services (Section 103),
4. Outreach to Unserved/Underserved Populations: a) Disability,

The following training and TA will be provided by RSA:

5. Financial: Grant Management: a) General Overview and b) Federal Regulations
6. Applicable Laws: a) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and b) Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the Act),
7. Applicable Laws: a) Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, and
8. Financial: Resource Development: a) Community Partners

There's more education and training opportunities!!



3 live webinars and COP discussions on selected training and TA topics



On-site intensive technical assistance for 8 selected AIVRS Programs



I-800 Technical Assistance Line for AIVRS Programs



2 on-line Moccasin Telegraph: AIVRTTAC Newsletters



4 Drum Beats: Practice Guides for AIVRS Programs



Self-paced e-learning training modules



December 2016 – Albuquerque, NM
 March 2017 – East Coast (location TBD)
 June/July 2017 – Scottsdale, AZ
 September 2017 – Anchorage, AK

A Story of Trauma, Healing and Transformation

The following story is AIVRTTAC's attempt to provide you with a grassroots grandfather story that reflects other ways of knowing and teaching to empower Tribal members with disabilities in achieving self-identity and what one stands for.

I talked to an Elder one time and it kind of blew my mind. He gave me a story about the eagle. I don't know if you've ever heard it. The story goes like this and I think it's really my story too.

This eagle is flying around and all of a sudden, something happened. He got shot. He was wounded and he fell inside a ditch. A farmer saw this eagle and picked it up, but the eagle was fighting the farmer, still trying to get away. But being wounded and very defenceless, the farmer took the eagle to his farm and put him in the chicken coop with the chickens. So after a period of time, through feeding and through mimicking the actions of the chickens, the eagle started going through a change. And the eagle looked around and figured, "Well geez, if that's how they feed, I guess that's how I'll have to feed. If that's how they sleep, that's how I'll have to sleep. And if they hang around like that, well I guess I'll have to do the same thing." So there was an identity change, and the eagle started becoming a chicken.

So this went on for a period of time, and one day an Indian came along. He was walking down the road and asked the farmer for a drink of water. He looked over in the chicken coop and saw the eagle acting like a chicken. So he said, "What's that eagle doing there in the chicken coop?"

The farmer said, "Well, I found it in the ditch, mended its wing and put him in there. He just needed to heal up. The eagle can fly out any time. Its wing is healed. There's no cage over him. There's a fence around to keep the chickens in, but the eagle doesn't want to go. He just thinks he's a chicken I guess."

So the Indian told the farmer that the eagle was a proud bird and explained that it stood for courage, power, might. Anyway, the Indian guy said, "Can I take that eagle?"

The farmer said "You can do what you want to do with it. Take him out of there. It's just one less I have to feed."

So the Indian took the eagle, but the eagle was very docile. He thought he was a chicken. He kept bobbing his head. He had lost his complete identity.

The Indian started talking to the eagle and telling him what the eagle represents. He said, "You shouldn't be there. You should be flying high in the sky, people looking up at you and seeing you spreading your wings and giving courage." The eagle didn't have a clue about what he was hearing.

So the Indian took the bird to the mountain and said, "I'm going to let you go. I'm going to drop you off here where you can fly and soar." So the Indian let the eagle go and the eagle just flopped back down to the earth just like a chicken. He just stayed on the ground. And the Indian went down and picked the eagle up, brought him back up again and again he explained what he represented and everything else about it. He explained that the eagle was not a chicken and that he's different from anybody else. "You have to know who you are and what you stand for." And he threw him off the mountain, and the same thing happened again. The Indian went down and picked him up again and took him back up. He explained again and again and again about it. The eagle started to flex his wings. His keen eyesight started to return, and the strength in him started to come back. So he let the eagle go again, and this time the eagle soared with the wind before he fell back down. He was hopping on the ground this time. He was shaking his wings and looking around. Again the Indian went down and picked him up and took him to the mountains. Again, he explained who he was and what he represented. When he threw the eagle off this time, the eagle flew and soared and everything came back to him, who he was and that he wasn't a chicken. He wasn't like anybody else, he was completely different. He gained everything he'd lost because of where he was placed and put.

I guess the bottom line is you have to know who you are, what you stand for, and that you can gain back whatever you've lost through perseverance and understanding. And you've got to have someone that's willing to take the time to share and to care and to teach.

Source: James B. Waldram, *The Way of the Pipe: Aboriginal Spirituality and Symbolic Healing in Canadian Prisons*, Broadview Press, Copyright 1997

Reflection:

Is your AIVRS program the "Farmer" that means no harm, but is short sighted in his vision of what is right and good. Or is your AIVRS program the "Indian" who sees with the heart and spirit and teaches and is willing to walk a walk...and for AIVRS are you walking with your consumer or are they walking alone? Are you encouraging your consumers to be eagles or chickens?

Interview with AIVRTTAC Consultant – Carol Bergquist, Ph.D



After one week of providing live webinars and facilitating a community of practice discussion, on September 23, 2016, Dr. Carol Bergquist (Director, Hannahville Indian Community VR Program) an AIVRTTAC consultant was interviewed. When asked “what are your thoughts on using technology in providing training and TA to the AIVRS programs?” Dr. Bergquist stated “The distance in, the distance of traveling, and the costs, especially for those remote [AIVRS] programs to travel to come to meetings, technology is the way to go. I would like to add to how the technology can work this week, there’s so much potential, possibilities for communication in the future.” The link to listen to the entire interview is: <https://youtu.be/njnkfKlzbYo>

Disclaimer

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