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# RETAIN REPORT

Retaining Employment  
and Talent After  
Injury/Illness Network



## The RETAIN Report

May 2021

Welcome to the May 2021 issue of The RETAIN Report—the internal e-newsletter for awardees of the Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) Initiative. Please feel free to share this subscription link with other RETAIN team members as appropriate.

*Please Note: Several of the links in this newsletter take you to resources housed in the RETAIN Online Community (ROC). If you do not have access to the ROC and are a member of a state grantee team, please visit [RETAINTA.org](https://www.retainta.org) and click “Request an Account” in the right-hand sidebar.*



### Phase 1 Recap

The Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) federal partners and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) would like to thank all of the Phase 1 states for your service, leadership, and commitment to improving lives, leaving a lasting impact on so many individuals and communities.

You have made significant progress to enhance stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW) outcomes through strategic partnerships, targeted interventions, and an integrated focus on the needs of individuals who recently have experienced an injury, illness, or medical condition that hinders their ability to work.

Here are some of the most notable accomplishments:

- Brought together the public workforce and health care systems by building new partnerships with over 40 entities and organizations
- Developed systems to collect and share information across partners to improve service delivery for participants
- Increased awareness of SAW/RTW and the value for individuals, health care providers, employers, and communities
- Served more than 1,000 people across eight states through the Phase 1 pilot programs
- Partnered with nearly 700 participating RETAIN service providers
- Created systemic change to integrate systems of care that serve injured and ill workers
- Fostered a holistic community-based approach to problem-solving to effect lasting change

Recently, we shared with you tools, resources, and talking points to help you communicate with your stakeholders about your future SAW/RTW efforts. These resources offer a starting point for the development of various communication products such newsletters, webinars, conference calls, and memos. Please reach out to your TA liaison for any questions or assistance with planning.

Given the many impacts of COVID-19 across the country on our health, economy, and workforce, SAW/RTW programs have never been more critical to your stakeholders and partners.



## Looking Ahead to Phase 2

On April 28, 2021, The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) [announced the award of five grants totaling more than \\$103 million](#) to five state agencies under Phase 2 of the RETAIN initiative.

Over the next four years, agencies in Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Ohio, and Vermont will continue to deliver RETAIN activities statewide through strategic partnerships, intervention strategies, and innovative support services. The DOL has awarded Phase 2 grants to programs with a particular focus on underserved and underrepresented communities. As this work moves forward, all states will benefit from the strong and lasting stakeholder relationships that will continue to support individuals and communities with employment opportunities.

Learn more about each Phase 2 state's program:

- [RETAINWORKS](#) (Kansas)
- [RETAIN Kentucky](#)
- [Minnesota RETAIN](#)
- [Ohio RETAIN](#)
- [Vermont RETAIN](#)



## New RETAIN Infographic

RETAIN connects health care providers, patients, and employers by offering early intervention strategies and coordination to support working individuals after injury or illness. Significant numbers of American workers experience injury and illness each year, inhibiting their full participation in the workforce. Recovery rates from injury or illness improve when employees stay connected to their work communities, return to their daily roles and routines, and continue to participate in the labor force. [Our new infographic](#) shares a snapshot of core partnership categories and eligibility criteria across Phase 1 RETAIN grantees.

## Meet the New Communications TA Team: The Bizzell Group

AIR is pleased to announce [The Bizzell Group](#) as the new



communications subcontractor and strategic partner under RETAIN TA. Bizzell, a U.S. Small Business Administration 8(a) strategy, consulting, and technology firm, will build upon the current success of RETAIN and deliver targeted and customized communications support for RETAIN awardees and stakeholders through AIR. Bizzell brings depth and breadth of DOL experience to the RETAIN Initiative as an award-winning firm with decades of strategic communications and technical assistance experience across health, labor, workforce, and disability projects.



## ICYMI: Webinar Review

### [RETAIN TA Webinar: Looking at SAW/RTW from the Other Side.... Let's Talk About What Works and Why](#)

Monday, March 2, 2021

**Description:** Tonia Peterson, MA, LPC, CRC, OTR/L, led this session focusing on three successful return-to-work and retention cases, highlighting key components such as empathy, communication, job analysis, transferable skills analysis, and reasonable accommodations, with a focus on participants' strengths.

### [RETAIN TA Webinar: Effective Communication Planning for Program Success](#)

Thursday, March 25, 2021

**Description:** This 75-minute webinar introduced participants to effective communication planning to help you promote your RETAIN program to priority audiences and communicate your successes to key stakeholders. Drawing on the best practices of strategic communications and social marketing, the webinar guided participants through the key steps of planning and evaluating an effective communication program, from defining goals and priority audiences through message and materials development to using different media to connect with audiences.

### [RETAIN Community of Practice: Where Do We "Grow" From Here](#)

Thursday, April 22, 2021

**Description:** This discussion, led by Tonia Peterson, focused on lessons learned when trying to implement SAW/RTW strategies, and used case examples to facilitate and engage participants in discussion of what success may and may not look like and how to turn a challenge into an opportunity to grow.

### [RETAIN TA Webinar: Using Data to Tell Your Program Success Story](#)

Tuesday, April 27, 2021

**Description:** Building on the work begun in the March 2021 webinar on effective communication planning, this 75-minute webinar guided participants through the key steps of developing effective translation and dissemination products by using strategy, stories, and social math to tell your success story. The webinar was designed to help participants developing new communication efforts as well as those refining existing communication programs.

*Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) state grantees, by the American Institutes for Research under DOL Contract Number 1605DC-18-F-00429. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to DOL, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of same by the U.S. Government.*

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