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RETAIN REPORT

Retaining Employment
and Talent After
Injury/Illness Network



The RETAIN Report

April 2022

Say Hello to Your RETAIN Team at ODEP and SSA!

You may have noticed a few new faces and voices in your recent meetings with the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). Though some faces may be familiar, their roles may have changed. Please welcome:



Jackson Costa
Ohio Policy Lead &
Alternate Minnesota
Policy Lead



Steve Nissen
Kansas, Kentucky &
Vermont Policy Lead



Amy Fong
Alternate Kansas &
Vermont Policy Lead



Brian Aiken
Alternate RETAIN
Evaluation Lead

Rhonda Basha

Alternate Kansas & Vermont Policy Lead
(not pictured)

Laura King

RETAIN Evaluation Lead
(not pictured)



Latest RETAIN Success Stories

The [latest RETAIN Success Stories](#) from each of the five state programs are available on the ROC to download and share. Read these stories to learn more about promising practices that are helping participants stay at work and return to work with RETAIN support. You can use these stories to spark reflection and discussion within your RETAIN team about activities that could be adapted to your state programming. Highlights include:

- **Ohio RETAIN** is using responses from the health care provider survey to tailor its training efforts so providers can better identify and refer patients to the program.
- **Vermont RETAIN** is expanding its referral resources to ensure its programs are accessible, reflect the diverse worker populations in Vermont, and ultimately expand the pool of participants who receive stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW)

services.

- [RETAINWORKS](#) sustainable partnerships with medical systems, workforce development boards, and occupational rehabilitation centers are supporting collaboration, learning opportunities, and expansion in Kansas RETAIN.
- [Kentucky RETAIN](#) hosts a virtual monthly employment seminar series to reinforce SAW/RTW best practices.
- How [Minnesota RETAIN](#) supported one participant on her return-to-work journey.

We are looking forward to working with you again in developing the next series of Phase 2 Success Stories starting this month. Please contact your AIR Technical Assistance (TA) Liaison with any questions about these success stories.



Communications TA Available Through The Bizzell Group

The most effective communications programs are strategic, integrated, consistent, and cohesive. AIR's RETAIN TA communications partner, The Bizzell Group, offers experienced communications consultants to help RETAIN states plan, develop, refine, and evaluate their RETAIN communications.

Bizzell's award-winning team of communications strategists, writers, editors, graphic designers, and digital media specialists are available to help your state achieve its RETAIN communications goals. Contact your AIR RETAIN TA state liaison to connect you to The Bizzell Group to get started with services such as:

- Strategic consultations to help your teams identify, evaluate and put into practice communications channels and tactics compatible with your audiences and goals.
- Outreach guidance to diverse stakeholders within Opportunity Zones designated by the Secretary of Treasury.
- Messaging guidance for participant or provider recruitment and retention, employer outreach, and other RETAIN initiatives.
- Evaluation and feedback on communications in development, such as brochures, flyers, posters, facts sheets, websites, social media channels, PowerPoint presentations, and more to ensure language and graphics align with RETAIN branding and goals.
- Guidance on video content development.
- Guidance on inclusive, culturally-sensitive, and equitable language for community outreach.

[A full menu of Bizzell communications TA services](#) is available on the ROC.



Upcoming Resources & Events

RETAIN Stakeholder Communications & Engagement Dialogue Series

[Register today](#) for the second session in the RETAIN Stakeholder Communications & Engagement Dialogue Series, launched at the 2021 RETAIN Annual Convening in November. This three-part series focuses on key messages and best practices for one-on-one conversations with stakeholder groups, including patients, providers, employers, and policymakers.

The next Community of Practice session will focus on communicating and

engaging with RETAIN participants. Attend this session to share experiences with your peers, complete hands-on activities, and learn from the communications experts at The Bizzell Group and from each other. A key goal of this series is to provide states with the framework on how to share the who, what, why, and how behind the RETAIN program with different stakeholder groups. This event is tailored to the challenges and work of participant-facing state RETAIN staff members as they promote the values and benefits of RETAIN. Please register early—registration is limited to encourage full engagement.

The presentation slides from the first session, [Engaging Health Care Providers](#), are available on the ROC (see slides 30-49).

Upcoming Events Schedule

Join us for these upcoming webinars and community of practice (CoP) sessions! Contact your AIR TA liaison with any questions.

- State Directors CoP Series - Registration is limited, please [register here](#).
- Partnering with Local Workforce Boards - More information coming soon!
- Return to Work Coordinator CoP Series Session #2 - More information coming soon!



More ROC Resources!

[Health Equity Tips for Developing Inclusive Communication](#)

Presented by communication experts Dr. Rhonda Waller and Nancy Bateman of The Bizzell Group on March 24, 2022, this webinar focused on actionable ways to promote inclusive communication within your RETAIN teams. The presentation highlighted tips and best practices to help ensure your communications are developed with a health equity lens and meet the diverse needs of your stakeholders. Topics included:

- The importance of person-first language;
- Preferred terms for select populations; and
- Resources for developing inclusive communication products.

Visit the ROC to download a [handy checklist](#) and other materials on inclusive communications along with the [recording](#), [slides](#), and [transcript](#) to share with your teams.

[RETAIN FYI: Research and Practice From the Field, Volume 34](#)

The [March edition](#) of the RETAIN FYI covers topics such as decision-making for return-to-work success, strategies for employers to prepare for employee return-to-work after substance misuse treatment, and today's safety precautions that employers must follow to provide safe work environments.

Do you have a research article, brief, or report on promising or evidence-based SAW/RTW practices that we should highlight in an upcoming edition of the RETAIN FYI? [Email us!](#)

[The ROC: Your One-Stop Resource](#)

Commit to continual learning and improvement on the ROC through resources on operational planning and implementation, recruitment and enrollment, collaboration with partners and stakeholders, communications and branding, or other aspects of RETAIN programming. Please bookmark [RETAINTA.org](#) and watch for upcoming resources.

The RETAIN Report is the bi-monthly internal e-newsletter distributed the third Thursday of every month for awardees of the Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) Initiative. Please share this issue with other RETAIN team members as appropriate. Please note that 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 RETAIN state grantee team, please visit [RETAINA.org](https://www.retaina.org) and click "Request an Account" in the right-hand sidebar.

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AIR | 1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor, Arlington, VA 22202-3289

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