



**THE VOICE**

**OF DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS**

# **MEDIA RELATIONS & CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

*Do You Have a Plan?*

# Introductions



**Terry Farmer** – *CEO, ACCSES*

**Michael Alderson** – *VP of Marketing and Public Relations,  
FSA Management Group*

**Andrea Parr** – *Director of Public Relations and Digital Media,  
FSA Management Group*

# Agenda

- Overview of the media landscape
  - *Outlets, topics and tone*
- Media relations training
  - *Resources, tools and templates*
- Crisis management: Industry and provider
- What to expect through 2015
- Closing and Q & A

# Part 1: Media Training

# The Media Landscape

- **More than 4,500** stories mentioning disability rights
- **More than 600** mentioning “sheltered workshops”
- **Interview requests** from: Associated Press; NPR; Al-Jazeera America; *Huffington Post Live*; New American Foundation; *The Special Education Connection*; *Mother Jones*
- **Stories with the most reach:**
  - *Associated Press story featuring Terry Farmer*
  - *Any story surrounding the Rhode Island settlement*

# Recent Media

## Some exempt from minimum wage, increased or not

Wednesday, 16 Apr 2014 | 5:20 PM ET

**AP**



AP

Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, center, joins fellow Senate Democrats to urge approval for raising the minimum wage, during a news conference at the Capitol in Washington, April 2, 2014.

But ending that program would mean many disabled workers "would not have the dignity, purpose and pride of a paycheck," said Terry Farmer, CEO of ACCSES, the trade group representing Goodwill and other groups employing disabled people.

***Syndicated article from April 2014 ...  
200 million potential viewership!***



### Letter: Arc's sheltered workshop in jeopardy

By Karen Duboy | Posted: Saturday, June 14, 2014 8:00 am

If I were to invite Gov. Cuomo to Western New York, especially Livingston and Wyoming counties, for the chance to explain his reasons to stop funding to The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming's sheltered work center, does anyone seriously think that he'd come?

The governor recently visited our area to brag about all the jobs he created with the START-UP NY program. But in reality, he is placing many thousands of other jobs in jeopardy.

At issue is the Cuomo administration's decision to cease new admissions into the state's sheltered work centers such as The Arc's Hilltop Industries program, with a longer-term plan to gradually eliminate them. As a result, people with serious disabilities throughout the state could be forced out of meaningful jobs in work centers, and cast into a volatile open job market under the pretense of

y, I fully support the notion of integration. But I also  
 tinate a viable employment choice for my son and  
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 is best for our children and families!

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## Upset with changes concerning EDI

June 12, 2014

Salem News

Save | 

To the editor:

My name is Lisa Buchanan. My sister Leah Scott has worked at the Robert Bycroft Sheltered Workshop-Employment Development Inc. South (EDI) for over 22 years.

This job gives her a great sense of self-worth and pride. It continues to provide her with an opportunity to feel important in the community by allowing her to earn a paycheck and work everyday, while still making a contribution despite her disabilities.

I just found out on June 5 that the Columbiana County Board of Developmental Disabilities (CCBDD) is merging EDI Central and EDI South - closing the EDI South facility. It seems to me that the board went behind our backs and made this decision.

They did this without taking into consideration how much this change will impact all of the clients, caregivers, families and employees of EDI South. I strongly feel that our families should have been notified and our concerns addressed before such a drastic decision like this was made.

My sister will no longer be able to do the one thing that gives her so much joy and pride, not to mention the only social outlet she has in her life, if this location closes. I will not be able to transport

Sunday June 22, 2014  
 The Buffalo News.com (/)  
**Opinion**

### Joan D. Harms: Sheltered workshops provide vital support

Updated: June 19, 2014, 05:31 PM Published: June 2

It is with gratitude that I write in response to two recent News articles: "Allentown honors its own" and "Sheltered workshops fading away." The stories were about the devastating possibility of closing workshops for people with disabilities across

Sometimes referred to as sheltered workshops, they provide a safe, friendly atmosphere for participants to work. Those who get up every day, with difficulty, and make their way to work, with difficulty, honestly love their jobs. It is their life support to them, which is far too difficult for them to cope with. It is family for some who have no one left. And it is the place to gather with friends and colleagues. People earn a salary, which gives them buying power in their community and, most importantly, gives them a feeling of self-worth.

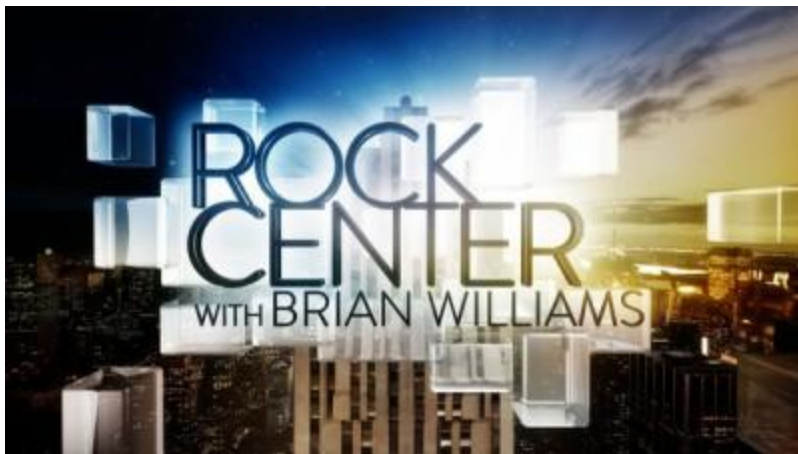
Allentown recently recognized 99 employees for their milestone year of employment. The span of time recognized was from five to 45 years. Just imagine the courage and perseverance of these people with disabilities.

# Skills-Based Wage etc.

**Positive Tone: 5% (UP ... More likely to be editorials)**

**Balanced/Neutral Tone: 60% (Major increase in this segment)**

**Negative Tone: 35% (DOWN ... More likely to be blog posts)**





# The Media Landscape: Section 14(c)

## The Challenges:

- Coordinated advocacy efforts opposing this legislation
- Misinformation is feeding public perception
- Polarizing media topic that is “click bait” for advertisers
- Opportunity for media sensation/incendiary language
- Perception of industry bias based on business model
- Unfair correlation of 14(c) and executive compensation
- Careful preparation leading to cancelled interviews
- Inability to engage 100% based on legislative concerns

# The Media Landscape: Section 14(c)

## The Opportunities:

- Challenging “discrimination” defeats the reporter’s position
- Negative articles are countered by positive commentary
- The personal story is a powerful tool
- **The language of the people is more impactful than the language of the issue**
- The What Matters Most Campaign offers a coordinated national approach to the issue in first person: “I deserve choices!”

# The Media Landscape: Topics

## Legislation

Section 14(c)

HR 831

Section 511 (WIOA)

Executive Order

HCBS Rule

Medicaid

## Primary Media Focus

Employment

Employment

Education and Employment

Minimum Wage (compensation)

Integrated Settings

Employment and Residential

Community/cultural development

Value to local economy (jobs/growth)

Personal outcomes and successes

# Media Training: Best Practices

- Don't wait for an interview to start preparing
- Define media-worthy topics
- Craft three key messages on these topics
- Develop your dream headline before the interview
- Your answers are far more important than the questions
- Create a guideline for you/your team to follow...

# Media Training Checklist

1. Contact your representatives
2. Confirm the purpose and scope of the story
3. Confirm the deadline
4. Control the interview
5. If you have time, call your ACCSES PR team
6. Review your key messages and keep them handy
7. Be brief and focus on the positive
8. Thank the reporter and let us know how it went!



# Media Training: Resources

## *We are Here to Help You!*

- ... Media Training Toolkit*
- ... Messaging Toolkit*
- ... Onsite Media Trainings*
- ... Templates and Other Tools*
- ... What Matters Most Campaign*

# Your Top 5 Takeaways

- To translate issues into **personal stories**
- To be “for” something
- To broaden your focus to include education, employment, housing, community and long-term success
- To use our media tools and the What Matters Most Campaign



what matters  
**MOST**

Respecting Options and Expanding Opportunities for People with Disabilities

# Part 2:

# Crisis Management

# Crisis Management

## *Top 5 Areas...*

- 1. Plan**
- 2. Anticipate**
- 3. Bridge**
- 4. Practice**
- 5. Revise**



## Great Crisis Management Plans...

- Define roles and responsibilities
- Identify key issues and areas of concern
- Anticipate the worst to plan for the best
- Develop resources in advance
- Allow for practice
- Allow for revision



## Ask yourself ...

- What issues have faced us before?
- What issues may face us again?
- What is happening on a national scale?
- What is our response strategy by topic?
- Who is the best face/voice on key topics?
- Who are my best external partners/advocates?
- What's the worst case scenario?
- How can I bridge from worst to best?

# Key Areas of Consideration

- Know the issues facing your industry, not just your business
- Have a written policy in place
- Train your media representatives
- Plan your social media response
- Prepare talking points in advance
- Plan internal vs. external communication strategies
- Practice, plan and revise quarterly

# 5 Things to Practice with Your Team!

1. Identifying areas of concern
2. Developing key response messages
3. Anticipating worst possible question
4. Practicing bridging topics
5. Conducting “surprise” interviews

# Open Discussion

*Thank you for your attendance!*

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