



ACCSES MEMBERSHIP TOOLKIT



2011



Welcome to ACCSES



Welcome to **ACCSSES** (*formerly the American Congress of Community Supports and Employment Services*). **ACCSSES** is a network of more than 80 organizations across this country with similar goals and purposes, providing a strong unified presence in Washington, D.C. Through this partnership, disability service providers are afforded a strong and experienced federal public policy voice, great opportunities to build meaningful relationships with policy-makers and up-to-date information to leverage our collective effort to enhance the quality and types of services benefitting people with disabilities.

ACCSSES and its partners are passionate about helping people with disabilities live to their full potential; believing in their capabilities, working hard to achieve personal and career goals and celebrating their successes. Collectively, we work hard to affect national policies and legislation, allowing the ***Voice of Disability Providers*** to be heard at the highest levels of our government, on Capitol Hill, in the White House and throughout the Executive Agencies.

To further our mission, we need your partnership. At **ACCSSES**, we know there is strength in numbers and your partnership plays the most important role in our advocacy efforts. As a result, we have established a Membership Recruitment Team to help reach new partners and guide their process as they come onboard. The team entails Board Members, ACCSES staff and is spearheaded, by Don Gereau as chair.

Won't you join this dedicated network and become one of the most influential voices on behalf of people with disabilities. To learn more about **ACCSSES** and membership, please contact Gary Goosman, Director of Communications, Events and Membership Relations, at GGoosman@verizon.net or go to www.accses.org.

Brenda Maxey

ACCSSES Board President



LEGISLATIVE TEAM

The ACCSES Legislative Team is represented by a stellar group of lobbyists and consultants, including **Peter W. Thomas** of Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville, **Bobby Silverstein**, Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville, **Theresa Morgan** Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville and **Charlie Harles** of Harles & Associates. The team is lead by **John D. Kemp**, ACCSES CEO.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the years, ACCSES has pursued initiatives and have set goals that align with our mission of promoting and enhancing community-based solutions that maximize employment and independent living opportunities for people with disabilities. The following reflect some of our recent accomplishments, made possible through the continued support and hard work of ACCSES partners, and its team of Legislative experts who continue to strengthen its voice throughout the disability community.

In the area of **employment**, ACCSES led and continues to lead discussions and collaborations around the development of new policies for the employment of people with disabilities. ACCSES helped to ensure that a full range of employment opportunities remain for individuals with the most significant disabilities, and continues to ensure that serving this population is a priority for new policy directions.

In the area of **health care**, the ACCSES Legislative Team took on a leadership role from the very beginning of the health care reform discussions among the disability community and continues to stand out as the lead advocates for ensuring reform legislation best represents persons with disabilities.

In the area of **education**, the ACCSES Legislative Team collaborated with the Transition Working Group created by CCD to create a principles document for Congress and the Executive Branch to utilize when developing youth-related public policy.

In the area of **independence**, the ACCSES legislative team led efforts to help develop and support federal policy that supports the rights of people with disabilities to make individual choices including choosing where they live and how they engage in the community, particularly with respect to ensuring these provisions were included in health care reform legislation.

Specifically ACCSES:

- Successfully advocated for the inclusion of key Rehab funding in the economic stimulus package
- Developed policy options for enhancing opportunities for competitive integrated employment as part of the continuum of programs for persons with the most significant disabilities
- Advocated successfully for the removal of a penalty for employers with employees on Medicaid; and led efforts for Congress to expand Medicaid eligibility.
- Led advocacy efforts to include certain assistive technology and devices in the essential benefits package in health care reform legislation; also worked to ensure language was included to improve medical devices accessibility



How Would Partnership with ACCSES Benefit my Organization?

Building Visibility and Power: ACCSES is built on a strong network of state rehabilitation associations and community rehabilitation programs. A dense grass roots presence on Capitol Hill gives you influence and real power to make change.

Legislative Focus: The only mission of ACCSES is to represent you in Washington, DC. We focus on the federal issues of importance to community providers: *AbilityOne*, *Medicaid*, *IDEA*, and the *Rehabilitation Act*. We employ an active legislative team in Washington and three lobbyists who stay in constant contact with Capitol Hill and regulatory agencies.

Unifying our Industry: Through ACCSES, community supports and employment providers unite and speak with a single voice on the national issues that affect them. This allows you to expand your potential to lead and achieve success.



Collecting Information for Success: Timely, accurate information is key to success. ACCSES collects critical, up-to-date information from and about the industry and provides it to members on a regular basis. ACCSES creates opportunities for members to get information faster, cut costs, and expand influence.

Connections When You Need Them: Our goal is to reinvigorate community providers through the exchange of information at the Annual Legislative Fly-In, board meetings, networking of the committees of ACCSES - all designed to connect you and your organization to similar organizations throughout the country.



ACCSSES offers its partners three significant membership benefits: **Access, Information, and Participation**. Your membership strengthens our position in Washington, D.C., by allowing Members of Congress and the Administration to readily see what's possible with appropriate public policy and what harm can easily be done without it.

Access

Over the last several years, ACCSES has met face-to-face with several high-ranking Obama and Bush Administration officials, as well as congressional staff. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- DOL Assistant Secretary Kathy Martinez (Office of Disability Employment Policy) to discuss service provider issues impacted by DOL regulations and policies
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) State Operations Director Dennis Smith to discuss service providers issues impacted by Medicaid
- Former DOE Deputy Assistant Secretary Troy Justesen (Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services) to discuss IDEA Part B regulations
- House of Representatives Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus to discuss issues important to the broader disability community, including Medicaid reform, direct-care workforce shortages, employment & training programs, child and youth with disabilities, and hates crimes against people with disabilities.

Information

ACCSSES ensures that its members are the very first to receive the latest breaking news on our legislative members, keeping them informed with succinct yet vitally current information.

Participation

ACCSSES believes that grassroots lobbying by its members is extremely important to our efforts in Washington, D.C. – and to their efforts back home. ACCSES convenes several face-to-face meetings, as well as legislative conferences, throughout the year designed to keep you connected to policymakers.

ACCSSES has established an annual federal policy-based cycle of activities designed to engage all member organizations in a targeted list of critically important legislative and regulatory issues. The annual Legislative and Regulatory Priorities includes program issues that impact both children and adults, including:

- CMS/state relationships;
- Medicaid rehabilitation services option and targeted case management threats;
- Accessing federal waiver monies;
- Increasing employment opportunities – including the AbilityOne Program
- IDEA Part C and Medicaid issues;
- Housing and in-home services; and,
- Staff recruitment and retention concerns.



How Do I Become an ACCSES Partner?

As a results-oriented association, ACCSES will afford your organization the opportunity to meet very similar CEO's of significant organizations who willingly share their successes and even a few failures to help leverage your efforts to better serve your communities.



Annual dues are based on your agency's budget and are listed below. As outline below, are the membership dues, based on your organization's budget.

Eligibility

ACCSES Membership is comprised of disability service providers that promote and enhance education, employment opportunities and independent living of individuals with disabilities. If your organization meets this description, then your annual membership fee is based on the following formula **(subject to change)**:

- Agency with Annual Budget under \$5 million - \$ 3,600/year
- Agency with Annual Budget over \$5 million - \$6,000/year
- State Association - \$6,000/year




Application Process

To submit an application for membership, please review the membership eligibility criteria above and complete the membership form on the next page.

The signed Membership Agreement and fee based on the fee schedule should be forwarded to Laurie Blair at the address below.



ACCSES NEW MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enrollment Date	
Main Contact Name	
Association/Agency	
Billing Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
Email Address	
	I participate in the AbilityOne Program and would like to be included in the ACCSES AbilityOne Division. Yes No
Please bill me at the following rate (check one)	
	Organization with annual budget of \$5M or above - \$6,000/year
	Organization with budget of \$5M or less - \$3,600/year
	State Rehabilitation Association - \$6,000/year
Payment Options (check one)	
	Monthly
	Quarterly
	Annually
Enclosed Payment	\$

Return Form and Payment to: **Gary Goosman at the address below**





What Others Say About ACCSES



*“The role of the Federal Government is to benefit all citizens. **ACCSES** speaks for people with disabilities, working to assure that their needs and interests incorporated into legislation and executive action. There is a benefit to government to hear from providers who know how to do things. **ACCSES** has the right people in the right place doing the right things.”*

Roger Sibley
Executive Director, Franziska Racker Centers



*“**ACCSES** provides valuable information that supports our strategic planning, statewide advocacy efforts as well as guidance with federal advocacy. **ACCSES** members have experience and expertise that can be tapped as a valuable resource and support for our organization.”*

Wendy Sullivan
President, Life Skills



*“**ACCSES** is our link to national policy making in Washington that affects Medicaid, Labor Law, and the Ability One Program, all of which impact carrying out our Mission in Traverse City.”*

Steve Perdue,
President/CEO, Grand Traverse Industries