2023 CONNECT

MEMBERS SUPPORTERS ADVOCATES SPONSORS PARTNERS
CESP PROFESSIONALS POLICYMAKERS FRIENDS FAMILY
A YEAR OF CREATING CONNECTIONS FY2023 ANNUAL REPORT
DID YOU KNOW?

APSE is the only national membership organization to focus exclusively on inclusive employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
On behalf of the APSE National Board of Directors, I want to extend my gratitude to National APSE’s staff as well as each of our members. APSE is a membership organization: it is all of us. We are the CESP’s supporting individuals getting jobs. We are the researchers exploring models to identify evidence-based approaches to move the needle forward. We are the state employees, the case managers, policy makers, family members, and advocates. We have many voices, and yet in the same breath, we have one voice supporting employment first.

This report documents much of the work and progress happening at the national and state level as APSE works to move the needle forward. When reviewing this report, I am struck with gratitude to know how much work is happening to support the Employment First movement.

As you review this report, I hope you will join me in celebrating APSE, and all of us, in the work we’re doing to support Employment First.

Sincerely,

Maya Cox
Chair, APSE Board of Directors
Thirty-five years ago, a small group of passionate folks sat together and sketched out on a napkin an idea to find and bring together likeminded individuals from across the country who were similarly committed to breaking down barriers to employment for people with disabilities. This conversation (and napkin sketch) became the roots of what is now APSE.

Thirty-five years later, increasingly larger groups of passionate folks continue to meet together all around the country to continue to innovate and advance Employment First. We do this informally. We do this online. We do this at state and regional gatherings. We converge together at APSE’s National Conference. Each gathering is an opportunity to reflect, reimagine and reinvigorate.

APSE’s mission is to advance employment equity for people with disabilities. I am so incredibly grateful for this network, because each and every one of our members, our Chapter leaders, our National Board members, and National APSE staff members are making a difference every single day. It’s not easy work. It’s often exhausting. It’s effort that often goes unacknowledged.

As you review this year’s annual report, I hope you will join me in taking a moment to truly acknowledge the breadth and depth of the work of APSE. This is your work. This is our work. And we will continue on until our vision—that all people with disabilities have competitive employment in an inclusive workforce—is achieved.

With gratitude,

Julie Christensen
Executive Director/
Director of Policy & Advocacy
ALABAMA APSE
Alabama APSE worked closely with our DD Council to secure funding to bring 75 self-advocates and/or their family members to the 2023 AL APSE annual conference. Once again, the Alabama Chapter awarded our Charles “Chuck” Sheehan scholarship that provides $1,500 funding to an individual with a disability pursuing higher learning.

COLORADO APSE
Colorado APSE launched our Excellence in Employment First Recognition Awards program! The goal of this award is to recognize anyone who exemplifies excellence in Employment First in some way—professionals, people with lived experience, employers, agencies, organizations, and beyond.

ARIZONA APSE
Arizona APSE has taken significant strides to elevate employment inclusivity in Arizona, developing plain-language educational materials, making complex issues accessible and sparking more inclusive conversations around employment for people with disabilities. They have published five white papers that serve as go-to guides for advocates, policymakers, and employers.

ILLINOIS APSE
We planned and hosted networking events to raise awareness about Employment First and APSE and share resources in our state. Topics included “Working with Gen Z” and “Overcoming Objections when Talking with Employers”.

DID YOU KNOW?
You can get CESP Group Add-on with your membership? With an APSE Professional Membership and the CESP Group Add-on, we will get access to the resources you need—including at least 18 free Webinars and several Communities of Practice—while APSE manages your recertification all in one place!
CHAPTER CONNECTIONS

INDIANA APSE
Indiana APSE’s Transition Committee sends out transition trends monthly to reach schools, students, providers and parents across the state. Their Marketing and Media Committee started monthly virtual platform education/information sessions for membership.

RHODE ISLAND APSE
Rhode Island APSE hosted a Community Conversation with families, state partners, providers, our Federal Court Monitor and people with lived experience to better understand the "lessons learned" through various iterations and their stakeholders has never been done before.

PENNSYLVANIA APSE
As a founding agency of the PA Workforce Coalition, Pennsylvania APSE will be working with state agencies and partnering with the PA Workforce Development Boards to provide training and TA to Workforce Boards across the state about hiring people with disabilities as a part of their DEI and talent acquisition processes.

TEXAS APSE
Texas APSE is a SWITCIE grant sub-awardee, with grant money for the Texas APSE conference for next 5 years.

WISCONSIN APSE
Wisconsin APSE created the Employment Service Handbook for supervisors and managers. They continued the Job Developer Connection and WI APSE Listen and Share that were held monthly.
2023 MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

**NEW MEMBERS IN FY23**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold Members</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Members</td>
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<td>Professional Members</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Members</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Members</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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APSE Business Memberships continued to grow in 2023 with 77 new business members!

Several business members upgraded their memberships this year including the Institute for Community Inclusion, the Integrated Resources Institute, and the UI REACH Program!

**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

“As a professional in the field, my goal is to match an individual’s strengths and interests to careers that highlight those while providing a supportive environment for growth. APSE shares my beliefs and strives to put research into practice while advocating at local and national levels for individuals with disabilities. APSE is a space for networking, learning, and sharing my research and experiences.”

- Staci Carr, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Center on Transition Innovations, Virginia Commonwealth University/RRTC

**AUTO RENEW!**

Never let your membership expire. Over 30 APSE business members and 100 individual members have already signed up to automatically renew their membership annually.

**PATRON MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

“I have spent my entire 40+ year career promoting employment for people with disabilities. As a recent retiree, I still have a passion for inclusive and equitable employment and want to stay involved. I’m so pleased that APSE offers the Patron Membership category so I can remain a member and stay informed.”

- Paula Johnson, now happily retired

**APSE.org/membership**
THE ESPCC REINTRODUCES HOSTED EXAMS
IN 2023!

Hosted exams are events in which an organization or group arranges an exam session onsite at their place of business or in another community setting. A hosted exam is an alternative to taking the exam in a testing center or via online proctoring. For some exam takers, particularly those who may have the need for assistive technology and/or other accommodations, this may be a more convenient choice. Additionally, if there is a known need to have four or more individuals certified, consider scheduling a hosted exam for them!

CESP CONVERSATIONS:

We’ve implemented a format change for our Monthly CESP Conversations. These meetings are now led by subject matter experts, providing focused 1-hour presentations on specific topics. This enhancement has significantly improved the quality and concentration of our discussions, making these monthly gatherings resemble a true Community of Practice. Moreover, SMEs can earn 2 CEs for each presentation they volunteer to lead.

CESP SPOTLIGHT

Dennis Rutter
(Ohio - Capabilities, LLC) was 2023’s CESP of the Year and received this award at the 2023 National APSE Conference in Columbus, OH.

“Dennis’ passion for Employment First is undeniable in the success he has with finding quality employment opportunities for the people he serves.”

DID YOU KNOW?

For all CESP’s seeking to add continuing education credits to meet the recertification requirements for their 3-year renewal, there are fantastic opportunities available. By actively participating in an APSE Board Committee, the ESPCC (CESP Council) and/or various ESPCC Committees, you can earn an impressive 10 CEs annually through your engagement.

CESP CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

apse.org/cesp-central/
# CESP CREDENTIAL

**BY THE NUMBERS:**

- **319** NEW CESPs
- **148** Recertified CESPs
- **260+** Trainings pre-approved for CESP recertification credit
- **1,871** TOTAL NUMBER OF CESPs *(as of 9/30/23)*, a 5% increase from FY22

**States with the Most CESPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
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<td>Maryland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>Oregon</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[apse.org/cesp-central/](http://apse.org/cesp-central/)
APSE continues to update our highly acclaimed regional institutes and organizational transformation workshops to jump start learning around best practices to achieve competitive, integrated employment. With funding support from Elevance, APSE held 8 weeks of intense training for 4 Employment First Collaborative Groups in Texas, followed by monthly meetings that concluded in October 2023.

“I enjoyed the meetings and found out a lot of information that is VERY useful. I would ABSOLUTELY tell others to participate in collaborative and that they need to join! I enjoyed this so much!”
- Mindy Ritchie (TEXAS)

“Thank you for offering opportunities for people across the country to share ideas and discuss barriers/opportunities!”
- CoP Participant

BY THE NUMBERS:

22 APSE live webinars offered
1,453 Registrants
EMERGING LEADERS AND RISING STARS

Facilitated by Rick McAllister, twenty-four mid-level managers participated in the Emerging Leaders program sponsored by SourceAmerica. Participants continue to meet and will conclude in the spring of 2024. An additional group of Emerging Leaders sponsored by SourceAmerica will begin in January 2024 with space for 21 participants. Five additional Emerging Leaders participated in the program this year. We had thirteen (13) participants complete our Rising Stars program this year.

“This is a great way for those new to the field to build a paradigm of where we have been and where we are headed as employment support professionals. Getting to engage with some of the most knowledgeable and sincerely helpful people in the field is an opportunity you want to take advantage of for expedited professional development.”

- Delaney Kralik, Include Me Advocacy Group (TX)

The Emerging Leaders program is a wonderful opportunity for every leader and especially those seeking change and growth. Shared experiences go a long way and having others share a common goal only amplifies the support in this cohort. I am more than grateful for the opportunity and time spent in this cohort. An added bonus is the national cohort to nurture this growing mindset.

- Jennifer Grazulewicz (Virginia)
FEDERAL PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES / LEGISLATION
WE WORKED TO SUPPORT

APSE’s Public Policy Priorities and Federal Legislation worked to support:

Phase out of 14(c) and subminimum wage
- Transformation to Competitive Integrated employment Act (HR1263 / S533)
- Raise the Wage Act (HR4889 / S2488)

Building the Capacity of the Employment Support Professional workforce to meet current and evolving needs
- Recognizing the Role of Direct Support Professionals Act (HR2941 / S1332)
- Better Care Better Jobs Ac (HR547 / S100)

Promoting SSI/SSDI Reform
- Stop the Wait Act (HR883 / S320)
- SSI Restoration Act (HR3824 / S2065)
- Social Security Expansion Act (HR1046 / S393)

Achieving the full intent of current Federal employment first law
- HCBS Access Act (HR1493 / S762)
- National Apprenticeship Act (HR2851 / S2122)
- American Apprenticeship Act (HR511 / S83)
- IDEA Full Funding Act (HR4519 / S2217)
- RISE Act (HR2401 / S1071)

BY THE NUMBERS:

100+ National Coalition Meetings Attended
55 Meetings with Congressional Offices and Federal Agencies
46 Letters and Comments Submitted to Members of Congress and the Biden Administration
33 Number of States Specific Policy Consultation Provided
21 Presentations on APSE's Public Policy Priorities
STATEWIDE CAUSES

STATE POLICY & ADVOCACY
apse.org/legislative-advocacy/

STATE POLICY & ADVOCACY
apse.org/legislative-advocacy/

STATE LEGISLATION

2 states phased out the use of 14c certificates:

Virginia (2023, HB1924)
Prevents issuance of new 14(c) certificates and phases out existing certificates in place as of July 2030.

Nevada (2023, AB259)
Prevents issuance of new 14(c) certificates as of January 2025 and phases out existing certificates in place as of January 2028.

DID YOU KNOW?

APSE launched a new legislative advocacy Action Center!

The Action can be accessed via APSE's website by hovering over the Policy & Advocacy heading and selecting Action Center at the top of the drop down. On this page, you will see any current action alerts and advocacy campaigns in progress. You have the option of clicking on any campaign that is of interest to you and will be directed to the necessary steps to TAKE ACTION.

Make sure to bookmark the site and check back for updates on what is happening across the country.
APSE IN THE NEWS (click each image for live link)

APSE continues to be a powerful voice in national dialogue of advancing employment equity.

Workers with a disability are making less than half of federal minimum wage
(The Messenger, 2/27/23)

‘An inherent indignity’: the fight to get workers with disability a living wage
(The Guardian, 3/8/23)
States Vote to End Subminimum Wage  
(Route Fifty, 4/24/23)

Virginia Joins Maryland in Raising Subminimum Wages for Disabled People  
(Conduit Street, 4/26/23)

DID YOU KNOW?

APSE Advance is a once-a-month e-newsletter that gives you all the information you need to know to plan for the month ahead – including upcoming webinars and communities of practice, CESP and membership updates, special events and training opportunities, and updates on APSE’s Federal and State legislative advocacy efforts. If you only read one email a month, make sure it is this one!

Advocates concerned about workers with disabilities earning below minimum wage  
(PBS News Hour, 10/25/23)
CONFERENCE BY THE NUMBERS:

624 Attendees

19 Sponsors

- Partner Level
  - CareSource

- Platinum Level
  - Elevance Health

- Gold Level
  - Alliance Enterprises
  - Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
  - SETWorks

30 Exhibitors

Keynote Speakers

- Keith Jones
- April Aycock

“Attending the APSE Conference was remarkable. I was afforded the chance to participate in a multitude of experiences and engage with leaders in our field, as well as emerging professionals. This conference provided a platform to not only explore innovation and cutting-edge ideas, but also to connect with like-minded individuals who share a passion for advancing Employment First. Moreover, having the opportunity to get credentialed at the conference has already had a positive impact on my professional growth, opening up new doors and opportunities for me to excel in my career.”

- Tiffany Jones, Community Employment Coordinator

In partnership with Regional Delegates and Chapter Leaders across the country, APSE held six REGIONAL E-LEARNING EVENTS:

- Midwest: January 12
- Rocky Mountain & Southwest: January 17
- Mid Atlantic: January 18
- Southeast: January 19
- Northeast: January 24
- Pacific Northwest: January 31

280+ Participants joined these events
**FINANCIALS**

**REVENUE: $1,096,558**

- **$29,500 (3%)** Grant/Contract Income
- **$87,505 (8%)** CESP
- **$153,095 (14%)** Professional Development & Training
- **$712 (0%)** Other
- **$475,771 (43%)** Membership Dues
- **$349,975 (32%)** Conference

**EXPENSES: $933,355**

- **$87,048 (9%)** Legal/Professional Fees
- **$146,754 (16%)** Operations Expenses
- **$209,509 (22%)** Program Expenses
- **$490,044 (53%)** Salaries & Benefits
FINANCIALS

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH (as of 9/30/23)
APSE membership grew to **2,114** members during Fiscal Year 2023!

- **Student Members**: 8 (FY 22) - 26 (FY 23)
- **Patron Members**: 60 (FY 22) - 51 (FY 23)
- **Professional Members (Individual)**: 676 (FY 22) - 747 (FY 23)
- **Professional Members (Business)**: 1370 (FY 22) - 1191 (FY 23)

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP IS UP BY 99 MEMBERS**
(2,114 in 2023 vs. 2,015 in 2022)

NEW MEMBERS: **407** (10/1/22 - 9/30/23)
- **Student Members**: 16
- **Patron Members**: 299
- **Professional Members (Individual)**: 41
- **Professional Members (Business)**: 17
- **Professional Members**: 27
- **Bronze**: 19
- **Gold**: 4
- **Silver**: 41
- **Student**: 17

FY 23  FY 22
LEADERSHIP

NATIONAL STAFF

Erica Belois-Pacer
Director of Professional Development

Julie Christensen
Executive Director/Director of Policy & Advocacy

Sarah Manning
Systems Manager & Program Support

Terri Nelles
Certification Coordinator

Christa Rainwater
Director of Membership & Chapter Engagement

APSE 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Top row:
Maya Cox, Pamela Cross, Ryan Aldrich, Duane Shumate, Wally Tablit, Kie O'Donnell

Middle Row:
Julia Barol, Emily Munson, Bridget Hassan, Cindy Burns, Tricia Jones-Parkin, Jan Dougherty

Bottom row:
Jaimie Laitinen, Gwendolyn Brown, Nicholas Love, Marianne Durrant, Melissa Marvel, Andrew Karhan

THANK YOU
to our members, collaborators, sponsors and contributors!

GET INVOLVED TODAY!
Email info@apse.org to learn more