**AUCD.**

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>> OLIVIA RAYNOR: If everybody would take their seats. Is this on?

Good morning! Would people please take their seats? Thank you very much. Those of you at the door, come on in and get settled. Welcome everybody to day two of AUCD: Unleashing the Power of Engagement. My name is Olivia Raynor, Chair of this conference, and soon to be President of the organization.

We are excited to start's today presentation.

Before I introduce Judy Woodruff from PBS News, I would like to recognize Sharon Lewis, our friend. Where are you Sharon? Right there. Stand up.

[Applause]

She's our friend, but I like to consider her my friend. Thank you for joining us this morning. I would also like to recognize and express our appreciation to LifeShare who is sponsoring this morning's plenary. They're a national organization that partners with states and organizations. Their mission is to spread the message of civil rights to all people with disabilities to create a better world, and we appreciate their sponsorship. So thank you, Lifeshare.

[Applause]

As we grow as an association, you've heard a lot of discussion about our strategic plan and our ideas for the future, and the direction we're taking. Specifically as we focus on broadening our impact and policy and practice, the panel this morning is of particular significance to us. This panel will help us plan for the future by discussing national policies relevant to employment, education, and long‑term care that are important for all with whom we engage.

I just wanted to draw your attention that on your chairs are index cards. At the end of the panel presentation today we will be gathering your questions. So please write down on those index cards the questions that you have for the panelists. They will be brought up front to Judy, where she will get through as many of them as she can to really engage all of us in an interactive dialogue with our panelists. So with no further ado, it is my pleasure to introduce Judy Woodruff, co‑anger of the PBS NewsHour, who will moderate our esteemed panel today. So thank you very much Judy.

[Applause]

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Thank you Olivia. Can you hear? I think you can. I think these mics are all live. I'm really, really happy to be here with you this morning. I've been at a previous AUCD conference, and it's really been a joy to get to know more about this organization and see the wonderful growth it's had. I'm excited to be part of this panel. I have to say, I'm more relaxed this morning than I was a week ago.

(Laughter).

Tuesday morning, a week ago, November 7th. Or November 4th. Sorry. See where my head is. When we were anxiously waiting to see what would happen as Americans went to the polls, waiting to see what the results would be. Maybe you'll forgive me, I haven't completely gotten it out of my system, what exit poll numbers were, and certain congressional districts. No, I'm happy to be here now. And we're here to talk about the future of education, employment, and community living for people with disabilities. It's such a fundamental question. And as the mother of a grown son with significant disability, these are all areas that have certainly been a part of our family's lives, and decisions that we've had to make. So I'm vitally interested in all these questions, and I'm really pleased to see the organization doing a deep dive as we're going to do this morning and really committing yourselves to making life better for all individuals with disabilities.

The hope is -- I think I know I don't have to tell all of you this, that we approach not one, but two big milestones. The 25th anniversary of the ADA is coming up in 2015. The 40th of the IDEA is next year -- that we can take stock. You can take stock of what has been learned in the years since. And where are we headed as a country when it comes to providing opportunities for people with disabilities? What do we know that is going to guide this country toward better outcomes?

So we're going to look back a little this morning. We're going to take stock, talk about what's worked, what we've learned maybe that didn't work, as well, and talk a lot about the future, what our plans are for the future, what our hopes are, and what we know the challenges are ahead.

To do that, we have three extraordinary panelists. Starting on my right, on your far left, is Kathy Greenlee. She is the assistant secretary of aging and the administrator of the administration for community living. Please welcome Kathy Greenlee.

[Applause]

In the center is Portia Wu. She is the assistant secretary of labor for the employment and training administration, at the Department of Labor.

Please welcome Secretary Wu.

[Applause]

And to my immediate right, on your left. On your right. That's right. Is Dr. Melody Musgrove. She is the Director of the Office of Special Education Programs at the Department of Education. Please welcome Melody Musgrove.

[Applause]

They have much fuller bios that I hope you'll take the opportunity to read. It's in your program. They all come to these positions and this meeting this morning with vast experience in the areas we're going to be talking about. And I want to remind you again about what Olivia said: we have index cards. We're going to have a conversation amongst ourselves for about 50 minutes or so, and the last 30 minutes we'll be taking questions from you. So please be thinking about what you want to ask, and submit those questions, and somebody will be picking them up and bringing them up here for someone to read.

The first thing we want to do, very logically, is talk about what has worked. What have you seen in your respective areas that have been the hallmark of whether it's ADA, or IDEA, what has worked better than anything?

I want to start with Melody Musgrove in education. Because education begins, and then we go into labor and community living. Of course we know all three of those are intertwined throughout the lives of those with disabilities.

Melody, let's start with you. What do you know in your area that has been a success story?

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: Thank you Judy. And good morning everyone. Happy Veteran's Day. When IDEA was passed, there were millions of children with disabilities who were prohibited from attending school because they had disabilities. The first thing we got right was ensuring that students wouldn’t not be allowed to attend school because of having a disability. That's the first thing we got right.

I think we have also focused on protecting the rights of children and families and assuring that families have an important role in the development of the IEP and programs for students with disabilities. We're not nearly where we want to be, but that is an area where we made sure that families were included in the decision‑making process, because they play such a critical role. We've certainly gotten that part right.

Also, I think the fact that we have more students in general education settings. We're again not as far along there as we want to be. But pushing for more inclusion, and having students with disabilities included with their peers is a very important part of IDEA, but particularly ensuring that students with disabilities have access to an education is something we got right.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: All right. We'll pick it up there, Portia Wu, from a labor perspective, what have you seen be successful?

>> PORTIA WU: Thank you, Judy. I want to thank everyone for letting me be a part of this discussion. We have made a tremendous amount of progress. If you look at specific changes, you say that's great. People have certain accommodations in the workplace. But it's really a mindset change. Our workplaces were created by us. They were created by human beings They didn't come down from the mountains on stone tablets. We should make workplaces work for the people in them. We wouldn't make computer monitors all set at 7 and a half feet high. Obviously I would never see any of those. But for us really thinking about the people who come into their workplaces with all their unique abilities and characteristics, and making sure the workplace works for them. Thinking about accommodation is a huge set change and mind set change. We still have a lot to do in employment, but we'll talk about that more.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: We will. Kathy Greenlee, what about your perspective? You're responsible for aging and community living and you were talking to me about how much the two merge and overlap.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: Thank you everybody for inviting me. This is the first time I've been to an AUCD meeting. I've met with directors before. Claire, over here. I may not see you much. Hello. It's wonderful to be here with you.

Judy, you mentioned two significant anniversaries next year. I also have a list of others that I would like to throw out there before I comment more specifically.

Not only is it the 25th anniversary of ADA, and 40th anniversary of IDEA. It's the 50th anniversary of Medicare, Medicaid, and the Older Americans Act. Those anniversaries are all next year. We recently recognized the anniversaries of the DD Act, the Olmstead Decision, and the Rehab Act. If you add to them the significant changes taking place right now with regard to the Affordable Care Act, reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, all of these together represent significant change for this country in the last 50 years. And if I were to categorize what have been the biggest successes, I think we have been able to transition a bit from big programs that were introduced years ago where we could look at what we were going to do for people, to the anniversaries that we're celebrating now, such as the Rehab Act, the Older Americans Act. It's really what do we do to support people. It's really a transition for doing more to support.

I think this is a good way to reset the expectations that we have as a nation, and that the expectations really should be driven by the person at the center, what the person needs for a good, long life, for community living, for health, for employment, for education. What does the person need, what does their family need to provide that support, and what is the government role in providing those supports? The government role is not the whole lead, and the government role should not be the lead, but should be responsive. All of these together shift expectations that are more holistic, and are a good way to lead us forward as we implement the changes that are happening now and have been really positive and a real reflection of I think the uniqueness and the commonality of people as they try to live their lives in the community.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: You all three talked about the change. Maybe you didn't use the exact word. Portia, you said a mindset change. And we just heard Kathy talk about transition. Let me come back to you Melody Musgrove. Tell us a little bit about how the thinking of educating people with disabilities has changed. I think we need to discuss that before we can understand where you want to take this in the future.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: Yeah, that's a good question. The vast majority of students who are served under IDEA do not have significant cognitive disabilities. Most who are eligible have speech and language disabilities, learning disabilities, or physical disabilities only. And yet the expectations are not nearly high enough for students with disabilities. That's one of the things that is beginning to change as we have focused so much on compliance through the years, and compliance is certainly important, procedural compliance. We have not seen the performance of students with disabilities in reading and math, and graduating high school. The purpose of education is not to get kids out of high school. It's for an independent life and contributing to the communities. There's a lot that needs to change about expectation and who the population is that we're serving because we know that students with disabilities can work, want to work. And that's what the expectation should be. How are we going to prepare them for meaningful work? For significant contributions and living the lives that they choose after they leave high school.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Fold that in Portia, Secretary Wu, into the labor picture. You're the one who used the term mindset change. There's a shift. Clearly a shift. How has that affected how you think and how others think about work for people with disabilities?

>> PORTIA WU: I'm so glad Melody mentioned the issue of the path from education to work. Because I do think we've made some important progress with accommodations. People understand what the basic requirements are in the law. But there is so much more we can and need to do in terms of bringing people with disabilities into the workplace to begin with. What kinds of workplaces are we bringing them into? We should have high expectations, and we should be preparing young people as they come through their education, not just to say you can get minimum wage, or a sub minimum wage job that will just get you out of the house.

That is not the expectation. The expectation should be: how can we give you the skills to drive and succeed? How can we give you good jobs to support you in growing fields? We should have the same kind of approaches with job training and employment for other populations with job training and disabilities. That's where we see our next steps at the Department of Labor.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Kathy, pick up on that. You a moment ago were talking about the change in doing things for people to supporting them to do things for themselves.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: I think one of the lynchpins across all of these fields is the concept of inclusion. I might just share just a very brief story as an example. We reorganized Create A Day. And I called my mother two years ago and sort of ran over her on the telephone and said how come when I was a kid I didn't have any friends with intellectual disabilities? I got rather wound up. But it was really about inclusion that the world has really changed. I’m 54, this is not the world we had as children, this real change that starts at the beginning of the education system, and that needs to continue through employment. And I think that's the integration across these different speakers, these different topics, these different agencies: the concept of inclusion. What does genuine inclusion mean? Not paternalistic inclusion. Genuine, meaningful inclusion. So people have real‑life experiences that have involvement of family, that have purpose for a lifespan. And that's where there are things. People need to get up and need something to do. In order to do that, we need to support that inclusion, and support those things that they need.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Melody, pick up on this idea of inclusion. It's such a huge concept in education and a challenge.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: Yeah. I appreciate what you said Kathy. Red flags go up in my mind when I go into schools and I hear someone say ‘see what we're doing with inclusion.’ We have an inclusion class. I know right off the bat something has gone wrong, because there is no program of inclusion. Inclusion is a culture. And the smallest, meaningful unit of inclusion is a school. There's no such thing as an inclusive classroom or a grade that's inclusive, or a subject that's inclusive. It's the culture of a school.

And the principal's leadership, and the schools, they are the one who set the expectation that we will serve every child that comes through our doors, and we will value them and make them a meaningful part of our school community.

[Applause]

That mindset is so clear and so important. Yet I do still go into schools where that is not the expectation. And that's the reason we have changed the accountability system so we're looking more at educational outcomes. For students to be able to be successful in reading and math and graduate from high school and college and be career ready, they have to have access to the general curriculum. And to do that, they need to be alongside their peers, and have multiple content, and demonstrate what they know and can do. Those are the initiatives that we are really pushing for now. This is about ensuring that there's a shared accountability for everyone in the school. It's not just the special ed director's responsibility. But it's the entire school.

Just like with all children. Beginning with the principal, the custodians, the cafeteria workers, every teacher, every individual, every adult in that school should be responsible for all children in the school and we really are working on making a much more seamless approach toward that and look forward to talking more about how we're seeing that, as well.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Again, Portia, this is really hard, this idea of inclusion. It's certainly hard in the area of employment. How do you see that as what a piece of your mission is in the coming years?

>> PORTIA WU: Thanks, Judy. It is a very important part of our mission. And one way the Department of Labor is supporting inclusion is saying you need to have a target. And we've worked on -- there's been a number of initiatives that this president has supported, and Secretary Perez has supported for people with federal contracts. You need to have a target for how many people with disabilities you're bringing into your workforce. You need to try to get there and recruit.

If you're working under federal contract, you need to pay people with disabilities at least a $10.10 minimum wage. I would have said before I took this job, in this administration, I had worked in many places where people were incredibly progressive, and they were. If you live here in D.C., you regularly see people with disabilities on the metro going to work, sometimes with guidance or help. But I didn't know what it was to work in a more inclusive workforce until I came to the White House and the Department of Labor. I now work every single day with individuals with visible disabilities. I do not go a single day in the workplace without working with multiple people with disabilities.

That's what made me realize I thought I knew what this meant before. I didn't. It wasn't until I went to a place like the federal government, and President Obama made it an example. Now I can look back at other places. We were open to it, but were we doing it? Not as much as we could have been. So our job at the Department of Labor is to help people with a little prodding and a lot of assistance to get from ‘yes of course we're open to it,’ to ‘oh, this is what it means. This is how we can do this.’

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: So talk about some of the examples of ways you need to do that. You said a little bit of prodding. My guess is it's a little bit more forceful than that.

(Laughter).

>> PORTIA WU: Well, I mentioned the federal contracting arm. Certainly that's one of the ways in which we can ‑‑ the federal government as a whole, not just the Department of Labor, but the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Department of Justice -- say you cannot discriminate against individuals with disabilities.

To reach out to individuals with disabilities, to find qualified candidates who are differently-abled, and develop relationships with individuals in your communities who can connect your organization. Train your HR representatives. I think it's great that we're having this on Veteran's Day. People are very eager to bring them on board. This helps open the door for a lot of people. We have more workers with disabilities now. That worked out great.

So yes, there are ways in which people don't comply with the law, we let them know it and help them into compliance., making sure they get on the path to find solutions that work for their businesses.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Kathy, you are the one who raised this concept in the first place. And you talked about what general inclusion really means.

Where do your resources need to go to make that a reality?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: Do I think inclusion is hard? I think it would be good to poll the audience. Do you think inclusion is hard? I think inclusion is fun, and I think it's hard. I went to an event in the courthouse. An Olmstead event? And it was a Champions for Change event and they had young people with disabilities talking about their lives. It was cool. It was fun to see people talking about their lives. Having young people step up and challenge things and say ‘we're here, we'll be included and listened to.’ Everyone could buy that. I think everyone has a generally positive nature. I do think people want to be inclusive, and are willing to be inclusive, and often what we have to overcome are deep cultural biases and a deep history of prejudice. But with the proper support, nudging, and urging, the people themselves are moving, can move, and there's wonderful leaders who are taking us there.

The hard part becomes what we do about these structures: the government structures, the funding structures. And that's where the work gets really hard. And that's where we have to pay attention because those are not nimble, fluid systems. But they are systems that are evolving. I mentioned the HCBS Settings Rule. And we've been funding home and community based service in this country through Medicaid waivers since the 1970s. That was a spot‑on change. Deinstitutionalize, and we didn't quite get there. It takes another big push. This setting rule is the biggest change for Medicaid and change to the community since they adopted those waivers in the '80s. But it will take a significant push and adoption by advocates and those who are allies and families to make that real.

And what is the underpinning, even for the push, is something as simple as true inclusion. The real involvement of individuals in their lives, in their day, integration of family. I think everyone can mentally get there. The problems become the pathway in the government structure.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: That's an intriguing comment. What do you mean?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: I'm an optimist by nature. I'm not the only one who calls up their mother and says ’How come this is wrong?’ There are ways we really value individuals and have hard projects and hard work in terms of getting things to be responsive.

And one of the challenges, and I could wander off into another topic -- much of the problem with Medicare and Medicaid is that many of these structures came from a medical support pathway, and they need to evolve and be more patient‑centered in their language, but it really is possible to figure out how we support people in community. And that is a global endeavor. It translates to little things that are significant. We recently funded a resource center for support in decision-making. We can have an entire day and talk about guardianship, and what it really means to support people who have a cognitive impairment, regardless of age, and this is about inclusion. It's really about a person‑centered approach to someone's life that they direct.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: Judy, I would like to pick up on something that Kathy said about medical supports. I think we're still paying a price for basing our special education system on a medical model. Diagnose the problem, the illness, the sickness, whatever, and figure out how to treat it. That calls us to focus on what children cannot do. Anyone who has been through a special education evaluation has seen the negativity that is part of the process. It focuses on what children cannot do, rather than on the strengths they bring to the table or how we plug into those and allow them to demonstrate their strengths.

There are places in the country, where we're looking much more at how we can turn that model on its head instead of a deficit‑based approach. Why can't we look at this from a position of strength? And it's because we began with that medical model.

>> PORTIA WU: I would like to comment also. I think Kathy's point about getting the system in line is absolutely an important one. We have a really great opportunity actually. This summer the President signed the Work Force Innovation and Opportunity Act. And that is reshaping our investments across the federal government, but particularly at the Department of Education, Department of Labor, and HHS. And what's important about that for all people with barriers to employment is, you know, we need to take the person as a whole person. That person is not coming in and saying "Oh, I have this medical problem. This housing need." They have a whole bunch of needs together, and they come as one person. When we have a person coming to us seeking employment, we need to figure out: what are the needs? What are the additional skills training they need? What are the additional remedial classes?

Do they need transportation services, other supportive services, accommodations in the workplace?

The Workplace Innovation and Opportunity Act really says to states: look at your accessibility. That's a huge mandate. There are people on staff here who worked on it and wrote it. It doesn't help anybody to have 2,500 American job centers around the country if people can't access it and use it.

And also think about partnership. Make sure all the services are in place so when an individual comes in and says ‘I need to get a better job. I need training,’ all of us can come together and get the services they need.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Is that possible today, to do right now?

>> PORTIA WU: It is possible, but it is not happening in a lot of places.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Why not?

>> PORTIA WU: I think it's some of the barriers are funding streams. I have my money to do this, and I have my money to do that. And really what we're saying to states -- and we've had a lot of change as of last Tuesday -- but states and governors really have a role to look at this all as a strategy and say: how do we bring education, vocational rehabilitation, workforce, disconnected youth, how do we bring all those programs and money together and serve the people in our communities?

We're going to put out work. They'll have regulations and guidance, but it's really going to come down to leadership at the local level and the state level, and really understanding that vision and bringing it to bear and making sure it works for people with disabilities who face barriers to getting employment.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: How do you make that happen? I would be interested in hearing from Melody and Kathy.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: I said fun and hard. This is being a hard group, just to be real clear. This is an area where there's significant bedrock‑level public policy that needs to be discussed. The supports that we have for people with employment, who need employment, who want employment, really become a challenge. And we have created systems where if someone needs long‑term services and support that it's a real challenge, almost impossible for them to have meaningful employment at a self‑sufficiency level because then they lose the supports.

I mean these are significant policy considerations. The middle pathway would bring us together in a significant way. How do we provide support for employment and a little bit of support for home care, long term supports and services so someone can be meaningfully employed?

It's too high-centered now and divided between one and the other. Do you need support or do you need a job, instead of a combination? But that would be in everyone's hard category in terms of the policies that underlie it. They implicate Social Security policy, they implicate Medicaid policy. Not only do you have these enormous programs, but you have both state and federal level conversations. And yet if the goal is inclusion, this is the right conversation to have.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Melody, talk a little bit from your perspective about this idea of needing to work across, through departments, through agencies, through layers of bureaucracy, government, and at the federal, state, and local level.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: I certainly agree with everything that has been said. Part of it is because of the different regulations, and different funding streams. We have tended to work in isolation, and even within education, Title I, Title II, and IDEA, have also tended to function in silos. That's one reason we changed it within the school system to change it for all students in a school.

We're delighted that AUCD is a new promise for us. They have the new technical assistance centers.

[Applause]

And it's very exciting.

And the purpose of that work is to really look at how we can break down and how we can package the right services to ensure that youths with disabilities can go onto productive employment, to be employed, to independence? And it starts early. I remember the day whenever I heard educators say "Well, you know," ‑‑ when you're collecting post‑school outcome, educators say we can't be held responsible for what happens to them after high school. We're the ones who have s put them on that path. We bear a huge responsibility to come together with VR. The best description of effective secondary transition is that the last day of high school should look just like the day after.

This is an area that I think we should be working much more efficiently in. And I think we'll identify ways to do that better. But we are not giving students these types of job experiences that they need before they leave high school, and we know that's hard for all students, but particularly for students with disabilities, we are not preparing them to go into post‑school education, and additional post‑school services. So there is a lot that we need to do in this area, and a critical part of that is figuring out how we wrap these ideas around individual students. And that's the way we continue to function. I think all of us have. That's a point we're trying to make now.

We say “here are the services, this is what's available,” instead of saying "Here's the individual. Here's what that person needs." And we've got to do a much better job in education. And we know that when we provide the kinds of supports and services that students with disabilities need, other students benefit greatly from that, as well! So this is about helping all students, but in particular students with disabilities to be able to live the life that they want.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: In the 15 minutes left before we start taking your questions. -- so please begin thinking about sending those questions forward on the index card -- focus for us, Portia Wu, what your main challenges are going forward? How do you work within the existing structure? How do you push the boundaries? How do you work in an environment, frankly a changing political environment? How do you get done what you need to get done for the future?

>> PORTIA WU: Well that's a big question. Thank you Judy. But I think as I mentioned having this new law, having the Workforces Innovation and Opportunity Act is an opportunity because we're sort of reframing how states and local governments will provide these services to all individuals seeking help. Work, employment and training services, including disconnected youth and including youth who have barriers. And actually part of the law says you're going to establish this advisory committee on the employment of individuals with disabilities. That's the big challenge. The exciting thing is we have a new canvas to paint on. The challenge is going to be getting the right the balance of enough guidance, enough prescriptive environments with not having states -- there's too much -- or having them get in the check the box mentality and not thinking about the bigger picture question. They need to pull back and say strategically: how do we have that warm handshake with education in particular? How do we make it so that the onramp isn't sort of going off the edge of a cliff? How do we use those strategies that work well with other populations, such as apprenticeship, work‑based learning? How do we make those work for this population, too, and embed them in real practices? These should be routine approaches.

That's the big challenge for us. The federal government, we can shape a frame, but getting people to actually use it and use our dollars this way will be challenging. It's going to require some changes on the ground. We need to encourage people and support them, and of course we welcome all your expertise and guiding us in how we can do that.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Kathy?

Do you want to pick up on that?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: The biggest challenge in my space is long‑term supports and services.

And that breaks down into a lot of sub-topics. But we're talking about how best to provide supports to an individual for a lifetime. What are the right level of those supports and how can we pay for those supports? What's important, I think, if we continue to have those conversations, is to put front and center the dual. And there's two different needs, but the dual needs of both the person and the family. Families provide 80% of the long‑term care in this country, and that's across population. Most people with an intellectual and developmental disability will live with their families their whole life. So how do we provide support for family? Because family really is the bedrock. And how does that family be supportive without being paternalistic about the person who needs the support? How do you balance the approach? I I would assume they don't always agree. No parents and kids do. How do you support the individual and their parents as the primary pillar of our long‑term care system?

Years ago, before I did disability work, I did aging‑specific work. In Kansas, I was challenged by a legislator who believed families had walked away from the job. No, oh my goodness, families are the bedrock. As we look at our long‑term services and supports, we need to start with the person in the family, not over here with the services. But start with the person in the family and say: how do we help this team create a full life for themselves and what are the supports they need? Some of those will be government service supports, and others will be community supports, and education, and employment supports. If we start simply by saying this is what we have to provide you on your Medicaid service, then we're not really person-centered, and you run a tremendous risk of not providing or being supportive of a full and complete and meaningful life.

Faith communities. This is a huge resource. The Boys and Girls Club. These are the services that exist and they need to support people with disabilities. instead of looking over here at the list of things we do from them, which is the wrong approach. The government can't just come in and show up. We'll just pay for this. That's not what you want the government to do. No one wants the government to provide a life. Just a service. There's a real difference.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: I keep coming back to this concept, tailoring what you're doing to the individual. You have to be focused on the individual. And yet you're dealing with laws which by necessity are written in a way to serve everybody. How do you bridge that? How do you make the laws, the regulations, that you have to work with, as someone who is working for all of us in the federal government, how do you make that fit the individual? How do you -- you're thinking creatively. You're all passionate about this. How do you bring those together? Melody?

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: IDEA of course has a built in personalization in the IEP process. Unfortunately, it has become so procedurally based that again the outcomes get lost. So as we focus on this accounts‑driven accountability system, we've got to focus on assuring not just that the procedural requirements are met, but that students are achieving, and that's why it's so important that students with disabilities be included in the program. So as we focus more on whether or not students are meeting the grade‑level standards, and that they're getting the supports they need to achieve to the highest level possible, then that's going to drive us to be more focused on the programs and services that we need here. But what does the individual child need? It's going to be more important that families are at the table and meaningfully included in those conversations, because we're really going to be pushing for a much higher expectation for all students, including students with disabilities.

>> PORTIA WU: I will say in the workforce system, that personal level that you see in IDEA is not where we have been historically. Especially during the Great Recession, we had tens of millions of people coming in the door, online, seeking help. And the sheer volume we have with shrinking federal resources has been challenging. But partnership is more important now than ever. We need to work with colleagues and understand the individual students and work with them to ask how we can understand the investments that you already made and find the best next step for individuals.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Kathy, I'm going to come back to you again on this. How do you actually make the connection? The human connections you want to make serve those individual needs at the same time you're working with laws, rules, regulations that have to be part of the structure. It's the way your office is structured, it's the way your day is structured, I'm assuming in my respects. It's the people you report to. How do you do that?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: For all of us who are multitaskers, it's everything at once. The mission of ACL is really to support the well-being and health of people so they can age across the lifespan.

I was talking about, before we started, about new and interesting programs that we have together.

And if you look specifically at the programs we're funding through AAIDD, which is where many of the UCEDDS are getting funded from us, it's really about taking a person‑centered, or an inclusive approach to everything that we do. Whether it's funding the protection and advocacy system. There's a carrot and a stick. No, this isn't working. We expect inclusion. To a DD council, which is about setting state policy to include people with disabilities and their families about what the state should be doing.

To the wonderful work that we're doing with the universities, where we need to provide additional research on what is successful for someone with support, and ask how we can do screening for children so we get early detection and support. How do we continue to support people so they make their own decisions? All the wonderful work that has been happening, historically it's been a laboratory, having you all be there to lead. I always saw it as an acronym, and as a more general perspective saw it as the people who figure out what the right match is.

What we have at ACL are these smaller programs to reach out and connect directly with community. And what our challenge becomes is sometimes we find the right thing to do. And how do we grow that and find a way to build capacity? And how do we attach those good ideas to larger programs, which is much of the ongoing challenge that we'll always have. We had a good idea. How do we get it to spread and grow? With this reorganization that Portia and I were working on, we have these three programs. The group that we know as NIDRR, the National Institution for Disability Rehabilitation and Research, also provides us a wonderful opportunity to invest in person‑centered research. It provides us an opportunity to figure out how we can continue to build and grow, figure out how to use technology to be inclusive, and figure out what we need to provide supports for different kinds of functional limitations for people with different kinds of disabilities. And ultimately we become the great partner we hope people will look to and say: “This is what we learned. This is the evidence that we have. This is the quality that we can show you, and this is the investment that you can make if you're a health plan or a state Medicaid agency. And these are the ways we can start embedding what we're learning into other bigger programs.”

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: There are so many questions rolling in. I'm going to start reading them. I'm worried we're not going to have time. They're for all three of you and for one or two of you at a time. But please jump in.

This is one question. How can self‑advocates most effectively collaborate with education and employment institutions to promote change? How do you see that Melody?

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: You know, one thing that we really need to be teaching more in the school curriculum is self‑advocacy. I mean, students with disabilities should be attending their IEP meetings.

[Applause]

They should be voicing their concerns, and we should be encouraging them to be able to express how they want to live their lives, and what supports they need in school and after. I don't think that we've had a lot of that going on. It's been kind of hit and miss. And that needs to be really systemic and we need to be teaching students at a very early age.

I know I have one grandchild. You know I was not going to miss an opportunity, those who know me, to talk about my only grandchild. She's four. She's really, kind of really expressing her ideas. And we're really encouraging that. I'm thinking, why don't we have all students with disabilities from the earliest age, you know, even if they're in at three years old, beginning in the preschool program, coming to their IEP meetings, and encouraging that from the earliest age? We haven't done nearly enough of that, and that's something I hope we can make much more systemic in the future.

>> PORTIA WU: I think one of the challenges in the employment world is there's so many places to go. We have federal American job centers that we support in states and local governments, but frankly most of the hiring that is happening out there in the world isn't coming through the federal government. It's coming through private doors. That's what's so hard for people. It feels like a black box to them. I feel like I should have a chance at these jobs, but I can't see inside the private sector employment world.

I do think where advocacy has an important role here is in trying to change the frameworks where you do have a little more transparency. The states, the workforce boards, they are going to be setting these strategic directions. It is the time now over the next year, year and a half to get together, and go to these bodies and say: “this is what you need to do differently. This is our experience, and this is what we would like to see be changed.”

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Kathy, I'm going to do a sharp turn. They're coming in a number of different directions, and I want to respect what people are interested in. One is you mentioned the National Center on Supportive Decision Making. Can you elaborate on that?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: We followed closely the lawsuit that Jenny Hatch filed in Virginia in regard to her guardianship. I had a meeting with the secretary. I'm convinced it's the only reason I missed this meeting. But Jenny came in and had a meeting to do a general brown bag discussion with staff. This is an area where we have human personal interest on what autonomy looks like for someone who needs a level of support who should not require something such as guardianship.

In the world of guardianship, there's a lot of work that's happening to reform guardianship, and there's every reason to do that work. And even without a conversation about decision-making, that's a whole world that needs improvement. But supportive decision-making is one of the new best bright spots in moving forward both law and social policy. And I think it's incumbent upon us all to sort of give voice to what's possible for people, and ask why we thought under this onerous plenary guardianship that someone should make all decisions for someone else.

You know, most people can make some input, some decision, regardless of the level of impairment, over their life and their day. And certainly someone like Jenny Hatch has a great deal of autonomy. How do we support and not squelch personal autonomy, personal goal and direction? And this is an area where aging and disability works well together. Frankly, there are many times that I see that if there was a two step process, that the first step has been taken by people in the field of disability. And aging is coming along. And we have very progressive, enlightened people to figure out how to operationallize this.

If we can conceive of a nation -- whether someone with an impairment, whether it's someone with Down Syndrome, or someone with early Alzheimer's -- if we think of a nation where we support that, how do we operationallize that so the rest of us know what we should be doing? What are the limitations? Who else would make the decision in the case of the limitation? And how do we take the lightest touch? For someone with Alzheimer's disease, it may need to progress. For someone with Down Syndrome, it may not.

Law tends to be black and white, for lack of a better description. And this is an area that needs to be more fluid.

We have interesting people at the table. And it's really all about trying to think differently and not just say that the person needs help so we'll provide it. It's not the right approach.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Either one of you want to add anything to that?

We have a question. This one I just want to recognize. He says: “Hi, my name is Eric Matthis from Seattle, Washington. Why do you all think and believe,” and this is for you Melody, “that you have high expectations, and also why do you think it's so hard to have inclusion in classrooms?”

I don't know if Eric is a student.

>> Eric: I am not a student. I'm an advocate. (Speaking off mic)

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: His question, as you just heard ‑‑

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: Again, looking at the educational outcomes of students with disabilities across this country, frankly I'm ashamed of the level of academic attainment. We have states in this country where 10% of the students with disabilities are proficient in reading. Where the vast majority of students with disabilities can and should be learning to read. Now there's a small population that will not. But we just have not had the expectation. I've had administrators in large groups. We started talking about this results‑driven accountability several years ago. And I said we've got to do more to close the gap between students with disabilities and their peers in terms of academic outcomes. And I've had administrators say to me "You do realize there's a reason the students are in special education. That's why they're there. If they could learn like everyone else then ‑‑ " I said no, that's not true. That's an absolute false assumption. All the research tells us that students with disabilities, the vast majority, can and should be learning academic content that will enable them to be prepared for life after high school. And yet that expectation just simply has not been there from both general ed and special education.

All the research points to the fact that we should have higher expectations. Should we meet students where they are? Absolutely. Absolutely. But we have got to do more to change the trajectory of student learning outcomes in this country if we are going to achieve the goals, the ideals of IDEA, which is equality of opportunity. Full participation. Economic sufficiency. Those are the ideals, and we're not going to get there unless we increase the trajectory at which students are achieving and getting the skills that they need.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Portia, this is a related question. Do we need ways to push for job inclusion in rural areas versus urban areas?

>> PORTIA WU: You have different challenges in different economies. It's not just rural versus urban. It's often small versus large. Certainly as I mentioned before, part of the issue is other supports. You think about people getting to jobs, so it's not just about whether they have the training and knowledge to do the job. There's so many other things. “Can I even get to the job?” is a huge barrier for many individuals. Is the sort of accommodation I need readily available in that type of workplace in an urban area or a large employer? They may already have a lot of adaptive technology and a lot of things that people expect that just may not be true.

So I do think in rural areas one of the things we need to concentrate on is to be sure people are aware of the resources that exist and are well connected.

I mean, that is one of the wonderful things about the Internet is that we have a wealth of information at our fingertips. We have technologies that when the work law was last authorized over 15 years ago, we just didn't have that. I know broadband access can still be an issue in many rural areas that don’t have as much technologies as other parts of the country.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Our small town, versus big urban: to what extent are those issues for you Kathy or for you Melody. I don't want to create something that isn't there.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: I think there's an issue in every policy conversation. Portia mentioned transportation. I have admitted to wanting to just run from that conversation. Transportation is complicated. It's complicated in a rural community, and complicated in an urban environment, as well. But much of what we need to make it all work -- whether you're trying to get to a job or get to a doctor or you're wanting to get down to the gym -- we need transportation systems in all parts of this country that make it easier for people to be able to be active in their communities, and active in their lives.

So on the long‑term supports and services side, and then we talk about the provider base, which will change depending on the supports that someone needs. There really are differences between urban and rural. But it doesn't mean that one is easy and one is hard. They can all be challenges, frankly.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: There are definitely challenges facing rural and urban schools. But I have to say in terms of work experiences, I have seen some fabulous programs in very rural areas. So much of it is about relationships. And in some of those small, rural communities, the businesses are more willing, or employers are more willing to engage and to give students with disabilities a try and to really work with them. And so I do think that there are different challenges, but it's certainly no excuse for not being able to provide some of the work experiences that students need. Sometimes it can actually be easier in a rural community. I do think there's a lot of opportunity there.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: Can I talk onto Melody's answer. I grew up in a small town, and everyone knew everyone's business, which became a problem.

(Laughter).

But you had true community. So in an urban setting, how can you create true community? It can happen, but it can also be a very isolating experience. But so can rural areas.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: It's often about the relationship. And we see that for many quality programs. It's about the relationship. It's about that person's individual force and will and persistence. And when that person leaves, sometimes the program goes flat. And we need to find policy levers to institutionalize and make systemic some of those high‑quality programs that we think exist.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Are you collaborating or making concrete steps to change the policies that create these work disincentives?

>> PORTIA WU: Do you want me to start?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: You can answer the whole thing if you would like.

(Laughter).

>> PORTIA WU: Thanks Kathy. Some of these things, as Kathy pointed out, need changes. We've all heard it: Families who say my son works 20 hours a week and he's not going to work more than that, because if he does he will lose his eligibility for benefits. I hear that over and over again from families. We need to look at that. We heard it through federal legislation. But I will say we have been looking at it and put it in prior budgets. We have talked about how we can coordinate with some pilots and working across Social Security, Medicaid, employment, to see what works. I think part of the reason maybe congress is fearful of changing things is they're afraid some flood gates will open, or people will take advantage of the system and cost trillions of dollars. We need to change the mindset there. There are lots of people who want to work, who can work more, and in the long run that's really beneficial for our bottom line in these programs, as well.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: And yes we do have collaboration. We've got a federal interagency workgroup that crosses Department of Labor, multiple parts of HHS, including CMS, ACL, and health security administration.

I would characterize their work in a couple of different ways. One is to make sure that if there are supports now that are in place that are not being utilized, we can make sure that people know about them and what the states are implementing. What exists now that is underutilized? And then what does the realm of the possible look like? What could a different sort of approach be to implement something large? It will take the kind of conversation that Portia is describing. It will take a conversation with congress, a conversation with states. All of us in the room. This is a huge conversation. But do we have people at the technical and policy levels that understand the connections across these realms? Absolutely. But these are huge, huge societal concerns that will take that sort of attention to really move.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: This is exactly what the PROMISE grants are working on and what we hope to gain from the work that this PROMISE TA center is doing is learning what policy changes that need to take place.

One of the things about these PROMISE grants, different from the previous youth transition pilots that we had is looking across programs. This includes a family component, looking at outcomes for the family, as well as the individual student. We know that the families are so important in these decisions, and the families were really not included as a meaningful component in the previous youth transition pilot grant. So that's really important work as part of the PROMISE initiative and the PROMISE grant. So we hope to get, you know, a lot more information at the end of these grants that will be useful to really inform policy.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: So here there were at least two questions here for Melody having to do with higher ed.

One is just please talk about your thoughts regarding access to post‑secondary education and real career development for people with significantly‑involved disabilities. And Portia can pick up on that. The other part of it, though, is “Dr. Musgrove, my experience is that university programs for school administrators includes very little course work in special ed law and policy.” So it's two different things, but there's a connection.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: It's really been exciting over the last few years to see more programs being created in colleges and universities around the country for youth with disabilities, including youth with intellectual disabilities. That's been very exciting. We issued a “Dear Colleague” letter over a year ago regarding least restrictive environment requirements that apply in IDEA as they do in the classroom setting. What is the most inclusive environment that a student can be in as part of secondary transition? If it's important for a student to be on a campus as part of their transition, that is something that can be included in the IEP.

It's exciting to see what can be done. We're looking at what other levers we have within the Department of Education to incentivize and encourage those programs. That's been a really exciting development, and I've had some opportunities to visit the programs for youth with intellectual disabilities within college settings, and was really inspired by the work that was being done by the students in those programs.

You're absolutely right that there's very little training for school leaders in disability policy and inclusion. We of course do fund through our Part D discretionary program a lot of personnel preparation programs, and some of that is leader preparation. So you know, with the small amount of money that we have, we do certainly encourage and require that those programs provide more training regarding disability, or not just disability specific, but on inclusion and policy.

But you know the programs for school leaders certainly need to have a much stronger component of training school leaders. How do you schedule for inclusion? What do teachers need to know and be able to do? What does successful inclusive teaching look like? And oftentimes they're afraid to educate them on teaching students with disabilities.

That's something we need to do more to do. And we need to encourage universities.

But as we increase the pressure for shared responsibility, then the colleges are going to have to be responsive to the changes in the field as far as teacher and leader preparation.

>> KATHY GREENLEE: Judy, this is where we've done some work. One of the coolest things I found was the progress of national significance of the program we funded called Think College.

[Applause]

It's absolutely cool. And we had a student come and spend a summer with us. Micah Feldman came and spent a summer with us. To work specifically to provide resources in three ways to students to encourage them to think about college, to colleges, and there's been a number of colleges that we worked with to come up with a curriculum that is supportive and helps provide skill building for students.

But also to work with families to say this really is possible for your young person. And encourage families to also think about college.

And it really has been one of the most positive experiences, I'll just say cool over and over, that everyone should think about college. This is an experience that can help all students. And I think it's phenomenal.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Are colleges ready to step up and be there for the students when students decide they want to do this?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: I understand our initiative worked with a collection of colleges. I think it was like a dozen. I don't know if it was that big or if it was a template for growth. But I don't know.

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: One of the challenges in higher education is students must self‑identify as having a disability. Once they have a diploma or exit high school, there is no entitlement to IDEA after that. Students must self‑identify, and many have not been willing to do that in order to get the supports and services they need. But I think it's really hit and miss as far as where universities are. But there are some who have really taken it upon themselves to be really aggressive and progressive in this area. Hopefully others will see the benefit of doing so both from an ethical standpoint.

>> PORTIA WU: We've worked a lot at the Department of Labor to partner with community colleges. We know the jobs created in our economy are going to require some sort of post‑secondary education. It might be six months or a year of technical training, or a two‑year degree. But we need to make sure that individuals with disabilities are getting on these paths. So many people get to community college, they take a couple classes, they don't meet the requirements, and they got some debt and they didn't really get the certificate that they needed to advance their career. Thinking ahead about how they can be accessed by different populations is really important to making sure that we can extend that onramp.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Portia, a question directed to you. You mentioned that President Obama is opening the door for persons with disabilities to be employed at a federal level. How can we replicate that model at a state and local government level?

>> PORTIA WU: Some states have. We set a specific goal. The president told agencies to set goals and report back to me on how you're doing on those goals. That's incredibly important. I have taken that seriously of 7 or 8 people. I've hired two people in the last 7 or 8 months. One of them is a person with a visual disability. There are all kinds of disabilities we need to support. But that signal needs to come from the top, from leadership.

[Applause]

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Are we talking governors and mayors?

>> PORTIA WU: Yes. In the past they have made this a signature initiative. They can say the same thing. Hiring within state and local governments, using their contract authorities to tell contractors to get with it, and thinking about partnerships. They can do the same thing. And some states have done a great job.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Do you want to pick up on that Melody, Kathy, in any way? Getting state and local officials on board. You've all talked about this in a way.

Another question. I guess this goes to all three of you. 70% of the adult incarcerated population are people with disabilities. How can that issue be addressed?

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: I would like to speak to that. Once again, this begins in schools. And we know from the data and from our research that if a student is suspended from school in elementary school, even just once, the chances that they will be suspended again and then end up in juvenile justice only go up exponentially. And if a student happens to be a minority, particularly African American and male, those numbers are even greater.

Now with the Civil Rights Data Collection, we see the extent of the overuse of really harsh disciplinary practices for students with disabilities, and particularly kids of color. So we are, you know, really calling that out now and we are working on some guidance in that area. There are so many alternatives to suspension and expulsion. Why do we continue to do something that we know does not work? There is nothing about --

[Applause]

There is no evidence that suspension improves safety in the school, that it improves anything about the culture, or that it does anything positive for that individual child. And as a former teacher, and a former school administrator myself, you know I have to believe that the reason it's continued to be used is because administrators just don't have the tools and the knowledge to do something else.

And they're also under pressure from the teachers to remove students. That's an entire culture shift that absolutely must happen. Like I said, we know what works. I mean positive behavior supports. Instead of punitive measures, how about providing incentives? We know what works. The challenge is getting that out there and really operationallized on the ground. And we are working very hard to do that. ODEP has been funding the support centers for over 15 years now. They're in 20,000 schools around the country, and that's not nearly enough.

A lot of that pressure has to come from the communities. That's just wrong. There are other ways to deal with behavior that doesn't have a long‑term negative impact on children as expulsion does.

[Applause]

>> PORTIA WU: On the back end, I will say helping people who have been involved with the criminal justice system has been a huge priority from the Department of Labor, especially Secretary Perez. A combination of approaches is needed. Don't wait until someone has been returned to their community to start thinking about a career path. They are facing a new barrier. They may have barriers from their disability. Now they have a mark on their record. How do we get behind the fence and get people trained and start getting experiences before they come out? How do we work with individuals about expungement for young offenders? How do we bring all this together?

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Okay, we're getting close to the end of our time, and I have a wrap‑up question in mind. It says it's for all. But I think one of you can tackle it. The new CMS definition of community will require substantial changes to support delivery at a state and organizational level. What role do you see ACL playing in achieving this change?

(Laughter).

>> KATHY GREENLEE: Yes, it will. And it will take a lot of work at the state level. And we're talking about the home and community‑based settings regulations that CMS just issued. I think the best way for UCEDD to be involved is to be part of a broader coalition in a state that really represents the voice of the individuals.

I mean there's been so much system change taking place and it's been caused by so many things. Some by the Affordable Care Act, and some by a move to the state level. And what we have been concerned about at ACL, and our colleagues at CMS is that the voice of the individual not get lost and the person receiving the services not suffer as a result of this system change.

I would encourage UCEDDs at the state level to reach out with a coalition of other people who represent consumers of the services and make sure that they're engaged with the coalition that's talking with the state, that's talking with the providers.

The real rule or the real goal of the settings rule is to evaluate each specific setting based on primarily criteria that reflects the experience of the person. There are some kinds of presumptive groups where it's presumed to be an institution.

But as we started talking to CMS about this reg many years ago, we realized that for students it's really not what the thing looks like, the building looks like, the home looks like, the small four‑person place looks like. It's about the life of the person who is living there and the people who can best articulate what life is, what life could be for the consumer advocates.

And that's where I would have UCEDDs engage with consumer advocates, because they will collaborate with all at the state level.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: As we wind down, just a few minutes left, I want to ask each one of you to speak to us about -- and even if it's in some way repeating what you said earlier -- talk about what you, briefly, what you see as the greatest challenges in your area. Whether it involves congress, state, local level, national level. Greatest challenge. And what gives you the most hope as you move into the future.

Let's start with Portia.

>> PORTIA WU: I think the greatest challenge, as I mentioned, is employment. We still think there's a lot to be done in this world. There are trailblazers, wonderful leaders, corporations, federal government, other places. But there are many places, workplaces where there is just not any hiring of people with disabilities.

That is not a goal. They are just not open to it. There is no one there with a disability. That is just not how it should be. The big challenge, I think, is how do we break down that door? How do we get more people to walk along this path?

Because I think you know once it's opened, people will understand the value. Employers will feel comfortable. So we need to create this virtuous cycle. And there's so many opportunities to do it. It involves post partnership with our education partners and our other supportive services agencies. I think that’s what makes me hopeful. I mentioned at the start talking about how we're setting targets for federal contractors, and we work closely with our sister agency, Department of Labor.

Really working with them and seeing the mindshift that is taking place, if we're going to do this, do it right. What can we bring to the people and how can we train our people? That is really exciting to me. I do think more and more employers and more and more state and local government entities understand the importance of this and want to do it. They maybe get a little lost along the path, but there's a wonderful opportunity now.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Melody?

>> MELODY MUSGROVE: I think this is the first year we've implemented results‑driven accountability. And helping states find that right balance of compliance and results is going to be a great challenge. Our whole system, our monitoring system, states and districts, have been so heavily focused on procedural compliance. How do we provide what teachers need to ensure that students with disabilities get what they need in a general ed setting, so they achieve to grade‑level standards and are successful after school?

Changing that mind set not just for meeting the procedural requirement of the law I think is going to be our greatest challenge moving forward. The thing that gives me the most hope is just the number of states and schools that are really embracing this message and say: “you know what we've made excuses long enough, and we're just not making those excuses anymore. We are pushing for better training for teachers, for better support for administrators, to ensure that students with disabilities are learning and achieving” and that really gives me a lot of hope.

The parents around the country who are being more, you know, aggressive and working with their teachers and the better collaboration that I see between schools and families around the country is actually a great reason for hope.

And if you'll indulge me for a moment. I believe I see Sue Swenson, department assistant secretary for OSERS in the back. I want to quickly acknowledge her.

[Applause]

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: Kathy?

>> KATHY GREENLEE: The biggest challenge I think in my space in general, which is community services with good long‑term supports and services, is we still have large programs and public policy that reflects a deficit‑based approach to individuals. And it's almost like a collective "Oh, dear, how are we going to pay for this approach?" Because we're focusing on deficit. And I think what's hopeful is the increased attention to an asset‑based approach. And that can and must start with a person, so when you're doing care planning with a family, or person‑centered planning with a family, it's a conversation about what you have and what you need. It's not just a conversation about what you need and what the government shouldbuy And as we start re-shifting to an asset‑based approach, it's more positive. It ties together everything that we're talking about here in terms of what do the students, and what do employees provide. What are the assets that they bring? And it changes the lens from deficit to asset.

And it's also a good illustration of the various people that we serve at ACL. This is very much what older adults, people with intellectual disabilities, all share in common: society that views them as a deficit, not an asset. And that's the change that needs to happen.

And the most positive and challenging for us all.

>> JUDY WOODRUFF: It's a challenge and something that gives you great hope. We have many, many questions that came in. We don't have enough time. But I divided them up I think according to the area they represent. And they're going to at least have a chance to read these and know what's on your mind.

Let's give a wonderful round of applause to our panelists.

[Applause]

>> OLIVIA RAYNOR: Thank you. Is the mic working? Terrific. Thank you very much Judy for moderating this excellent panel. And thank you to each of our panelists for your contributions to continue our conversations around engagement and more specifically looking at public policy and how we can move forward. We want to encourage you to take advantage of the concurrent sessions that are following this panel this morning, continue with your learning and discussions amongst one another, and take advantage of all that this conference has to offer to you.

Please note that our exhibitors are open all day. Stop by and thank them for bringing their products and ideas to share with us. And we hope that you'll join us this afternoon at 4:45 for the awards ceremony where we're recognizing those who have contributed a great deal to our network. I promise this will be a terrific event.

Very importantly, I'm to remind you or excuse me, tell you all that the program is not correct and that tomorrow's event begins at 9:15. We have Taryn Williams, who is the White House liaison on disability issues who will be speaking with us at 9:15. And we have Senator Harkin who will be joining us at 9:30. We don't want you to miss these important events. So go on, have a wonderful day, and thank you again to our wonderful panelists.

[Applause]

(Ended at 10:20)