

## News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



### FY15 BUDGET UPDATE!!



#### **UPDATE ON THE BUDGET - GVRA-BHDD funding partnership**

Good news. The Senate has provided a path for \$5.3 million additional federal matching funds to come to GVRA.

Wednesday morning March 4th at 8:30 AM the Senate Appropriations Committee met to make their recommendations for the FY 2015 budget public. The Subcommittees had met behind closed doors Friday to consider recommendations and requests but did not conduct any further public meetings or take testimony from the public on the budget.

Dawn Randolph worked with Senator Renee Unterman, Greg Schmieg and Senate budget staff to consider various ways to obtain additional state funding for GVRA. One proposal that gained traction late last week was a proposal to use state funding from the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (BHDD), which needs to accomplish supported employment goals, with vocational rehabilitation federal funds. BHDD couples supported employment with other Medicaid Wavier and support services to offer a full and meaningful day to those with developmental disabilities. BHDD provides the following definition:

*Supported Employment enables participants, for whom competitive employment at or above the minimum wage is unlikely absent the provision of supports, to work in a regular work setting.*

Senate Budget Analyst Amie Hobbs first proposed this idea and worked very hard to make it a reality. While the Senate Budget Office could not immediately transfer funds to GVRA due to the strict requirements of the BHDD/US Department of Justice Settlement agreement, the two

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[BUDGET UPDATE!](#)

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Special  
Announcements



**State Use  
Council  
Meeting**  
March 27, 2014  
10:00 AM  
Location: Sloppy  
Floyd Bldg - West  
Tower

**Working  
Wonders Day**  
March 27, 2014  
Noon  
Location: Sloppy

agencies (GVRA and BHDD) could be directed to work together to secure additional 110 dollars and fulfill both agency missions.

Below is the language revealed yesterday in the Senate's Budget recommendations. BHDD will make \$1 to \$4 million available in the FY 2015 budget for GVRA to obtain additional federal funding. BHDD will retain up to two times its initial investment and the rest will be allocated to GVRA in compliance with 110 requirements. The Senate recommended \$2,000,000 as a base that would result in the agencies allocating the proceeds for BHDD to use for supported employment for people with development disabilities and GVRA using for vocational rehabilitation.

**Language in the Budget (you can view the budget recommendations online [here](#))**

**BHDD Language**

54.12 Recognize and execute a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (\$2,000,000) and receive additional federal funding for supported employment services. (S:YES)

**GVRA Language**

200.6 Recognize and execute a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (\$2,000,000) and receive additional federal funding for Vocational Rehabilitation services. (S:YES)

**Federal Match - \$5,389,671 new funds for GVRA (estimate based on \$2 million from BHDD )**

Dawn put a call in to Executive Director Greg Schmieg and will also talk with Commissioner Frank Berry to make sure CRPs are included in the discussions to fulfill the intent of these additional resources to GVRA. The House Budget office has already been briefed and House Budget Leadership appears to support the Senate's creative recommendation. However, Dawn is making it clear to both chambers that we still have a long way to go to fully fund GVRA.

Call the GATES office if you have questions at 706-298-0287.

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## Call for Information

*THE PORTAL* is a communication tool for GATES and GATES members. If you have stories about your organization, staff announcements, program descriptions, or other information you want to share with other GATES members, please send the info to Charles Hall, [chall@asqinfo.net](mailto:chall@asqinfo.net)



*Floyd Bldg*

**GATES Board  
of Directors  
Spring Meeting  
April 25, 2014  
Location: -TBD**

**Galaxy of Stars  
and Tommy  
Awards  
Luncheon  
April 30, 2014  
Cobb Galleria  
Centre  
(sponsored by  
Nobis Works)**

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*THE PORTAL is a regular publication of GATES. If you have staff or others associated with your organization that you would like to receive THE PORTAL, please send their email address to:  
Charles Hall,  
[chall@asqinfo.net](mailto:chall@asqinfo.net)*

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# GATES

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