Mary Ann Haschert

160 S. Progress Avenue, Suite 1-A

Harrisburg, PA 17109

Dear Mary Ann,

**Today’s Vision *- Tomorrow’s Reality….*think of the possibilities**

Last month I issued an invitation to stakeholders within the statewide developmental disabilities system to consider participating in ODP’s Futures Planning process. We were specifically looking for individuals to take part on a team (known as the Extended Team) that will be contributing ideas to the creation of long-term goals and identifying the action steps needed to achieve them. The response to this request has been overwhelming.

As a result of the tremendous response, we developed a process to determine membership for this team, with a focus on ensuring a primary seat at the table for self-advocates and identifying individual members who are willing to serve as representatives for others interested in the process. We also weighed the following considerations: representation from diverse areas of the state (i.e., geographic areas, urban, rural, and cultural); ability of individuals to bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to the process whether services are received today or not; inclusion of broad perspectives that consider both intellectual disabilities and autism; and a strong representation of stakeholders.

I want to thank you for your interest in participating in ODP’s Futures Planning process. Although you were not selected to participate on the Extended Team, there are several other avenues available for you to keep abreast of the process and to provide input. We encourage you to reach out and work through the Extended Team members to get updates and provide feedback. You can participate in open forums that will be scheduled in late spring/early summer. You can review proposed documents and provide comments via a dedicated web site. The commitment of all our stakeholders in the planning process is important to the long-term strength of the service system.

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact Dolores Frantz at dofrantz@pa.gov or 570-372-5800.

Think of the possibilities. Think of what can be instead of what is. Together we will help create our vision for tomorrow. I look forward to working with you to create a brighter future.

Sincerely,

 

Fred C. Lokuta

Deputy Secretary