

**Statement of the Learning Disabilities Association of New York State
to the New York State Board of Regents on
VESID Supported Employment Initiatives**

September 15, 1999

Introduction:

The Learning Disabilities Association of New York State welcomes this opportunity to present to the New York State Board of Regents our recommendations for legislative and budget initiatives with respect to VESID for the 2000 session of the New York State Legislature.

The Learning Disabilities Association of New York State is comprised of eight regional chapters covering the majority of New York State. Chartered as a non-profit association by the New York State Board of Regents in 1958, the Learning Disabilities Association is a parent-driven organization providing advocacy and support services to individuals with learning disabilities, neurological impairments, and other related developmental disabilities as well as providing support services to their families.

The Learning Disabilities Association of New York State *supports* the following supported employment initiatives, which we believe, will help VESID provide the level of programs, resources, and services necessary to benefit New York's population with learning disabilities:

VESID Supported Employment:

LDA supports an \$8 million increase in funding for Supported Employment to address current and projected waiting lists for supported employment opportunities and to address structural issues in the supported employment service delivery system.

LDA supports a reimbursement level for provider agencies that provide extended services that are commensurate with OMRDD.

LDA supports an increase in the level of funding VESID provides for Intensive Supported Work slots.

LDA supports the creation of new functional limitation criteria and appropriate assessment tools for classifying individuals with a learning disability that does not eliminate individuals based upon a high IQ level. Individuals with a high IQ can have a learning disability.

LDA supports a competitive reimbursement rate for psychologists and psychiatrists so that consumers can receive evaluations that are relative for the learning disabled population such as a neuropsychological evaluation.

LDA supports the funding of a Comprehensive Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation (DVE).

LDA supports a more comprehensive safety net for the learning disabled who are moving from welfare to work and correctional services to employment opportunities in the community.

LDA supports expanded funding for educational opportunities for the learning disabled population to provide work skills which will make them competitive workers in the 21st century.

LDA supports the creation of a VESID RFP program so that provider agencies have the opportunity to be more creative in the developing of employment opportunities for hard to place consumers.

Conclusion:

We appreciate this opportunity to share with the Board of Regents our recommendations for an improved VESID Supported Employment Program and look forward to a successful 2000 legislative session.