

Please share this flyer and a NRA Membership application with your co-workers and colleagues!!

Introducing!!!

**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
DISABILITY BENEFITS SPECIALISTS**

A Division of the National Rehabilitation Association

The National Association of Disability Specialists (NADBS) is a Division of the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA).

Our MISSION: To increase public understanding of the social and economic gain to individuals and communities through empowerment of persons with disabilities to become self-sufficient, self-supporting, and contributing members of the community. NADBS will also:

- *Help to develop a specific body of knowledge and skills in this field*
- *Work to disseminate new information*
- *Encourage and stimulate pragmatic research and enlightened inquiry*
- *Promote student learning and development in the field!*

Approved by the NRA Board in November 2006, the NADBS is now accepting members!

Professional Membership is \$30.00*
Student Membership is \$15.00*

** requires NRA membership*

more information about this exciting new Division, contact the NRA office at 888-258-4295

NADBS President's Message
By John W. Lui, CAGS, MBA, CDMS, CRC

ATTENTION!! A NEW DIVISION IS BORN!!

Thanks to the foresight of Shirley Brown (Mississippi), this concept of a division was approved by the NRA Board back in 2002. The bylaws and the dues structure were endorsed at the November 2006 Board Meeting in Orlando, Florida. A new division is officially in place – the National Association of Disability Benefits Specialists (NADBS). The purpose of NADBS is “to enhance the practice of benefits counseling, and to advance the cause of informed choice, full community inclusion, employment and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities”.

As you all know, persons with disabilities as well as the rehabilitation service providers, for many years, have faced the difficulties in maneuvering the maze of the complex regulations and rules of various private and public disability benefits systems. With the passage of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA) in 1999, there is an even stronger national movement on employment of people with disabilities. This drives up the need for benefits planning and assistance types of services and supports. The impact is a demand for practitioners to provide benefits counseling.

As this field continues to grow, there arises a need for a “home” to develop a professional identity, collegial interchange of ideas, knowledge, and skills, as well as standards of practice, etc. Thus, the motivation to establish this new division, which will fit in suitably with the other divisions of NRA.

To ensure that we will be a thriving and viable member of NRA family, the NADBS Board is busy developing a business plan to organize this new entity. Some of the broad goals listed in the NADBS Bylaws include:

- increasing public understanding of the social and economic gain to individuals and communities through the empowerment of persons with disabilities to become self-sufficient, self-supporting and contributing members of the community
- developing a specific body of knowledge and skills in the field of benefits counseling
- working to disseminate that knowledge as it evolves
- encouraging and stimulating pragmatic research and enlightened inquiry
- enhancing student learning and development in this emerging field.

I urge you to **JOIN UP** and **CHECK US OUT!** It is your opportunity to be part of a very exciting moment of history, and to ride the wave of a fast-growing profession!

NADBS President's Message
By John W. Lui, CAGS, MBA, CDMS, CRC

BUSINESS PLAN

As indicated in the last issue of Contemporary Rehab, the broad goals listed in the NADBS Bylaws include:

- increasing public understanding of the social and economic gain to individuals and communities through the empowerment of persons with disabilities to become self-sufficient, self-supporting and contributing members of the community
- developing a specific body of knowledge and skills in the field of benefits counseling
- working to disseminate that knowledge as it evolves
- encouraging and stimulating pragmatic research and enlightened inquiry
- enhancing student learning and development in this emerging field.

To ensure that we will be a thriving and viable member of NRA family, I am pleased to report that at this writing, a business plan has been developed by the NADBS Board to organize this new entity. A few key target areas include Membership, Chapter Development, Support and Promote Training Opportunities, Promotion, Finance and Strategic Alliance. Activities and deliverables with cost estimates and specific timelines are charged to certain Board Members. You will begin to see activities relating to these goals and objectives at the Governmental Affairs Summit, and State Chapter and Regional Conferences.

We are also delighted to introduce a member to our Board – Mrs. Jennifer Jones from Anchorage, Alaska. Jennifer is the coordinator for the Alaska Works Initiative at the UAA Center for Human Development. She provides training and technical assistance to benefit planners statewide and to state and community agencies on how to assist people with disabilities to access community employment. Mrs. Jones has been an employment advocate and benefit planner for the last 12 years, and is a proud person with a disability.

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NADBS President's Message
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PROMOTION is key

I am pleased to report that we HAVE a logo and byline for this new division with the NRA family:



“Promoting Individual Choice and Enhancing Social and Economic Independence”

At this writing, we are finalizing on the brochure to get it to the printer. In the mean time, we have provided flyers and training sessions at various State Chapter and Regional conferences. In alignment with our strategic goals to “increasing public understanding of the social and economic gain to individuals and communities...” and “to developing a specific body of knowledge and skills in the fields of benefits counseling”, we have submitted three (3) proposals to NRA’s Call for Paper for the Annual Training Conference in Tucson, AZ. The proposed topics are as follows:

- The Emerging Profession of Benefits Counseling: State and National Perspectives
- Benefits Counseling 101: The Nuts and Bolts of Work Incentives
- Asset Development by People with Disabilities

The content of these sessions, if accepted, will provide information and training to the NRA membership and conference attendees regarding the broad concept scope of services/definitions encapsulated in the term “benefits counseling”.

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