

CareerACCESS Program - Telling the Story

BACKGROUND:

- Decision-makers in D.C. need to hear how SSI policy has affected you, your life and the choices you make every day about work and health care. YOUR STORY IS IMPORTANT!
- Each story is unique, but there are *common ties*... and one of those ties is how SSI rules interfere with you being able to work without fear of losing your benefits, continue to have the medical and personal assistant care your disability requires and your ability to acquire the assets needed to sustain independence.
- CareerACCESS would address these issues. In an effort to get the word out about CareerACCESS and to build support for the program, the World Institute on Disability, the National Centers for Independent Living and PolicyWorks are collecting personal stories.
- One may share his/her story by either 1. writing the story, using a template we will provide... or 2. recording a video of you telling your story.

STRUCTURE GUIDELINES:

- Use *first person* – for example, “This is my experience, I experienced...,” etc. This helps you get across your story most effectively.
- Outline your thoughts beforehand - to be clear and to make sure you cover all the points you wanted to cover.
- It is suggested that written stories be limited to two pages and videos to 7-10 minutes. This will help your story get the broadest audience possible and will keep the audience focused on the most important parts of your story

TALKING POINTS SUGGESTIONS:

- The experiences you have had as a person on SSI who is interested in work?
- Fears you might have about working and the impact work will have on access to your existing benefits: health care, housing, subsidized child care
- What it means to not be able to have more than \$2000 of assets if you are single and \$3000, if a couple. How does that affect the choices you make?
- After you have reviewed the CareerACCESS program, talk about what the changes in policy would mean to you in the following areas:
 - Greater ability to work because of the changes in the earnings limits
 - Expanded access to health care
 - Greater asset (resource) protection