



Committee Annual Reports

September 2011

**Prepared by:
NENA Committee Chairs**

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NENA Board Chair Annual Report

The National Employment Network Association exists to advocate for and support the needs of **ALL** Employment Networks.

This past year has been one of growth, accomplishments, challenges and success. Being on the NENA Board and Committees is not for the faint of heart! This is truly a working Board and we have developed a lot of synergy, which makes things fun and exciting as well.

We have experienced illnesses of several board members and this has challenged us all and some have gone above and beyond in getting the job done. One prime example is Susan Webb, NENA President leading a Quarterly Conference call, and talking to over 200 ENs from her hospital bed!

To follow in no particular order are some of the highlights for the year:

- Providing substantial input to the new RFQ with recommendations for improvements. SSA was very responsive to NENA and several enhancing changes were made to the final agreement.
- Sabra Gardner, the new Project Director for MAXIMUS, met with the Board to get mutually acquainted and address issues. Ms. Gardner was featured on the NENA August Quarterly conference call and communicated with about 200 ENs that were on the call. NENA has appreciated an already productive working relationship with Ms. Gardner and her staff.
- Another Quarterly conference call addressed the RFQ, providing ENs with a good understanding of the new and expanded requirements that will need to be met.
- NENA initiated interaction with several staff at BASS and MAXIMUS resulting in a significant initiative expected to lead to Beneficiary marketing improvements in the coming year.
- Several NENA Board members were interviewed by the GAO (General Accountability Office) to provide input into the eventual report the GAO completed on the Ticket Program.
- Partnership Plus has been a major initiative of NENA through several conference and national quarterly calls and education on Partnership Plus.
- NENA's website continues to be a resource for ENs for education, and keeping current on the new things always coming up in the Ticket Program plus interactive communication among ENs.
- NENA had active committees in: Operations, Finance, Membership, Ticket Institute, VR-EN Partnership Plus, Marketing to Beneficiaries, and the Job Placement Forum.
- Finally, NENA's First **Annual Training Conference** with over 100 attendees is a reality!

In summary, 2010-2011 has been a year in which NENA has played a key role in collaborating with the four major players and influences in the Ticket Program – Employment Networks, Social Security, BASS and MAXIMUS. There was on-going dialogue with Social Security throughout the year to discuss issues and actions critical to the Ticket. NENA is grateful to the leadership in Social Security – Bob Williams and Dan O'Brien – for their “can do” attitude in being responsive to the needs of employment networks.

Plans for 2011-2012: NENA believes that it will be critical for all parties involved with the Ticket – SSA, MAXIMUS, the BASS and employment networks, to be communicating the same message to beneficiaries: the purpose of the Ticket program is to assist and support beneficiaries who want to work to be able to leave the cash benefit rolls and become self-sustaining productive and tax paying citizens. Meeting the needs of the beneficiaries is the bottom line for all of us. NENA looks forward to continuing to play a key role in the future growth and success of the Ticket to Work Program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Luttrell, Board Chair

NENA Communications Director Annual Report

The Communications Director provides on average at least 50 hours a month of communications and administrative support for NENA projects and functions. Beyond the functions described below, the Communications Director provides substantial one-on-one communications and customer support to NENA members and prospects.

Communications -- Infrastructure and Messages

The Communications Director maintains a communications infrastructure with the following business partners including website components:

Internet Services Provider—GoDaddy;

Teleconference—TurboBridge;

Email listserve—Constant Contact;

Surveys—SurveyMonkey;

Annual Conference Registration and messaging—RegOnline;

Under development is a Blog/Community Page using WordPress, based on the GoDaddy web page, to replace the community page developed by Karen Davidson.

Some of the message content areas addressed using these components:

—Annual Conference promotion and development;

—2011 Board Elections;

—National Teleconferences, including Quarterly teleconferences and special-focus conferences on the RFQ and Partnership Plus;

—Jobs Group;

—Listserve on the DUNS number transition;

—NENA Membership promotion;

—Ticket Program “Latest News” about NENA and SSA initiatives

This communications infrastructure has been used to support Committees including:

—Partnership Plus; —Beneficiary Marketing Group; —Job Placement Focus Group; —Policy/Legislative; —Ticket Institute; —Executive Committee (bylaws).

Admin infrastructure websites to support communications or other functions include:

—Oregon Corporation Registration; IRS Form 990 annual report; Oregon Corporation annual report; —PayPal; —Carbonite Backup; —Doodle; —Constant Contact email list, membership lists, committee lists; —NENA liability insurance maintenance was handed off to Executive Committee in July.

NENA Special Projects include Ticket Institute sessions under development for the West Virginia MIG, as well as a membership drive focused on MIGs.

—GoToWebinar capacity was investigated and acquired for WV Ticket Institute.

Key 2012 goals, beyond ongoing maintenance of all the above, include:

—Recruiting NENA memberships through MIGs; —Fulfillment of WV Ticket Institute; —Completion of VR/EN Partnership Plus Survey Report.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Mead, Communications Director

NENA Treasurer & Finance Committee Annual Report

Below is a summary report of NENA Revenue and Expenses for fiscal year 2010-2011, which is broken down by category. The report reflects activities through August 31, 2011, which comprises 75% of our current fiscal year. The budgeted amount for each category is established by our Finance Committee prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, which runs from December 1st through November 30th. The percent of budget attained and/or utilized reflects our current status for a particular line item.

To date, NENA has stayed within the budgeted amount for all expenses, and has exceeded the projected revenue goal for the Annual Conference already by 55%! This, of course, doesn't yet reflect all of the conference expenses, which will continue to be posted through October 2011. NENA is also set to reach and exceed our budgeted Membership Dues goal prior to the end of the fiscal year.

At the end of the report are the Beginning and Ending Balances of the NENA bank account. The Beginning Balance reflects the amount in the account when the new fiscal year began on December 1, 2010. The Ending Balance is our current balance as of August 31, 2011. These reports are generated monthly, and the NENA Board actively tracks revenue and expenses to ensure they are in line with the goals of the organization. The monthly revenue and expenses report is always available to NENA Members upon request.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Jordan, NENA Treasurer

NENA Revenue & Expenses 12/01/10-11/30/11 (75% elapsed through 08/31/11)

Projected Revenue	Budgeted	Year-to-date 12/10-8/11	% of budget attained
Membership Dues	\$15,000.00	\$13,950.00	93%
Annual Conference Revenue	\$10,000.00	\$15,472.87	155%
Contracts	\$0.00	\$700.00	0%
Banking Interest	\$5.00	\$2.68	54%
Total Projected Revenue	\$25,000.00	\$30,125.55	121%

Expense Category	Budgeted	Year-to-date 12/10 - 8/11	% of budget utilized
Bank Service Fees/Paypal:			
Paypal - Estimated	\$100.00	\$79.53	80%
Insurance			
Liability, E&O, D&O	\$3,000.00	\$2,981.00	99%

Licenses, Fees, Registration			
State of Oregon - Corp. Filing Fee	\$50.00	\$50.00	100%
Misc.	\$50.00	\$13.00	26%
Total	\$100.00	\$63.00	63%
Postage & P.O. Box Rental			
P.O. Box 1 Year	\$70.00	\$70.00	100%
Postage - Estimated	\$130.00	\$93.38	72%
Total	\$200.00	\$163.38	82%
Printing			
NENA Brochures	\$500.00	\$0.00	0%
Conference Material/Misc.	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	0%
Total	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	0%
Fees paid to Subcontractors			
CareerConnect 3@\$500, 9@1,000, 1,500 Misc.	\$10,500.00	\$7,487.50	71%
Unknown	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	0%
Total	\$12,000.00	\$7,487.50	62%
Material & Supplies			
Estimated expenses	\$500.00	\$59.98	12%
Furniture & Equipment			
Estimated expenses	\$500.00	\$0.00	0%
Communication			
Survey Monkey - \$19.95 Mo.	\$240.00	\$179.55	75%
Bayspire - Interactive hosting	\$609.00	\$160.00	26%
TurboBridge Conference Calls	\$2,400.00	\$1,155.26	48%
Constant Contact - Email Mktg.	\$300.00	\$0.00	0%
GoDaddy Webhosting	\$175.00	\$153.69	88%
Misc. - Unknown	\$776.00	\$148.95	19%
Total	\$4,500.00	\$1,797.45	40%
TTW Annual Conference Fall 2012			
Estimated Expenses	\$12,000.00	\$1,022.09	9%
Total Expenses	\$34,400.00	\$13,653.93	40%

Beginning Balance (12/01/10):

\$32,063.67

Ending Balance (08/31/11):

\$48,535.29

NENA Beneficiaries Marketing Group Annual Report

Group members: Steven Sachs - Chair, Olivia Clawson, Rachel Hall, Peter Mead, Paul Luttrell, Kathy Holmquist and Jeff Lilley

After a six-month hiatus, BMG regrouped with new members providing a good foundation for being an effective body in support of contributing to improvements in the beneficiary marketing and outreach for the Ticket Program. In the last meetings of the year, we had participation from several members of BASS (Beneficiary Access and Support Services) the contract that SSA has with Booz-Allen-Hamilton (BAH) and well as participation from the Director and Deputy Director of MAXIMUS. The BASS contract started in October 2010 with the purpose of providing and improving beneficiary outreach and on-going support.

BASS reported to the Group that monthly WISE events are being conducted online, now that they are gradually switching over to webinars with a January, 2012 phase out of on-site WISE events (an example is a Youth in Transition done on August 31). Several promotions are planned for National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October. Success stories, including a 60-second radio PSA, aired to 17 million listeners in 32 states and many regional and local newspapers picked up print media success stories. BAH is using social media (i.e. Facebook, twitter) vehicles to also get the word out.

The perception from most Employment Networks has been that WISE events have not been effective. This lack of a comprehensive marketing effort nationally is hurting the Program. BAH, through the BASS, has asked NENA BMG to help brainstorm other marketing and outreach strategies that can be used nationwide and this Group is committed to offering suggestions to diversify and expand the marketing effort. Upcoming meetings will address possible changes and improvements to consider.

NENA reported that the information on the various Ticket to Work websites are showing widespread inaccuracies and inconsistencies of EN information from one website to another. MAXIMUS will be looking to have systems provide good, accurate data. Because inaccurate information hurts beneficiary perception of the program, consideration should be given to shutting down websites until the information can be shown to be reliable and valid.

A BMG member contacted the Beneficiary Contact Center as a mystery shopper to ascertain what is being said to beneficiaries. Both helpful and not so helpful things were said to the caller, which was shared with BASS. One concern was that specific ENs were mentioned in that call, which should not happen. With the term on the NENA board ending for Steven Sachs, Jeff Lilley became the Group Chair effective the last meeting in August.

The Beneficiary Marketing Group is confident that the groundwork has been laid to move forward with collaboration among, NENA, the BASS, MAXIMUS and SSA to develop effective marketing and outreach tools in the coming year to help beneficiaries assimilate into the Ticket program more easily and become successful in becoming employed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Lilley, Group Chair

NENA Job Placement Forum Annual Report

The Job Placement Forum has been meeting since November 2010 on the 3rd Friday of the month from 3p.m. to 5 p.m. EST to share placement strategies, tips and concerns. Peter Mead has assisted with facilitating most of the calls, which have been hosted by myself. Formal minutes (at the request of Susan Webb) have been submitted to the NENA board members since June 2011 when Sarah Lind from My Employment Options started taking notes.

We have had up to 18 members on one call and average around 9 per call. We have had all types of EN's represented in the forum: private, non-profit, VR, one-stops, small EN's and national EN's. Using an informal structure, conversations between EN's are encouraged to facilitate learning.

Highlights of guest speakers and special topics:

- Sam Jones, Worknet1, Economic development Model
- Pam Walker, Alliance Professional Services – Federal Schedule A Employment
- Paula Vieillet -Assessment Exercises using material from Disabilities/ Different Abilities: A New Perspective for Job Hunter
- Retention and recruiting strategies

Next year we will try to have more guest speakers including employers who have expressed interest to Maximus in hiring persons on the ticket. There has been some interest from NENA participants who were on the calls to become more involved in this forum. My plan in the next year is to develop a team to help coordinate forum and speakers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paula Vieillet, Committee Chair

NENA Legislative/Policy Committee Annual Report

Committee Description:

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA), the “law” or “statute”, establishes the Ticket to Work Program and authorizes the existence of Employment Networks (ENs). The regulations (sometimes called “rules”) issued in 2001 and again in 2008 establish how the law is implemented and managed. Developing regulations is a laborious process requiring extensive public input. The policies developed by SSA to operate the Ticket to Work (TTW) Program, do not require public input and can easily be changed by the Associate Commissioner (Bob Williams) without public input. Such policies, however, must be consistent with the TWWIIA and its regulations.

NENA’s Leg/Pol Committee develops NENA’s recommendations to SSA, MAXIMUS and Congress that propose legislative, regulatory, and policy changes that ENs believe will improve the program in some way. NENA consistently enjoys a collaborative relationship with all these entities, and SSA has adopted many of our recommendations.

NENA recently established a closely related new committee, the Operations Committee, which focuses on operational issues not fitting the definition of “policy.” The Ops Committee addresses the administrative functions that affect ENs, such as what information is required on various forms we submit.

NENA members interested in joining either of these committees or any others may do so by sending an e-mail to Peter Mead at pmead@nenaticket.com.

Committee Actions:

1. Submitted recommendations and sought clarification on key provisions of the new RFQ that establishes the Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) currently being distributed to all ENs. SSA adopted many of our recommendations.
2. Submitted extensive comments to the rulemaking docket responding to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that resulted in the new regulations that became effective in 2008.
3. One of only four witnesses invited to testify at a hearing of the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee on the viability of the TTW Program.
4. Submitted recommendations to the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) NPRM on requiring Federal Contractors to apply EEO/AA quotas to hiring qualified individuals with disabilities and specifically referencing the TTW Program as a resource for such individuals when making recruiting and hiring decisions.
5. Submitted comments to the Associate Commissioner to streamline the EN payment process by adopting Autopay.

6. Submitted comments to the docket responding to a pending SSA Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) on modifying the 2008 regulations regarding the provisions of how VR and ENs interface under the Program.

Planned Committee Actions:

1. Submit comments and recommendations to improve and correct the data on the EN Report Card that SSA is currently ready to launch.
2. Coordinate comments with the Operations Committee on various policies and methodologies that appear inconsistent with the new BPA.
3. Seek an invitation to testify at an upcoming House Ways and Means SS Subcommittee hearing in response to a recent General Accountability Office (GAO) Report about the Ticket and ENs. We heard that such a hearing is currently under consideration by the House Committee.
4. Respond to an NPRM, if issued, that is the step following the ANPRM mentioned above.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Webb, Committee Chair

NENA Membership Committee Annual Report

This year has been an eventful one for membership. Long time committee chair, Karen Davidson, left her position at “A Ticket to Success” and went to work for MAXIMUS in May of this year. Olivia Clawson of “Employ-Ability, LLC” replaced her position as NENA Membership committee chair.

In March of 2011, membership reached 100. A goal was then set to sign up 50 extra members for this fiscal year. At present date, NENA has 140 members. There are eight memberships for Arkansas based ENS that have been committed to and will be paid for by the state MIG and another eight across the country that have been invoiced. Therefore, we will have a total for the year of **at least** 148 members by the end of September.

Recruitment activities have varied from face-to-face meetings and training sessions to phone calls to membership pitches during NENA sponsored teleconferences and other events. Registration for the Annual Conference in Las Vegas brought in organizations that took advantage of the membership rates to both become a member and register for the conference at the same rate as a nonmember conference registrant. In addition, we will be recruiting any nonmember conference participants for membership in Las Vegas. NENA membership brochures will be available during the conference and members will be encouraged to take the literature and pass it around to ENS in their areas when they return home.

While our goal for the coming year is to increase membership, our approach will also include collaboration with other committee’s activities in addition to the activities summarized above. There are entities who have expressed the need for the “Ticket Training Institute” or something similar as a means to gain information and advice about the application process to become an EN and to answer operational questions thereafter. NENA will continue to play a large role in bringing in new ENS and training them for success. Each and every EN we assist through NENA will be recruited for membership.

NENA is also working to organize a national teleconference for MIGs. Their contracts will end this December and NENA has been successful in working with some of them to afford memberships for ENS in their states. We anticipate a final date for this teleconference at the end of September or early October of 2011 and we are confident that we will get additional memberships as a result.

We look forward to another rewarding year of NENA membership and building our numbers to strengthen our advocacy, training and the overall quality of Ticket to Work programs nationwide.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Clawson, Membership Chair

NENA Operations Committee Annual Report

Committee Members:

Pam Walker (Chair – Alliance Professional Svcs)	Kate Peterson Kingree (ERI – WI)
Linda Habash (Human Solutions -new member)	Becky Litton (Alliance Professional Services)
Kathy Holmquist (Pathways to Independence)	Yasmin Shumate (Career Development Services)
Lisa Jordan (Human Solutions)	Linda Singleton (A Ticket to Success)
Maureen Kolkmeier (Challenge Unlimited)	Susan Webb (Abil)
Michelle McKnight (PRIDE Industries)	

The Operations Committee, which was recently organized to handle operational related issues between ENs and MAXIMUS/SSA, just recently began its work. A few of the items currently being worked are provided below, and additional issues requiring evaluation will be added to the list as those issues present themselves during the regular course of business.

The Chairman's objective is to involve NENA members who have not previously been active with Committees, and who represent various business models, geographical locations, and experience levels. This will place the Committee in a better position to look at issues from different perspectives and determine how rules or procedures impact all ENs. Although some members have already been assisting on projects, the Committee's first meeting will be in Vegas.

Items on the Committee's list and currently being worked include:

1. Review of RFQ rules and document compliance (alternate contacts, journal requirements)
2. On-going communication issues (Technical Bulletins, Email notifications as discussed during the Board's phone conference with Sabra)
3. Employers as ENs (This may/may not still be an issue based on the new RFP)

New issues:

1. Pay: Maximus Rep indicated that if an EN submits a payment request for a Ticketholder using an EIR (filing a certification payment), AND if that Ticket is no longer assigned to that EN's organization, the SSA Field Office will not process the request for earnings (even if available)
2. Procedural: PII sent thru email: Maximus trains no more than 1 type of PII in an email and encourages ENs provide SSN#s in email when requesting information, but RFQ/RFP say "NO" PII in body of email to anyone, including SSA. This would mean encrypted attachment or fax via using email.
3. Report Card Data Review:
 - a. Inaccurate information provided to beneficiaries – States, "Report card shows how many clients the EN services and how many the EN has assisted in getting and keeping a job". Not so – it only shows the snap shot for 1 year, not totals for the EN.
 - b. Does not compare apples to apples – An "Employer EN" will have a shorter assignment/placement rate and percentage rate because they only accept Tickets that they will be putting to work. Question whether or not these ENs should be included in the "state averages".
 - c. How are the "state averages" computed? If they are based on the state of physical location of the EN, the statistics appear to be incorrect. If based on the state served, then why do the state averages not change for a provider who serves multi-states?
 - d. Why does the report not reflect numbers of Tickets assigned and meeting Timely Progress by attaining educational goals as part of the information provided to Ticketholders?

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Walker, Operations Committee Chair

NENA PartnershipPlus Committee Annual Report

The NENA PartnershipPlus committee is comprised of EN and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) members and is fortunate to have Sallie Rhodes, Ticket to Work Specialist, SSA Ticket to Work Operations Support Manager Team providing Technical Assistance to committee efforts. The committee meets quarterly by teleconference and more often as needed.

The focus this year has been to provide PartnershipPlus training and resource materials to the NENA membership. In particular the committee trainers have focused on building an understanding the cultural differences in the VR and EN employment realms, and strategies for bridging those differences for a successful PartnershipPlus Ticket program relationship.

The April 4, 2011 National Training Teleconference provided intensive, professional-level basic training to help employment networks understand opportunities to collaborate with State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies under the "Partnership Plus" provisions in the Ticket Program. Four presenters representing the key stakeholder partners in a successful PartnershipPlus service relationship SSA, VR and private sector ENs presented a 90-minute free training for NENA members. The training PowerPoint and handout materials are available on the NENA website at: <https://nenaticket.com/TeleconfApril4-VR-EN.html>

On September 21, 2011 the committee is sponsoring a more advanced PartnershipPlus panel presentation at the NENA conference. Again, SSA, VR and EN partners will provide training and materials to support the expansion of successful PartnershipPlus agreements and relationships.

In addition to the materials made available at the training events, several members of the NENA PartnershipPlus committee have shared sample agreements and other useful PartnershipPlus implementation materials with Sallie Rhodes. She has included some of the materials in the SSA PartnershipPlus toolkit at: <https://yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/basics2>

Committee members recently reviewed Ticket program references in the Senate draft bill for reauthorization of the VR program legislation. The committee is currently drafting recommendations for these references. The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) has a Social Security Committee. The co-chairs of that committee have agreed to work with the NENA PartnershipPlus committee to advance agreed upon modifications in the VR Ticket responsibility bill language.

The goals for the coming year are to continue to advance PartnershipPlus through training and shared resources, and in particular to promote formal agreement models between VR agencies and ENs for successful PartnershipPlus collaborations. The committee will also finalize its recommendations for VR Ticket responsibility language in the draft bills to reauthorize the Rehabilitation Act (i.e., the VR program legislation).

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene Dwyer, Committee Chair

NENA Ticket Institute Annual Report

Committee Description:

NENA ticket institute expands upon the basic training delivered by MAXIMUS and focuses on the EN perspective. The training emphasizes the peer model from ENs with the most experience and success operating a Ticket to Work program. It is targeted at new and more experienced ENs that may need intense analysis of their operations. The training includes on-site training and/or webinars in a modular format.

Training modules include EN business model determination, marketing to beneficiaries, database design, payment tracking, financial modeling, staff requirements, and other aspects ENs find useful to succeed. Currently the training is more relevant to senior strategic management and operations managers.

Thus far, training is provided by contracts with State Medicare Infrastructure Grantees (MIGs).

Committee Action:

1. Two on-site 2½-day trainings and two 6-module webinars were conducted in Arizona. One webinar series was conducted specifically for mental health providers.
2. One on-site 1-day training and one 6-hour webinar were conducted in Maine with follow-up individual consultations.
3. One on-site training and one webinar were conducted in Arkansas.
4. NENA holds monthly one-hour or 1½-hour topical teleconferences for all ENs with Q&A included.

Planned Committee Actions:

1. Currently NENA has a contract to deliver webinar training to ENs in West Virginia.
2. We are exploring taped webinars available in modules on the NENA website for a fee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Webb, Committee Chair