



*Balancing Mission, Management and Resources*

Dear OPRA Members:

I am so honored to be chosen by the OPRA Board of Directors to be your Board Chair for the organization for the next two years. We have so many challenges ahead of us and I want you to know that I will keep all of you in mind when discussing issues that affect all of our individual businesses and the people we employ and support.

We need you and your staff to be involved in YOUR trade association. This period of time is so critical as we say goodbye to a known long-time leader in our industry Director Martin and his administration and welcome in a new administration. Basically, we are welcoming the “unknown”. That can be scary and exciting at the same time and we need all of you to be engaged. This is YOUR trade association! Please join me by pledging that in 2018 you and your selected staff will become more involved in a committee, attend a conference, contact and re-contact the OPRA staff to make sure they hear your concerns. Believe me, I understand how hard it is to cut that check for dues, but if we don’t take advantage of the opportunity presented to us, then we are not getting the bang-for-our-buck! Please, I welcome you, beg you to become more involved in your OPRA. Contact Mark, Jeff, Anita, Sonya, Lisa or Christine right now and find out what committee needs your expertise! We have a short time to influence the direction of the unknown future administration, the time to get actively involved is now! Together we are stronger.

As I told the OPRA Board, and I promise all of you, I am guided by major principles every day. I wanted to share with each of you the four guiding principles that I will lean on during my term as chair. Keep in mind that each principle is in the over-arching guise of our workforce crises.

1. I believe we are now in a time and place where **cooperation between providers and county boards** is needed as much as possible. We will always have our differences, but I will encourage our mutual cooperation and unification on issues facing our system. That means we need to discuss and practice negotiation and compromise. Entering into a new administration, this is needed more than ever. If we come to the table unified on as many issues as possible, no new Director will thwart our efforts. I truly believe this.
2. **Grow our membership.** Again, with a new administration, old alliances change. We need to be open to take advantage of this fact. I will lead a serious Board discussion on how we can “open our tent” and welcome those providers who are not getting the service, influence and support from other groups that they need and deserve.

3. **Always start with “Our Why”.** We should always be marketing OPRA, our services, our employees. We understand the day in and day out of providing services to people with disabilities better than anyone, **we are the experts in services.** With that, we need to always remind ourselves and others WHY we do what we do. Everything should be guided by our collective “Why”, which of course are the individuals with disabilities we provide services to. Nothing matters if it doesn’t have a positive impact on their life.
4. We are a collection of individual business and **OPRA must provide leadership on assisting members to be the best businesses possible.** This means that our CEO track at each conference must be packed with the latest information and speakers in business practices that is available to us. My hope is that a CEO (like you) will say to themselves that they must attend the OPRA conference so to get the best, cutting edge information.

Again, I look forward to the next two years, together taking on all of the challenges we all will face. We are the leaders and the time for leadership is now! Our employees, our system and the people we support are counting on us. We have an excellent, dedicated professional OPRA staff and experienced, passionate members. It’s time to lead.

This is YOUR Trade Association, the important work is done in committees, get involved!  
Please.

Thanks

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**OPRA Executive Committee**

Diane Beastrom – Vice Chair  
Adam Guinther – Treasurer  
Lisa Reed – Secretary  
Tom Weaver – Past Chair