

# Developmental Disabilities Life Opportunities Trust

Washington State Developmental Disabilities Endowment Trust Fund

Autumn 2007

## Preserving the DD Life Opportunities Trust

The DD Endowment Trust Fund, commonly called the Life Opportunities Trust, is closing in on an important milestone.

When we first opened the Life Opportunities Trust to trust holders the Governing Board estimated that we could match about 1,000 trusts with the original \$5 million dollars the State Legislature provided to the program.

As of the end of August, 2007 we have 907 active and open trusts and we are coming close to our goal.

The critical question for the Governing Board is what will happen next? At our June 2007 Board meeting, we decided to approach the Governor and State Legislature during the 2008 session and ask for another \$5 million dollars so that we can match additional private contributions for new trust accounts.

You can help us. Consider writing a letter or sending an e-mail to your state legislators telling them how important this program is to you. Let them know that you would like others to have the same opportunity as you have had to open a trust. The Life Opportunities Trust is a great way for families to plan for the future. It is also a great way for people with developmental disabilities to save money and build some resources for their future needs. The match of public

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## The DD Life Opportunities Trust: Facts & Figures

### Background Facts

- The Developmental Disabilities Endowment Trust Fund or DD Life Opportunities Trust (DDLLOT) began in 1999.
- \$5 million was originally give to the Trust to match a portion of the private contributions made in the first 1,000 trusts opened
- July 2002 – 16 Trust were opened and the first private contributions are made

### Current Figures (August, 2007)

- 907 trusts have been opened with 882 being fully enrolled trusts, 323 of which are Trust I, Third Party Individual Trust Accounts, and 559 of which are Trust II, Self Settled Individual Trust Accounts
- Total private contributions equal \$1.6 million
- 352 disbursements have been made totaling \$332,101

### The Future of the DDLLOT

- 2008 – Request to the Governor and Legislature to include another \$5 million in the budget to expand the DDLLOT and continue matching private contributions
- DD Life Opportunities Trust Foundation – the new 501 C-3 charitable foundation will allow contributions from the private sector and the philanthropic world

## Reflecting on Five Years of the DDLLOT

Developmental disabilities advocate Margaret-Lee Thompson vividly remembers the first time she heard about the Developmental Disabilities Endowment Trust Fund. It was September 1997 at a King County Parent Coalition coffee for county legislators, and Senator Dan McDonald had just revealed his idea for initiating a special needs trust for individuals with developmental disabilities.

In 1999, the Washington State Legislature made this idea a reality by establishing the Trust Fund, now commonly referred to as the Developmental Disabilities Life Opportunities Trust (DDLLOT) Fund, and provided \$5 million for matching a portion of the private contributions for each of the trusts. Estimates determined that the state's \$5 million appropriation the DDLLOT would be able to match approximately 1,000 trusts.

Through the DDLLOT and its matching capabilities families with a member with a developmental disability were provided a unique opportunity that offered both support and independence. Trusts established in the DDLLOT program allow families and individuals with a developmental disability to build assets for future use without losing eligibility for government benefits.

"The purpose of the state match is to encourage families to set aside some income to meet future needs and prepare," said former state Senator and DDLLOT legislative sponsor Dan McDonald. "What's most important is the fact that these trusts give people with

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### ***Preserving (continued)***

dollars creates an incentive for people to act and it makes this program the only one of its kind in the country.

In addition, we are actively working on the possibility of forming a non-profit corporation that would work with the Governing Board to seek funds from community resources. We would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in being a part of that effort.

In the end, the Governing Board is committed to seeking additional funding so that we can offer this opportunity to anyone who is interested in furthering the future of their family members or self.

Sincerely,

Janet Adams, Chair  
Governing Board

### **Save-the-Date: November Trust Holders Meeting**

A meeting of the Trust holders will be held November 19, 2007 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Tukwila. The event will conclude before the annual King County Legislative Forum at the same location.

Trust holders, families, friends and community members are invited to attend.

Please contact Linda Walling at 800.634.4473 or [lindaw@cted.wa.gov](mailto:lindaw@cted.wa.gov) with questions about the second annual meeting.

### **Moving Soon?**

If you have moved or are planning to move, contact Patti Bell at the Arc at 888.754.8798 to update your information.

### **Foundation Board Seeking Members**

The LOT Foundation is seeking members to join the newly forming, charitable foundation to support the DD Life Opportunities Trust. The Foundation's goal is to expand the ability of the LOT to match private contributions.

The Board of Directors is seeking members with community and corporate contacts, legal experience, or financial/investment expertise.

For more information or to apply, please contact Ed Holen at 800.634.4473 or [edh@cted.wa.gov](mailto:edh@cted.wa.gov).

### **Questions? Feedback?**

We welcome your comments and feedback. Call or email Ed Holen at 800.634.4473 or [edh@cted.wa.gov](mailto:edh@cted.wa.gov).

### ***Five Years (continued)***

developmental disabilities more independence.”

The first private contributions to the DDLOT were made in July 2002, with the opening of 16 trusts. Since those first trusts five years ago, a total of 907 trusts have been opened, a number that is very close to the matching capacity of 1,000 trusts.

In 2008, the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) will be asking the Governor and state Legislature for an additional \$5 million to expand the DDLOT program beyond the original 1,000

trusts. The DDC will also be forming the DD Life Opportunities Trust Foundation, a 501-C-3 charitable foundation, to allow for additional contributions from both the private sector and the philanthropic world.

For many individuals, families and advocates across Washington the DDLOT provides much more than just a contribution match. Peace of mind, security, independence, these are just some of the things that the DDLOT has been able to provide for hundreds of families across Washington