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## Partnerships of Choice, Olmstead Action

**By Bob Williams, Deputy Commissioner, Administration on Disabilities  
Director, Independent Living Administration**

Seventeen years ago today, the Supreme Court decided in *Olmstead v. L.C. (Olmstead)* that under the Americans with Disabilities Act, people with disabilities cannot be unnecessarily segregated and must receive services in the most integrated setting possible. This landmark decision is at the core of ACL's mission and has caused a shift in funding, policy, and attitudes toward community living that has improved the quality of countless lives of people with disabilities and older adults.

In 2015, the [Workforce Investment and Opportunities Act \(WIOA\)](#) took another step toward codifying the spirit of *Olmstead*, adding transitions as a fifth "core service" provided by Centers for Independent Living. CILs know better than anyone how important transition services are. But in a time of limited resources, the increased expectations that accompany a mission expansion can seem daunting.

We have to remember that supporting transition is not really new for all of us. Empowering people with disabilities to live in the community and assisting youth in making the transition from school to adulthood have been the heart and soul of the independent living movement. WIOA makes the importance of this work explicit.

So how do we do it? One of the most exciting ways we can enhance the capacity of the IL networks, and provide the fifth core service within the limits of existing resources, is to expand the partnerships and collaboration with organizations outside of the traditional IL networks.

Some, if not many, CILs have already begun building these relationships. We can all share experiences and best practices and learn from each other's successes and setbacks.

[Read my full blog](#) and learn about a few examples of how partnerships can help Centers for Independent Living and State Independent Living Councils do what they do best: empower people with disabilities to take charge of our futures, with the services and supports we need to live our lives to the fullest.

We want to learn from and share your partnership successes, too. Share your stories [here](#). Thanks for all you do to make the promise of *Olmstead* real for people with disabilities of all ages!

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