Disability Services Center (DSC)
JBS INTERNATIONAL, INC.
A women-owned business with nearly 30 years of experience and offices in North Bethesda, MD, and Burlingame, CA, JBS has a diverse client portfolio that includes private industries, nonprofits, and federal and state governments. For more than a quarter century, our work has brought us around the world and to every state, territory, and tribe in the United States. We offer our clients not only an understanding of public health issues, but also broad expertise in the political, financial, structural, and cultural dynamics in which public health programs are implemented. Our work includes technology services, research and evaluation, clearinghouses and call centers, technical assistance and training/capacity building, program development and management, policy analysis, and communications services. JBS ensures that all products are fully accessible to target audiences and meet 508 compliance standards. JBS welcomes new challenges and looks forward to working with current and new partners.

DISABILITY SERVICES CENTER
The Disability Services Center (DSC) continuously identifies and investigates disparities and services gaps for individuals with brain injury and cognitive impairment. DSC is committed to turning ideas into action and enhancing system change to improve the long-term, rehabilitation outcomes and community integration of individuals with brain injury and cognitive impairment. The Center identifies effective approaches to meeting individuals’ unmet needs and tests and implements evidence-based and best practice solutions. Addressing the health issues of returning service members, including their behavioral health and rehabilitation needs, has been an important part of our portfolio.

The JBS DSC is led by Senior Policy Advisor Eileen Elias, MEd. Ms. Elias has more than 40 years of experience as a public health disability-based policy leader, manager, analyst, planner, trainer, and educator serving individuals with special needs, including those with brain injury. She has served as the Deputy Director of the Office on Disability at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Commissioner of Mental Health for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and Senior Policy Analyst for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
DISABILITY SERVICES CENTER IMPROVING THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BRAIN INJURY AND COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT THROUGH:

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

We believe in forming collaborations and partnerships that bring together individuals from different disciplines and with different perspectives to improve the quality of services, the service delivery, and the long-term outcomes of individuals with cognitive disorders. The DSC partners with many organizations to advance knowledge, promote understanding, and improve services.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

TBI-ROC

Traumatic Brain Injury-Resource Optimization Center

JBS has created the Traumatic Brain Injury-Resource Optimization Center (TBI-ROC), a rapidly evolving resource of coordinated public and private expert collaboration on TBI rehabilitation. The mission of the TBI-ROC is to support individuals with traumatic brain injuries—civilians and retuning military service members—and their families and caregivers in addressing the gaps in rehabilitation services across the lifespan. The TBI-ROC is guided by an Advisory Group of interdisciplinary experts whose diversity encompasses the complexity of TBI issues. These experts represent researchers, consumers and advocates, frontline service providers, payers, trade organizations, and returning service members, their family members, and their caregivers.

Collaboration With the National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health at Georgetown University

JBS DSC works closely with the National Technical Assistance Center on a variety of projects to address the needs of children and youth with serious emotional disorders. This partnership helps support child-serving systems in building capacity for trauma-informed care. Details on these projects are provided in the following sections.

Other Partnerships

Examples of other partners include:

- Beneficial Designs, Inc.
- Boston University’s Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
- Brain Injury Services
• Centre for Neuro Skill
• Easter Seals
• Frazier Rehab Institute
• Georgetown University’s National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health
• Innovations Institute at University of Maryland
• Institute for Matching Persons with Technology
• Kent State University
• Lakeview Neurorehabilitation Center
• Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers, Inc.
• Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine at NYU Langone Medical Center
• TIRR Memorial Hermann
• University of California, Santa Barbara
• University of Oregon
• West Virginia University

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, JBS continuously assesses unmet needs for individuals with brain injury and cognitive disorders and develops projects and initiatives to close services gaps and meet those needs.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVES

HealthNAV

In collaboration with the TBI-ROC Advisory Group, JBS developed HealthNAV, a Web-based tool for individuals with cognitive disorders of all ages, family members, caregivers, and healthcare providers. HealthNAV identifies individually tailored and geographically defined services that support individuals with emotional/psychiatric needs, substance use problems, brain injuries, posttraumatic stress disorders, chronic medical and other acquired conditions, and disabilities. HealthNAV empowers the user by locating healthcare services according to the individual’s stage in the continuum of care, family and caregiver needs, and location. Service options are based on service accreditation/certification and adherence to evidence-based/promising practices.
Moreover, HealthNAV helps the user understand and apply accessed information and identifies federal- and state-based public- and private-payer information.

**Project Career**

Development of an Interprofessional Demonstration to Support the Transition of Students with Traumatic Brain Injuries from Postsecondary Education to Employment (National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research [NIDRR], H133A130066). The incidence of TBI is high among young adults. Although they may recover some functions, individuals with TBI often experience long-term cognitive impairments, such as deficits with short-term memory, that lead to barriers in gaining and maintaining employment. Best practices exist from the assistive technology field to help individuals with TBI compensate for cognitive impairments and from the vocational rehabilitation field to enhance employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. However, these practices have not been merged to address the needs of individuals with TBI transitioning from undergraduate settings to employment.

In collaboration with Boston University, Kent State University, and West Virginia University, JBS DSC has developed an interdisciplinary program that merges assistive technology and vocational rehabilitation best practices to help postsecondary students with TBI, including returning service members, transition to employment. Project Career is funded through a 5-year development grant from NIDRR. From 2013 to 2018, Project Career will develop, pilot test, and refine services that support at least 150 civilians and veterans with TBI. The project uses iPads to provide services, including cognitive support technology, electronic mentoring, case management, and follow-along support, to maximize students’ career readiness and help them transition to employment settings. Additional services include field-based internship placements and support for postgraduation job placement.

Through the use of state-of-the-art technology and proven best practices in vocational rehabilitation, this innovative method of academic enrichment and career enhancement will substantially improve the bleak employment outcomes that presently await civilians and veterans with TBI following the completion of their academic training. The end product of Project Career will be a compendium of technology application guidelines, training materials, procedural manuals, and resource information that rehabilitation professionals and consumers can use to promote technological proficiency, academic success, self-determination, and long-term career success for Americans with TBI.
**E-STEAM**

Development of a Web-Based Tool for the Electronic Selection Training Evaluation App Management of Mobile Apps for Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities

In partnership with the University of Oregon, JBS has submitted a proposal for a 5-year project that seeks to develop a comprehensive one-stop Web-based tool—E-STEAM—that will allow individuals with cognitive disorders, family members/caregivers, and rehabilitation professionals to efficiently review apps and select those that can help compensate for specific cognitive impairments and that are well matched to an individual's needs, capabilities, and preferences.

**Iraq Telementoring for TBI**

JBS Co-CEO Jerri Shaw and Ms. Elias were invited by the Iraqi Ministry of Health to Baghdad in November 2012 to support the Ministry's strategic planning meeting on addressing TBI in Iraq. The meeting brought together more than 50 male and female Iraqi medical and public health experts representing psychiatry, psychology, social work, trauma, rehabilitation, neurology, neuroscience, dentistry, emergency room, primary care, technology, and allied health (occupational therapy).

Meeting participants developed a strategic plan to build partnerships between Baghdad University and U.S. academic institutions to implement a telementoring or electronic approach to improving Iraq's primary care clinicians' expertise in assessing and treating patients with TBI. Given current conflicts throughout Iraq, electronic learning approaches are the recommended mechanisms to safely bring together the U.S. academic educators and Iraqi medical participants.

This proposal is contingent on obtaining funding for building the technological infrastructure and medical expertise necessary to support TBI medical education and continued learning. Partnerships with U.S. academic medical centers and funding from the U.S. private sector are needed to serve as necessary catalysts.
Trauma-Informed Resource Tool

Many resources are necessary to build trauma-informed child-serving systems. The National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at Georgetown University and JBS are creating a Web-based trauma-informed resource tool to support leaders in taking steps to build trauma-informed systems in their states. This tool will be used by practitioners, the advocacy community, and family members/consumers.

The tool will include videos with interviews of state officials, national leaders, developers of evidence-based treatments, and researchers. Insights and lessons learned from eight states that participated in the Alternatives to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF) demonstration will also be provided. Authorized by Congress in 2005, the 5-year demonstration tested whether children and youth with serious emotional disorders who met requirements to be served in a PRTF could successfully and cost effectively be served in the community. Interviews of participants in these states document the developmental process of becoming increasingly informed by trauma issues. Providers, family members, administrators, legislators, and researchers share their insights into building trauma-informed practices and systems. Children, youth, and their families provide client perspectives on the need for trauma-informed practices and the impact of trauma-informed care on their lives. Conducted over 18 months, the interviews capture the initial stages of implementation and lessons learned during the yearlong implementation.

In addition to the video interviews, the tool will include white papers that provide insight into trauma-related topics (e.g., impact of trauma, trauma-informed care, evidence-based treatments, fiscal impact and benefits) as well as resources and links to support leaders in building trauma-informed systems and organizations from a national to a local level. The tool will be available by August 2014.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Through comprehensive technical assistance and training, JBS works with clients to build internal capacity. Strengthened capacity supports efforts to help people run better, more efficient programs, build essential skills, reach personal and professional goals, and achieve organizational sustainability.
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS

PRTF Medicaid Waiver Initiative

In 2005, Congress authorized a five-year Demonstration project to test whether children/youth with serious emotional disorders who meet requirements to be served in a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF) could successfully and cost effectively be served in the community. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services selected 10 states (Alaska, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, South Carolina, and Virginia) to participate in this 5-year PRTF demonstration. The participating states used a 1915(c) waiver, enabling them to use Medicaid waiver authority to serve this population. JBS and Georgetown University’s National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health work in partnership in providing technical assistance (TA) to help states, tribes, and communities increase their capacity to offer effective and intensive community-based behavioral health services for children and families. The TA is provided through a series of interventions including white papers, individualized assistance, Webinars and use of video case studies.

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Rebalancing Medicaid Demonstration Program

The MFP TA is provided to support states in completing each of their project requirements and to help them transition post the grantee time period, to other Medicaid waiver programs, such as the 1915i/state plan amendment. JBS works with the Medicaid MFP contractor, New Editions, to address the behavioral health needs of youth in transition, adults and older adults with a disability as they transition from institutional long term care to community based care. The TA is provided with individual grantees and through Webinars to all MFP state grantees.

RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

The DSC regularly partners with institutions that are research implementation sites to provide research and program evaluation for the institutions’ research activities. Given that the DSC is not an implementation site for research projects, it has no direct benefits from project activities and, thus, controls for conflict of interest. We therefore deliver objective analyses and evaluations of assessment data. We obtain meaningful data with methodologically robust studies that withstand critical review, and we achieve this under rigorous deadlines, budget limits, and contracting standards. Our in-house senior researchers are highly regarded and have earned solid reputations for their skills in conducting studies that include ethnically, economically, and socially diverse populations.
RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECTS

Project Career

Project Career: Development of an Interprofessional Demonstration to Support the Transition of Students with Traumatic Brain Injuries from Postsecondary Education to Employment (NIDRR, H133A130066), Evaluation of Development Activities and Impact In collaboration with Boston University, Kent State University, and West Virginia University, JBS was awarded a 5-year grant to develop, pilot test, and refine a cadre of sequenced cognitive and vocational services and supports to 150 civilian and veteran students with TBI to improve their transition to employment settings.

JBS DSC developed and manages the project’s evaluation plan to ensure continuous quality improvement of usefulness, appropriateness, and accessibility of all project activities. Evaluations consist of formative evaluations to assess whether activities were implemented as planned and meet the needs of student participants with TBI and summative evaluations to determine whether activities have an impact on students with TBI. To obtain the relevant data, JBS has identified validated assessment instruments and has created surveys and structured interviews to collect the information and databases to securely store the data. In addition, JBS is responsible for analyzing the data, generating evaluation reports, and disseminating them to all project partners, project stakeholders, and members of the project’s national Advisory Board.

PRTF Waiver Initiative—Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analyses

JBS DSC is providing support to the research team at the National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health at Georgetown University for secondary analyses of a large data set from a national Community Alternatives to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) Waiver initiative. The JBS–Georgetown partnership was developed under the direction of Ms. Elias. Over 5 years, the PRTF waiver demonstration states have collected an array of data on child and family characteristics including diagnostic information, services received, clinical and functional outcomes, and the Wraparound Fidelity Index for more than 5,000 youth enrolled in programs in 9 states. JBS and Georgetown completed video interviews of youth, families, services providers, and local and state officials participating in the initiative; these interviews provided extensive qualitative data. In addition, JBS and Georgetown are conducting qualitative and quantitative data analyses to assess the effectiveness of providing services for children and youth with serious emotional disorders in the community and to gather information on lessons learned, outcomes, and accomplishments. The data analyses and reports will be completed by September 2014.
DEVELOPMENT OF WHITE PAPERS AND JOURNAL ARTICLES

A major focus of DSC is to develop and disseminate information that raises awareness, educates stakeholders, and ultimately improves lives of individuals with brain injury and cognitive impairment.

Sample White Papers and Journal Articles

The Family and Caregiver’s Guide to Traumatic Brain Injury, Monograph

In collaboration with key experts of the TBI-ROC Advisory Group, DSC developed a set of TBI articles that were published in Exceptional Parent Magazine and serve as a monograph on how to treat a TBI, how to overcome obstacles to receiving treatment, and how to care for an individual with a TBI. The monograph provides valuable information on major issues regarding TBI treatment and rehabilitation that is relevant to civilian and military family members, caregivers, community educators, students, rehabilitation and medical specialists, employers, and others who are supporting a person with a TBI. It focuses on family-centered care that specifically targets individuals with TBI.

Improving Awareness and Treatment of Children With Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and Co-Occurring Psychiatric Disorders

This white paper was supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Community Alternatives to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs) grant demonstration. The aims of this paper are to increase the understanding of children and youth with co-occurring emotional/psychiatric disturbances and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) and to raise awareness of the unique diagnostic challenges and treatment needs of these children and youth. Robust studies of evidence-based interventions for this population are lacking. This white paper highlights both the lack of such studies and the pressing need for specialized interventions that can address the challenges faced by children with psychiatric disorders within the FASD population.

The paper addresses the following topic areas:

- Understanding the history and experience of children with FASD and psychiatric disorders, including those treated in PRTFs and other psychiatric institutions
• Understanding the current state of research into psychiatric conditions that co-occur with FASD in children and proposed interventions
• Understanding the importance of accurately diagnosing children with FASD and co-occurring psychiatric disorders so that they can be treated appropriately
• Recommendations to help children with FASD and co-occurring psychiatric disorders achieve their optimal functional status.

Post-Acute Rehabilitation of Adults With TBI in the United States: Barriers to Receiving Services

Recovery from TBI is a lifelong process requiring individuals with TBI to have access to a comprehensive continuum of care, ranging from acute care to post-acute rehabilitation, including community-based services to maximize biopsychosocial functioning. However, it is unclear whether and to what extent individuals with TBI can receive needed post-acute rehabilitation services. JBS conducted a literature review to determine which post-acute services individuals with TBI receive, to what extent these services meet individual needs, and what factors create barriers to receiving needed post-acute rehabilitation services. Results show that barriers to receiving needed services are related to financial, structural, individual, and attitudinal factors. The paper is currently under revision for publication.

Trauma-Informed Resource Tool, White Papers

Becoming trauma-informed is a challenging process, and many resources are necessary to build trauma-informed child-serving systems. The National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health at Georgetown University and JBS is creating a Web-based trauma-informed resource tool to support leaders in taking steps to build trauma-informed systems in their states. The tool will be of use to leaders across all child-serving systems, practitioners, the advocacy community, and family members/consumers. It will include white papers that provide insight into trauma-related topics (e.g., impact of trauma, trauma-informed care, evidence-based treatments, fiscal impact and benefits) to educate leaders, providers, and family members about trauma, the importance of trauma-informed systems and organizations, and the important factors to consider for building capacity for trauma-informed systems and organizations.

Additional Papers in Development

JBS is conducting systematic literature reviews to assess the epidemiology of TBI worldwide and the effectiveness of assistive technologies for cognition.
Contact Information

Eileen Elias, M.Ed.
Director, Disability Services Center
Senior Policy Advisor for Disability and Mental Health

JBS International, Inc.
5515 Security Lane, Suite 800
North Bethesda, Maryland 20852
240.645.4534
eelias@jbsinternational.com