

# EMPLOYMENT DATA BRIEF

## 2014-2015

### A CLOSER LOOK AT EMPLOYMENT IN ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES USING THE ADULT CONSUMER SURVEY

The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) uses tools developed as part of the National Core Indicators (NCI) to evaluate the quality of Regional Center services. This data brief summarizes findings relating to employment in the 8,405 people who took the NCI Adult Consumer Survey (ACS) in the 2014-15 fiscal year.

#### 2014-15 California and National Employment Rates in Populations with Developmental Disabilities



12.2%

California

17.0%

Nationally<sup>1</sup>

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Employment rates for individuals with developmental disabilities are lower than those found in the general population<sup>2</sup>. In fiscal year 2014-15, the employment rate for individuals with developmental disabilities in California was 4.8% lower than at the national level<sup>1</sup>. This brief outlines the characteristics of employed individuals in California, which may facilitate a better understanding of these differences.

<sup>1</sup> Reflects NCI national average, which includes 46 states. In California, the working age for individuals with DD is 22-55; at the national level it is 18 and over. <sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of 12/2016

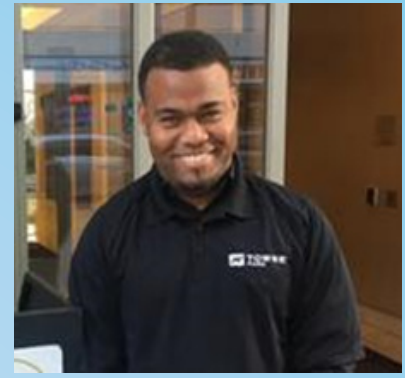
# Department of Developmental Services Projects and Policies



**The National Core Indicators (NCI) Project** is a set of surveys selected by DDS in 2009 to monitor California's developmental disabilities service system and assess quality and performance among regional centers. NCI surveys are developed by the Human Services Research Institute, and include both mailed and in-person surveys.



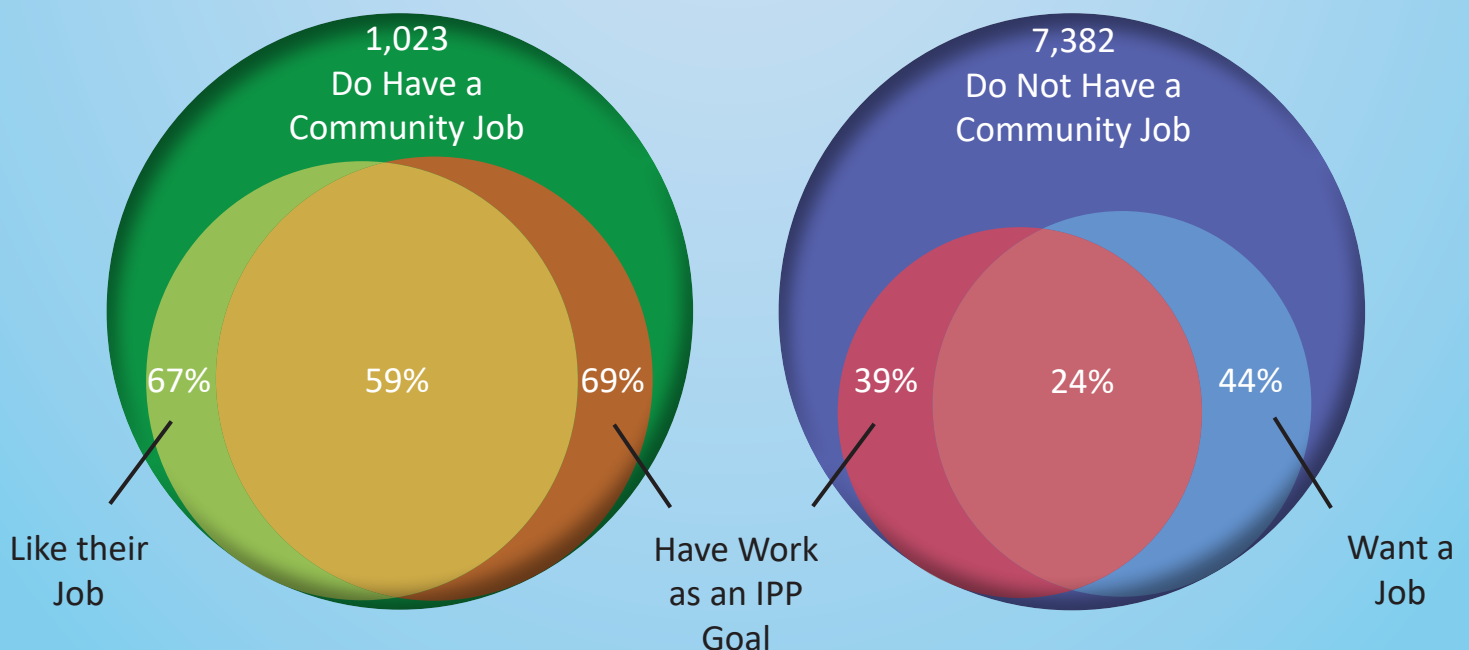
**California's Employment First Policy** was passed in 2013. The policy mandates that opportunities for competitive integrated employment are given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities.



**California Competitive Integrated Employment: Blueprint for Change** is an agreement between the Departments of Rehabilitation, Education, and Developmental Services. The agreement builds on California's Employment First policy, to increase opportunities for Californians with developmental disabilities to prepare for and participate in competitive integrated employment.

## Employment as a Goal: A Possible First Step

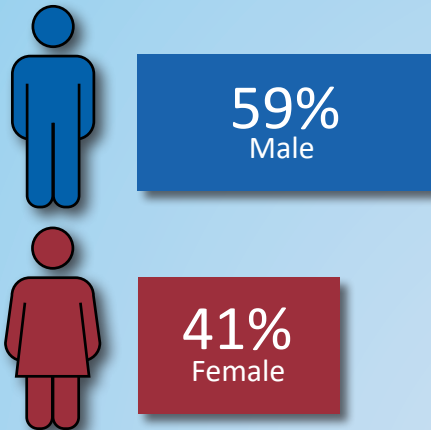
Having work as a goal in the Individual Program Plan (IPP) may be an important first step on the path to a community job. Of the 8,405 people who took the ACS in FY 2014-15, 1,023 (12%) were employed in the community. Of those with a job, 69% had work as a goal in their IPP. In contrast, among people who did not have a job, 39% had work as a goal in their IPP. In addition, more people who didn't have a job reported wanting a job (44%) than those who had work as a goal in their IPP.



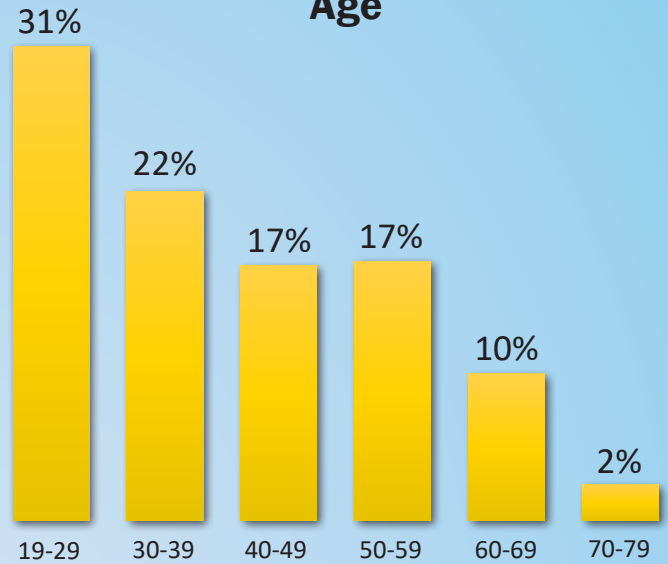
# Demographics

Individuals with developmental disabilities who were employed in the community were mostly male, under the age of 40, had an explicit means of communication (more than gestures or body language), and were in good to excellent health.

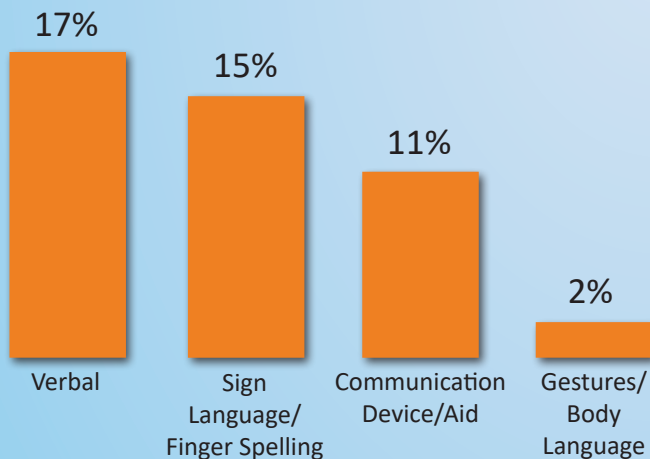
## Gender



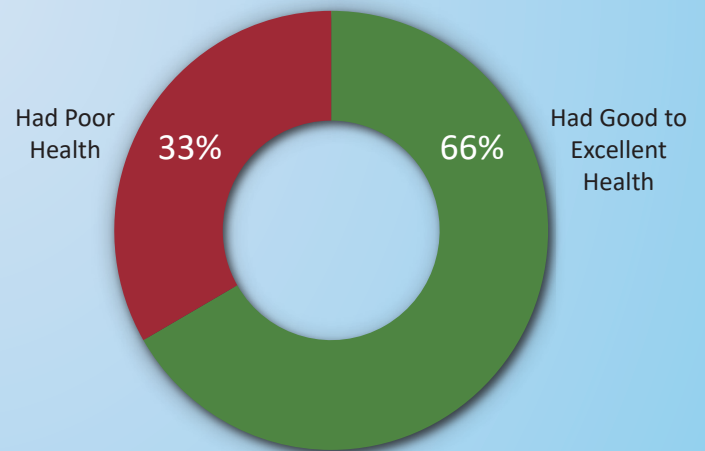
## Age



## Communication



## Health



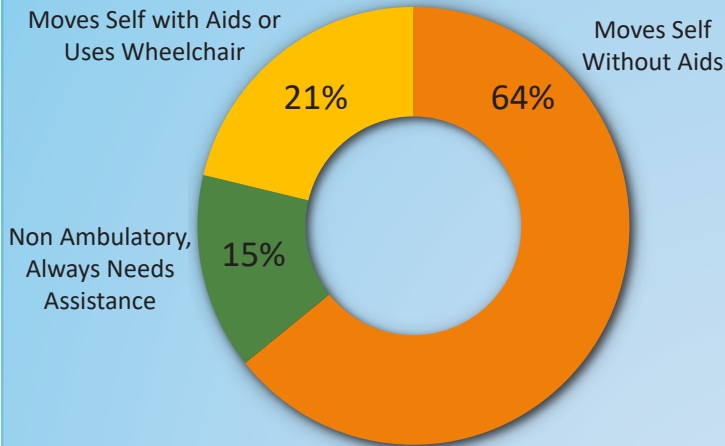
## Summary of Key Findings

- Males were employed in the community at a higher rate than females.
- Individuals under age 40 were more likely to work in the community. As age increased, rate of employment in the community decreased.
- Individuals who used gestures or body language as their preferred means of communication had a lower rate of employment than those who used other forms of communication.
- Individuals in good to excellent health were employed at double the rate of those in poor health.

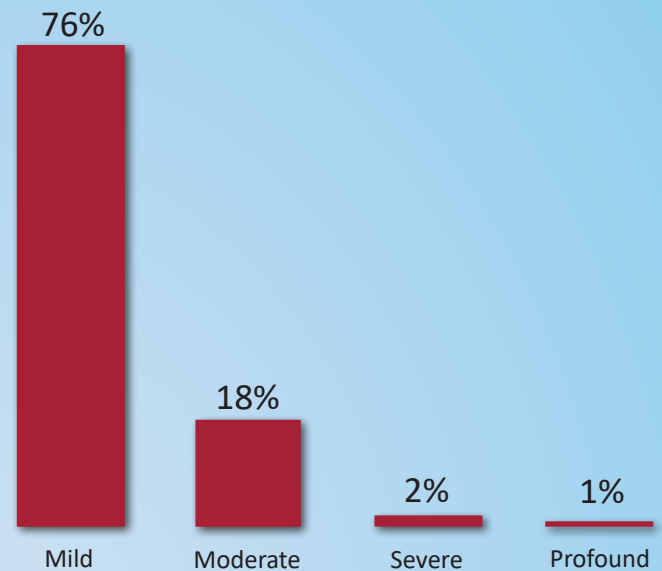
# Demographics

Individuals with developmental disabilities who were employed in the community were mostly independently mobile, had mild intellectual disability, and had two or fewer diagnoses in addition to intellectual disability.

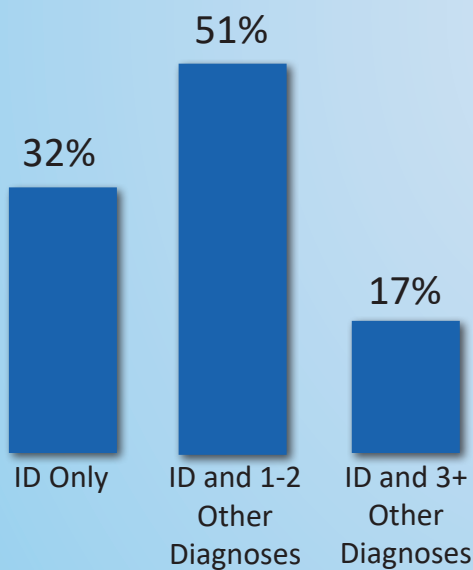
## Mobility



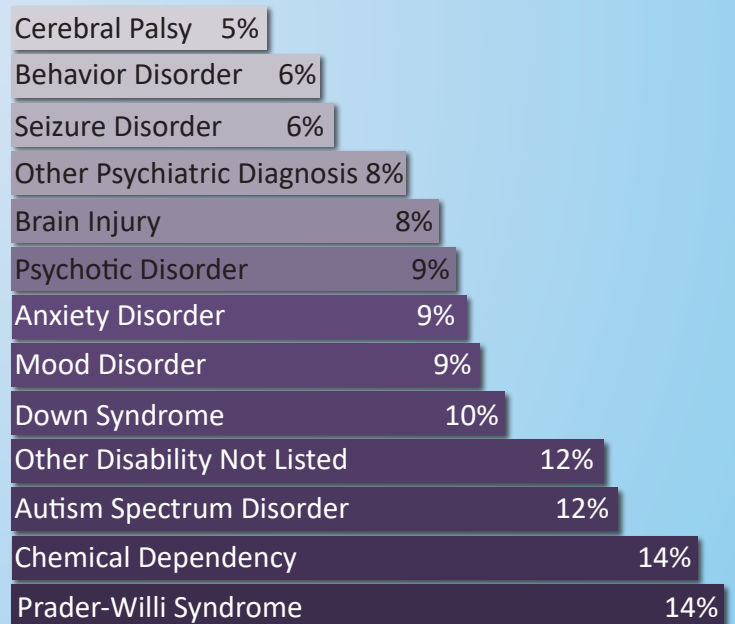
## Intellectual Disability



## Number of Diagnoses



## Type of Diagnosis\*



## Summary of Key Findings

- Individuals who moved independently without aids were employed at a higher rate than those who required the help of aides or were non-ambulatory.
- Individuals with mild intellectual disability had the highest rate of community employment. As level of intellectual disability increased, rate of employment decreased.
- Individuals with two or fewer diagnoses other than intellectual disability were more likely to be employed.
- Individuals with chemical dependency, Prader-will syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, or an other disability not listed had the highest rates of employment.

\*Diagnostic categories are not mutually exclusive (individuals may have more than one diagnosis). Categories add up to greater than 100%



# Types of Community Employment



35%  
Building and Grounds  
Keeping or Maintenance



21%  
Retail



15%  
Food Preparation  
or Food Service



12%  
Other



6%  
Assembly, Manufac-  
turing, or Packaging



4%  
General Office and  
Administrative Support



3%  
Material Handling,  
Mail Distribution



1.5%  
Self-employed



1.5%  
Personal Care  
Provider



0.4%  
Management, Business,  
or Financial Operations



0.4%  
Professional or  
Technical



0.3%  
Fishing, Farming,  
or Forestry



0.3%  
Construction or Repair



Nicole is employed in a competitive integrated setting providing animal care services at Mohnacky Animal Hospital. Nicole feeds and walks the animals at the hospital, prepares them for surgeries, and monitors their recovery, including those in critical condition. She has worked at her job for nearly one year, works full time, and receives above minimum wage. When asked about her job, she responded "I get paid to do what I am passionate about!"



Merrell is employed as a legislative assistant intern at the California State Capitol in Sacramento. His advice: "Be willing to try out a good job. Even though it might be a challenging job that you don't like at first, you might actually like it later. Don't give up."

## Summary of Key Findings

- The majority of employed individuals worked in building and grounds cleaning or maintenance (358 people), retail (218 people), or food preparation and food service (150 people).
- Few individuals were employed in construction or repair (3 people), farming, fishing or forestry work (3 people), or management, business, or financial operations (4 people).



Average hours worked in the community in a 2-week period

People with developmental disabilities benefit from integrated community employment in more ways than just earned income<sup>1,2</sup>

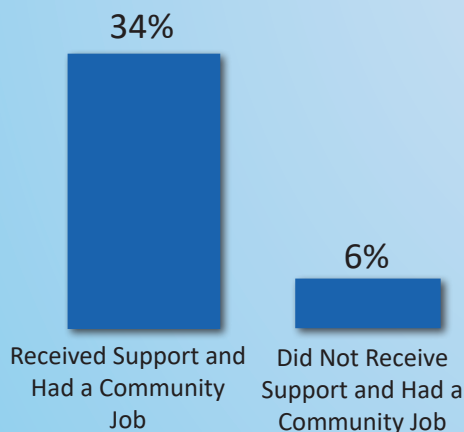
*Builds self-esteem*  
*Increases quality of life*  
*Increases feelings of independence*  
*Provides structure*  
*Expands socialization opportunities*  
*Increases feelings of social belonging*  
*Develops new skills and enhances existing skills*

## Services and Supports:

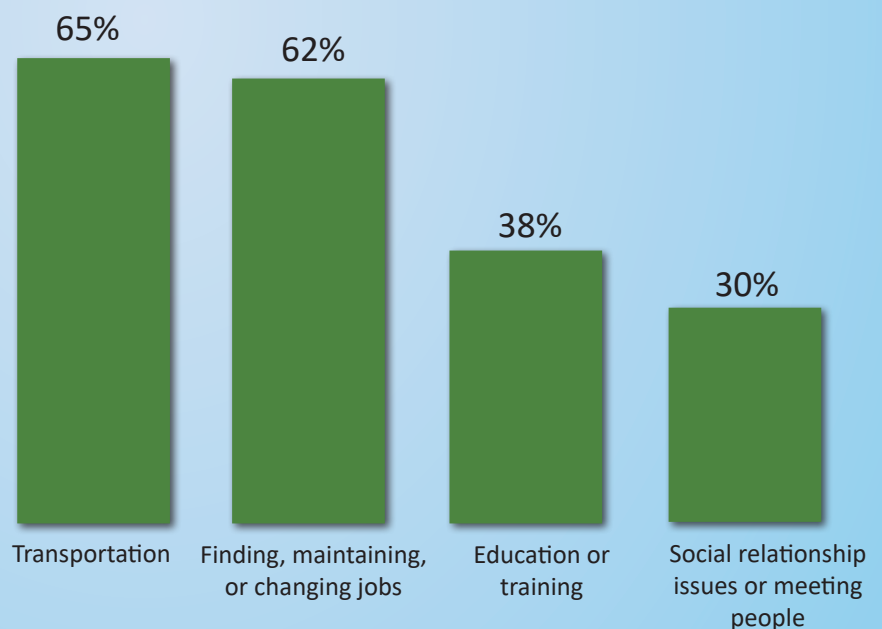
### Another Step Towards Competitive Integrated Employment

Individuals who received supports or services were more likely to have a community job. More than half of the 1,023 individuals who had community employment received supports for transportation or for finding, maintaining, or changing jobs. Fewer receive supports or services for education or training and for social relationship issues or meeting people.

#### Employed Individuals Receiving Support



#### Type of Support Received by Employed Individuals



## Summary of Key Findings

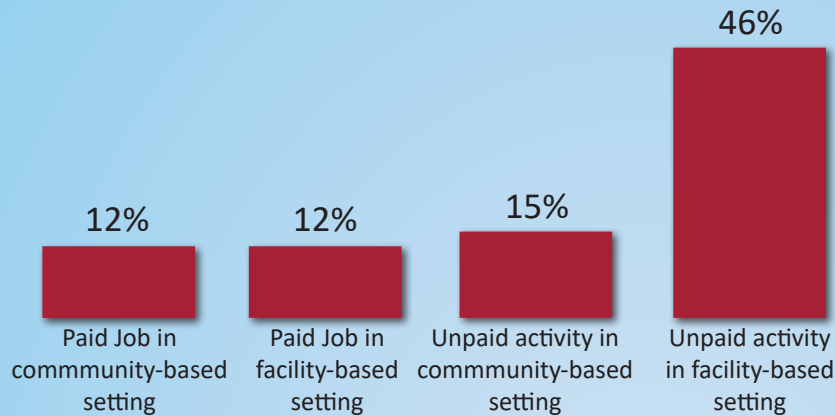
- Among individuals who received services and supports for finding, maintaining, or changing jobs, 34% were employed in the community. Among individuals who did not receive these supports and services, only 6% were employed in the community.
- 65% of individuals with community employment received assistance with transportation and 62% received assistance with finding, maintaining, or changing jobs. 38% received assistance with education or training, and 30% received assistance with social relationship issues or meeting people.

<sup>1</sup>Stephens, Collins, & Dodder (2005). A longitudinal study of employment and skill acquisition among individuals with developmental disabilities. *Research in developmental disabilities*, 26(5), 469-486.  
<sup>2</sup>Kober & Eggleton (2005). The effect of different types of employment on quality of life. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 49(10), 756-760.

## Other Daily Activities

There are other types of work experiences that individuals with developmental disabilities participate in such as paid activities in facility-based settings and unpaid activities in community or facility settings. The greatest proportion of individuals participated in unpaid activities in facility-based settings.

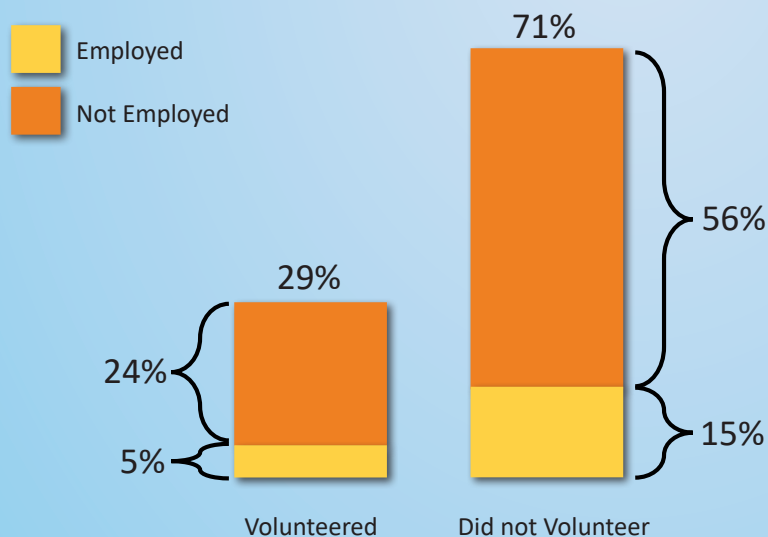
### Jobs & Activities by Setting



Karla had volunteer experience at a food bank that helped her solidify her skills and prepare for her current job as a packer at Bi-Rite Market.

## Volunteering & Employment

Volunteering can be a useful part of an individual's journey towards employment, as it can help individuals to build work skills and explore job interests. It is also a valuable way to contribute to a local community and build community relationships. Over one quarter of individuals volunteered, most of whom were not employed.



Candice had multiple volunteering experiences which helped to prepare her for her current job as a courtesy clerk associate at Sprouts Farmers Market.

## Summary of Key Findings

- The greatest proportion of individuals participated in unpaid activities in facility-based settings (46%). Relatively fewer individuals participated in unpaid activities (15%) or had a paid job (12%) in the community.
- Over one-quarter of individuals (29%) volunteered.
- The majority of individuals (56%) were not employed and did not volunteer. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of individuals were not employed but did volunteer.