

OSNT Quarterly

Achieve with us.

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Hello Everyone, and Happy Summer!

Hot off the presses this month - the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE Act) has been approved by both the Oregon House and Senate and is waiting to be signed into Oregon law by Governor Brown. In this issue of the OSNT Quarterly, I will explain a little more about the newly proposed IRS guidelines that have been published and what it means for Oregonians with disabilities who have been patiently awaiting this new savings option.

In other big news, the OSNT Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey has been deployed and we are eagerly awaiting your responses. Not everyone was mailed a paper survey so be sure to read more about how to participate on the back page.

Also in this issue, some new tools are introduced in order to make it a little easier to request disbursements and get information released for benefit certifications. We are always trying to think of new ways to make your experience with the OSNT as easy as possible and we welcome your ideas and feedback in order to make that happen.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need assistance related to your account at the OSNT. I am here to help!



Paula
Program Director

Paula

ONLINE ACCESS Q&A

Q I have logged into my account online, now what do I do?

A If you have access to only one account, you will immediately see a screen that shows your account number and asks for input of Starting Date and Ending Date. Just type in the dates for which you would like to view account transactions and then click the View Statement button.

If you have access to multiple accounts, the first screen you see will show a list of all accounts for which you have access. Click on the account that you would like to view and follow the instructions above for viewing transactions.

Q I was never prompted to change my temporary password the first time I accessed my account online, how do I change my password?

A It is very important that you change your password to something that you will remember, and that you not use the temporary password that was sent to you for initial set up. For a little while, there was a glitch in our database system and new users were not being prompted to change temporary passwords. If that happened to you, please change your password next time you access your account by clicking the Change E-Mail or Password button before logging in.

Change E-Mail or Password

You may change your email the same way. If you change your email address using this button, your email information will also be changed in the OSNT records and we will automatically receive your new information.

Q & A

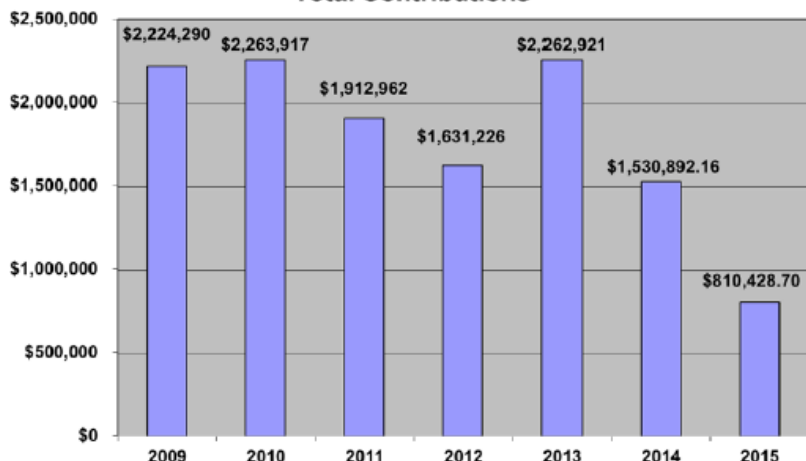
Investment Performance: 2nd Quarter - 2015

OREGON SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST

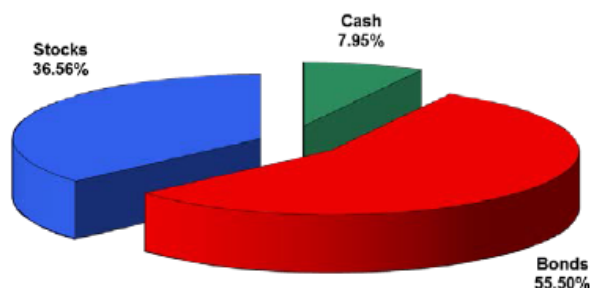
Performance Results for the Period Ending June 30, 2015

The Oregon Special Needs Trust seeks to achieve a rate of current income necessary to meet the needs of the Trust beneficiaries.

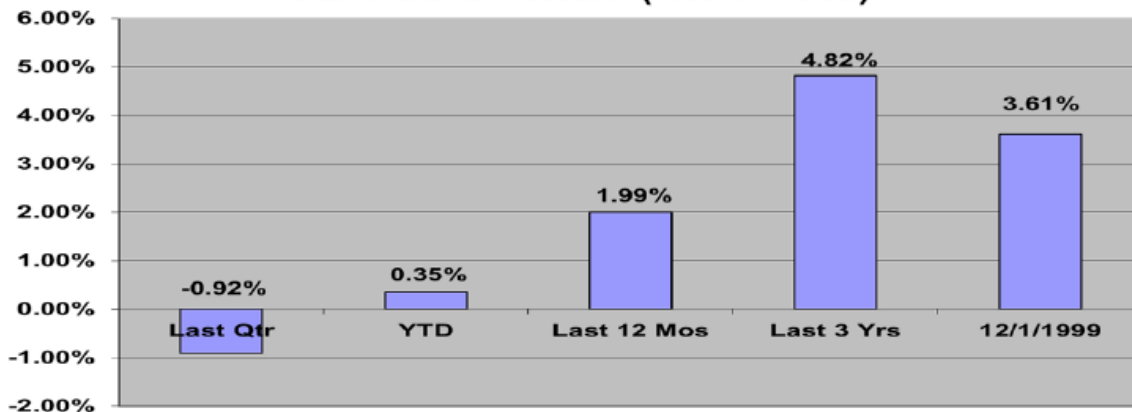
Total Contributions



Portfolio Composition



Total Rate of Return (Net of Fees)



Disclaimer: Returns shown represent the results of the Oregon Special Needs Trust managed by HighMark Capital Management, a subsidiary of Union Bank, NA. Historic performance is no guarantee of future results. Proceeds upon redemption may be either less than or greater than the original investment. There is no guarantee that this or any investment strategy will achieve its investment objective. Investments are not guaranteed by Union Bank, NA and are not insured by the FDIC or any other government agency.

A REUNION . . . PLUS

In elementary school, Brian became friends with a classmate. Nir's family was visiting from the Middle East. Our families became acquainted with one another. We took trips, shared child care, ate together and were friends and kept in touch. We visited them several years after they had returned to their country, taking part in a special ceremony for Nir's thirteenth birthday. Last year, when Brian's friend, now grown up, took a job in Vancouver BC, the connection was re-established. What a reunion there was in June as we met! He really wanted to see his friend again.

During the same trip, Brian was able to see his sister finish the Ironman 70.3 in Victoria. He had kept up with her progress as she trained for this major event.

We have found that the OSNT, administered by The Arc of Oregon, has given our son a chance to take vacations with us, make independent purchases and join in life with classes, which would not be possible if he were to fund his activities solely with his SSDI payments—his only source of income. This special needs trust has allowed him years of appropriate benefits and, at the same time, the chance to engage in these activities.

Three cheers for vacation distributions from his OSNT account!



Brian & Nir Reunited!

---- Susan & John Watson, Corvallis, Oregon

ABLE ACT

ABLE ACT APPROVED IN OREGON!

As reported in the last edition of the OSNT Quarterly, the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act creates a new section of IRS tax code to establish tax-favored accounts, allowing individuals with disabilities to obtain a savings account without jeopardizing eligibility for means-tested public benefits.

Earlier this month, both the Oregon House of Representatives and the Oregon Senate passed the bill with flying colors! The bill was sent to Governor Brown, and as this newsletter goes to print, it is awaiting her signature. Upon approval by the Governor, the State Treasurer's office will move forward with hiring staff in order to develop the new ABLE Act program for Oregon. ABLE accounts are to be made available to the public no later than January 1, 2017.

While the Oregon legislature was busy enacting the new law here in Oregon, the IRS was also busy preparing proposed guidelines for the administration of ABLE accounts. Some of the proposed regulations have caused some concern about how the states will be able to comply. For example, the IRS has indicated that it will be the responsibility of the State to verify that distributions made from an ABLE account are "qualified disability expenses" and to report that information to the federal government. This was not something that had been expected because in a regular 529 College Savings account, it is up to the account owner to prove that distributions are made for qualified college expenses.

The proposed regulations also address numerous other issues that were previously unclear, including the following: the relationship of a person with signature authority and the designated beneficiary of the account; qualifications for eligibility; status of an ABLE account when person is no longer disabled; who can establish an account on behalf of a designated beneficiary; potential penalties; and qualified expenses. The proposed IRS regulations are currently open for public comment through September 21, 2015, and a public hearing has been scheduled for October 14, 2015. The Arc of the United States, and other advocates will be analyzing the proposed regulations in preparation for submitting comments.

It will be interesting to see if some of the more controversial rules make the final cut. In the meantime, Oregon will be moving forward with its plans to implement the ABLE Act by the January 1, 2017, deadline and we will continue to keep you informed on the progress.

NEW DISBURSEMENT REQUEST EMAIL BOX

disbursements@thearcoregon.org

Did you know that there is a special email address for disbursement requests? In order to streamline our process and to make sure that disbursements can be processed in a timely manner even when a staff member is out of the office, we have set up this special email box (disbursements@thearcoregon.org) for all disbursement requests. By using this email address to submit your requests, multiple staff members are able to assist you if you call to confirm that the request has been received.



GLOBAL RELEASE OF INFORMATION FOR BENEFIT RECERTIFICATION

We often get calls from various contacts asking us to send trust documentation to a government agency for purposes of benefit recertification. Often times, the person who is calling is not authorized to request the information. Sometimes, we get a call directly from the agencies but we cannot release the information without expressed permission from an authorized person on the account.

In an effort to improve the process for benefit recertification, and to avoid multiple phone calls and forms, we have developed a special *Authorization For Disclosure of Financial Information* form. This new form can be downloaded from our website by going to the Forms and Documents page from the Trust Client Services drop down menu at the top of the home page. In the Enrollment Documents list, click on "*Benefit Re-certification Release of Information*". By completing and submitting this form, we will be able to provide whatever information is needed to whatever agencies you are working with for benefit re-certification.

NEW TOOLS



CONTACT US:

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Watch for the next issue in
October for the results of our
Annual Customer Service Survey!

*Do you have a story to share? If
you would like to be featured in
our next newsletter with a story
about how the OSNT has
enhanced the life of a trust
beneficiary, please submit your
story to
pboga@thearcoregon.org along
with a picture!*

ANNUAL CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

Our goal is to make sure that everyone's experience with the Oregon Special Needs Trust (OSNT) is a positive one. We are asking OSNT clients to help us reach our goal by completing a short survey to let us know about recent experiences with the OSNT.

The survey has been deployed electronically and via postal mail to all OSNT clients who:

- Are identified as the Primary Authorized Representative of an account with the OSNT, and
- Have requested 1 or more disbursements in the last 2 years, OR
- Have opened a new OSNT account within the last year.

Survey responses are due by August 31, 2015 so that we may report the results of the survey in the Fall newsletter.

If you do not receive an email or letter inviting you to participate in our survey, you may still complete the online survey form if you would like to provide feedback for us to consider. To participate, visit us online at www.thearcoregon.org and open the Survey post from the front page. You will then see a button to click in order to complete the online survey.

Thank you for your feedback! Watch for the results in the Fall edition of the OSNT Quarterly Newsletter.



Stay informed

Stay informed about all of the great things happening at the OSNT and at The Arc Oregon by signing up for our e-newsletter. Go to our website at www.thearcoregon.org and click the *Stay In Touch* box to register.



www.TheArcOregon.org

Do you have a question or topic that you think should be featured in the next newsletter? Please send your question to pboga@thearcoregon.org.