

State Rehabilitation Council

DELAWARE

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



Independence through Employment

Annual Report 2010

THE MISSION OF THE DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to provide opportunities and resources to individuals with disabilities that enable them to achieve independence through employment.

THE MISSION OF THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

The Delaware State Rehabilitation Council is a consumer driven organization of members representing DVR Stakeholders. Members are appointed by the Governor and provide advice and support to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

PURPOSE

The purpose of the State Rehabilitation Council is to collaborate with DVR to identify key challenges and opportunities; advise and assist in the preparation of the DVR State Plan; evaluate consumer satisfaction with DVR and service providers; conduct an annual evaluation of DVR's effectiveness; coordinate with other councils in the state; prepare and submit an annual report; and develop and assess goals and priorities with DVR.

SRC COUNCIL MEMBERS		
Lisa Furber – Chair Community Legal Aid Society	Doyle Dobbins – Vice Chair Advocate	Alexander Rose Dev. Disabilities Council
Steve Slotkin Consumer	Keith Sargent, D.O. Consumer	Vickie Tulley Carelink Services
Charles Moore Client Assistance Program/Consumer	Mark Feinour Bank Of America	Dale Matusevich Department of Education
Marie-Anne E. Aghazadian Parent Information Center	Alice Coleman Workforce Investment Board/Consumer	Jarrod Lippi Statewide Independent Living Council/Consumer
Jennifer Ridgley Consumer	Brenda Rodriguez DVR Counselor, Ex-Officio	Andrea Guest DVR Director, Ex-Officio
Steve Huber Cape Henlopen School District		



**State Rehabilitation Council of Delaware
for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**
Supporting Employment for Delawareans with Disabilities

December 31, 2010

The Honorable Jack Markell
Governor of Delaware
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Markell:

On behalf of my colleagues on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), I am pleased to share with you our joint 2010 Annual Report, which details significant accomplishments achieved by the public vocational rehabilitation program in Delaware. The State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation enjoy a strong history of partnership and collaboration with a joint goal of providing quality services to Delawareans with disabilities who seek to maintain, regain or obtain competitive employment. Much of the progress we made in 2010 can be attributed to this dedicated partnership.

For the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, 2010 was again a very challenging year. DVR continued to see large increases in the number of people seeking assistance to prepare for employment, which required the Order of Selection to continue. It was through hard work and dedication of both DVR staff and the SRC that 705 Delawareans with disabilities obtained employment.

The council strives to be a voice for people with disabilities in the First State seeking inclusion in the community and workforce. The next few years will continue to bring new challenges to DVR and to the council. The Council and DVR staff will work together to continue to assist people with disabilities to achieve independence through employment. I would like to recognize and thank the members of the council for their time, dedication, efforts and passion. Additionally, I would like to thank our partners, the Department of Labor and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for their hard work and advocacy for people with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to give back to our community through service on this council.

Sincerely,

Lisa Furber

Lisa Furber, Chair
State Rehabilitation Council

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Delaware DVR and State Rehabilitation Council

“Working together works”

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council work together, as a team, to accomplish a shared vision: ***people with disabilities in Delaware achieve independence through employment consistent with their interests and abilities.*** The VR Counselors are key members of the team. They empower individuals with disabilities to set goals, and secure employment that matches their interest and abilities. Our VR Counselors are assisted by a very effective and knowledgeable support staff, they help to make things happen.

DVR Leadership is focused on ensuring that the resources and tools are in place so DVR can empower customers to the build their desired future. That requires quality rehabilitation services; education and job training; working with employers; best practices to follow; ongoing training and development required; funding to secure and accountability for performance. Community Rehabilitation Partners and Employers are also key members of this team.

The State Rehabilitation Council is a partner at every step. Together we:

- Evaluate customer satisfaction, and provide feedback;
- Conduct a Community Needs Assessment, to identify where resources are needed;
- Develop goals and priorities and state plan together;
- Conduct Public Meetings, and share our message with stakeholders and customers;
- Evaluate DVR’s effectiveness in achieving our mission, and identify new directions.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is grateful to the State Rehabilitation Council for its support and assistance.



SRC COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is responsible for developing the agenda for full Council meetings. The committee addresses management issues relating to the function of the Council and provides oversight for the duties and responsibilities of Council and its committees and project teams as governed by the Rehabilitation Act.

Membership Committee - Lisa Furber

The Membership Committee maintains its member recruitment efforts for the Council. Members of this committee identify and review member nominations, provide training for Council members, and monitor Council By-laws. All 3 year appointments to the Council are made by the Governor. Members represent people with disabilities, employers, education, rehabilitation professionals, and advocates. The Chair of the Council serves as the Chair of the Membership Committee.

Activities

- *Recruitment efforts included exhibiting at several disability and consumer related conferences and making presentations to disability related advocacy groups such as Partners in Policymaking. Chair of the membership committee attended DVR staff and made presentations to DVR staff and counselors educating them on the Council and encouraging them to refer individuals for Council membership.*

Policy, Procedure, and Performance Committee – Don Moore

The members of the Policy, Procedure, and Performance committee have the responsibility to provide technical assistance to other committees and project teams related to DVR Policy and Procedure. The committee is also responsible to review Fair Hearing decisions and the selection of impartial hearing officers. The committee stays current with DVR's practices for providing services to individuals with disabilities. The Chair of the committee serves on the DVR Policy Manual Committee, which reviews policy and makes recommendations for policy changes to the Director.

Activities:

- *The Chair kept members apprised of policy changes throughout the year.*

Government Relations Committee - Doyle Dobbins

The Government Relations Committee is responsible to maintain linkages, stay aware of issues and coordinate activities between the SRC and other councils for individuals with disabilities within the state. The committee reports on noteworthy activities of other councils, the State Legislature, Congress, and educates the public about the Council. The Chair of the Government Relations committee provides regular updates to membership. At SRC meetings, legislation that impact Delawareans with disabilities and other significant issues are reviewed and if necessary put on the table for a vote for action.



Supported Employment Services		
	FY 2010	FY 2009
Eligible for SE Services	422	388
Employment Outcomes	75	101
Competitively Employed	100%	100%
Average Weekly Earning	\$190	\$163
Average Weekly Hours	23	20

Early Start to Supported Employment

The Early Start Model was designed as a collaboration between The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Education and Division of Developmental Disability Services to initiate supported employment services to a young person with a developmental disability while he or she was still in high school, resulting in attachment to employment prior to or immediately after completing high school. While this model is a successful one, there are many challenges, working with different service providers and agencies.

In order to improve the program, DVR, DDDS, and DOE collaborated with a consultant, George Tillson of Transcend, to conduct an **Early Start to Supported Employment Symposium**. This event brought together agencies and Community Providers together, to improve services and identify best practices. There were more than 80 participants.

The symposium included employment related training; interactive sessions to develop strategies to improve the program. This included sharing the results of customer satisfaction surveys conducted by the sponsoring agencies to evaluate the program and individual providers. The results were that customers were satisfied with the program, but satisfaction with providers was mixed, and there was room for improvement all around. The biggest factor in the survey was success in securing employment. A critical element in the program was the relationship between the individual and their placement provider.



DVR Success Story . . .

Mary Husty reflects the success of the DVR School to Careers Transition Program. Mary met Christina Cody, DVR Transition Counselor in her Senior year at St. Marks High School. Mary had been an accomplished athlete, a swimmer, until a serious accident left Mary partially paralyzed. Mary said, DVR ***“opened opportunities for me to adjust to my life after an injury and pursue my educational and career goals. DVR immediately supported my rehabilitation and accommodation needs, like building a ramp, so I could independently leave and enter my home.”***

Initially, Mary desired to become a teacher, a goal which was later refined to a career in human services. Mary graduated from St. Marks in June 2003, and thereafter gained admission to the University of Delaware.

While she was studying at the University of Delaware, with support from DVR, Mary received driver’s training and learned to operate a vehicle with hand controls. With support and assistance from her family, Mary purchased a van. DVR provided funding and technical support to have the vehicle modified with hand controls, and Mary had wheels!

Mary continued to excel in her studies at the University of Delaware. She was an exemplary DVR client, applying herself to her studies, keeping her counselor informed of her progress, and submitting information and documents as necessary. The hard work and dedication paid off in May 2009, when Mary received her Bachelor’s Degree.

Mary participated in volunteer opportunities to gain some experience, and in May 2010, Mary accepted a paid internship with Delaware Technical and Community College, working with DVR clients enrolled in the Delaware Tech Supported Education program. Mary provides program support as well as individual educational support for students enrolled in the DTCC remedial program. It seems Mary found a way to join her two career goals, to work in human services, and teach.

Mary is currently enrolled in a Masters Degree program at Wilmington University. According to Mary, ***“through all of my experiences a knowledgeable and supportive counselor, Christina Cody, advised me about my career goals and met any need I had. I am thankful and grateful to DVR for their support of my education and independence.”***



Evaluating Last Year's Performance

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council conducted an effectiveness evaluation on February 16, 2010 at the Fox Valley DVR site. The effectiveness evaluation was conducted by members of the DVR leadership team and the SRC council members.

RSA Standards & Indicators: The evaluation team found:

- DVR's 902 employment outcomes was impressive in this challenging job market;
- The 64% rehabilitation rate is above the 55.8% standard;
- competitive employment at or above minimum wage, at 99.33%, is above standard;
- Successful outcomes by individuals with significant individuals grew to 86%;
- DVR missed the standard of achieving wages of 52% of the state's hourly wage, this standard continues to be a challenge for Delaware and mid-Atlantic states;
- DVR met or exceeded its other standards, earnings as source of support (71%); and minority service rate (96%);
- DVR experienced its second highest ever number of applicants, at 2,766.

RESULTS: Considering funding, numbers, job market and order of selection challenges DVR's performance on standards and indicators was rated a very favorable 4.5 out of 5.0



1. Provide quality employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

DVR staff provided details about its results in achieving quality outcomes for people with disabilities, which was 902, compared to 905 the year before. This was quite an achievement considering challenging job market, increases in clients, and first time implementation of an order of selection. That helped outcomes grow for individuals with significant disabilities from 742 to 775. The average hourly wage, at \$9.89 was only marginally lower than the \$9.92 average from the year before.

RESULTS: DVR's performance outpaced expectations; the rating was 4.0 out of 5.0.

2. Support training programs that reflect opportunities in the labor market.

DVR staff provided Labor Market information about the Delaware job market, and 5 year growth in jobs. Information was provided about training programs funded by DVR; results over prior year; and outcomes. DVR highlighted a training program collaborating with a local hotel to provide a 6 week hospitality training at the employer's site. The hotel hires from graduates to meet their staffing needs. The others are assisted to find jobs in other area hotels.

RESULTS: DVR's performance on this goal was accordingly rated a 3.0 out of 5.0.

3. Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.

DVR continues with dedicated transition counselors statewide, supported by paraprofessional transition assistants. The transition program continues to grow, from 1,543 participants in FY08 to 1,778 in FY09. Even with an order of selection, 812 high school seniors received services in FY2009. Those placed on a waiting list were offered DVR Navigator assistance with locating training opportunities and job search. This year 282 completed their transition and found employment, down 326 last year.

More students chose college over employment after graduation. DVR implemented a new fee schedule for college tuition support, maximizing the Delaware Technical and Community College “connected degree” program. The fee schedule has enabled DVR to provide support for more students to receive post-secondary educational.

DVR also sponsored a statewide Transition Conference, providing students and parents with a substantial amount of workshops on topics important to students and parents. DVR partnered with Employment and Training to bring the mobile one-stop to high schools around the state.

The DVR administers a Supported Education Program at Delaware’s lone Community College, which provides individualized tutoring, study skills, and training to enable students to improve critical English, Reading and Math skills. Students have a high success rate completing the course and advancing into degree/certificate programs.

RESULTS: The Transition program continues to excel achieved a score of 4.0 out of 5.0.



4. Continue to search for funding sources to sustain new Initiatives.

DVR seeks grant funds for services such as:

- Benefits Counseling, which are vital to people with disabilities on public support interested in employment and self-sufficiency;
- Programs for at-risk youth through grant funds;
- DPN Navigator Program as well.

DVR operates a statewide benefits counseling program with a grant from SSA. DVR pursued several federal grant initiatives during the past fiscal year:

- DVR collaborated with the ARC, a community rehabilitation program, on a grant to establish a consortium of job placement providers.

RESULTS: DVR achieved modest results resulting in a score of 4.0 out of 5.0.



DVR Year in Review

FY2010 was one of the most challenging years in memory. Some of the key challenges facing DVR and our customers were:

- record numbers seeking DVR services;
- 2nd year on an order of selection;
- High Unemployment Rate;
- Flat funding for 2nd year;
- Staff salary reductions and furlough days.

Despite the many challenges we faced, our staff stayed focused on their mission and our customers stayed focused on their goals, and 705 individuals with disabilities achieved success in employment. Some of DVR’s successes:

Employment Outcomes-	705
Average Hourly wage-	\$10.05
Transition students employed-	288
Rehabilitation Rate-	68%

School to Careers Transition Program

The DVR Transition Program continues to achieve exemplary results. DVR Transition Counselors throughout the state met with over 800 seniors with disabilities at every public high

school in the State of Delaware. By the time they left high school in June, they had a career goal and a plan in place. DVR has many choices to offer graduating seniors:

• ***Early Start to Supported Employment***

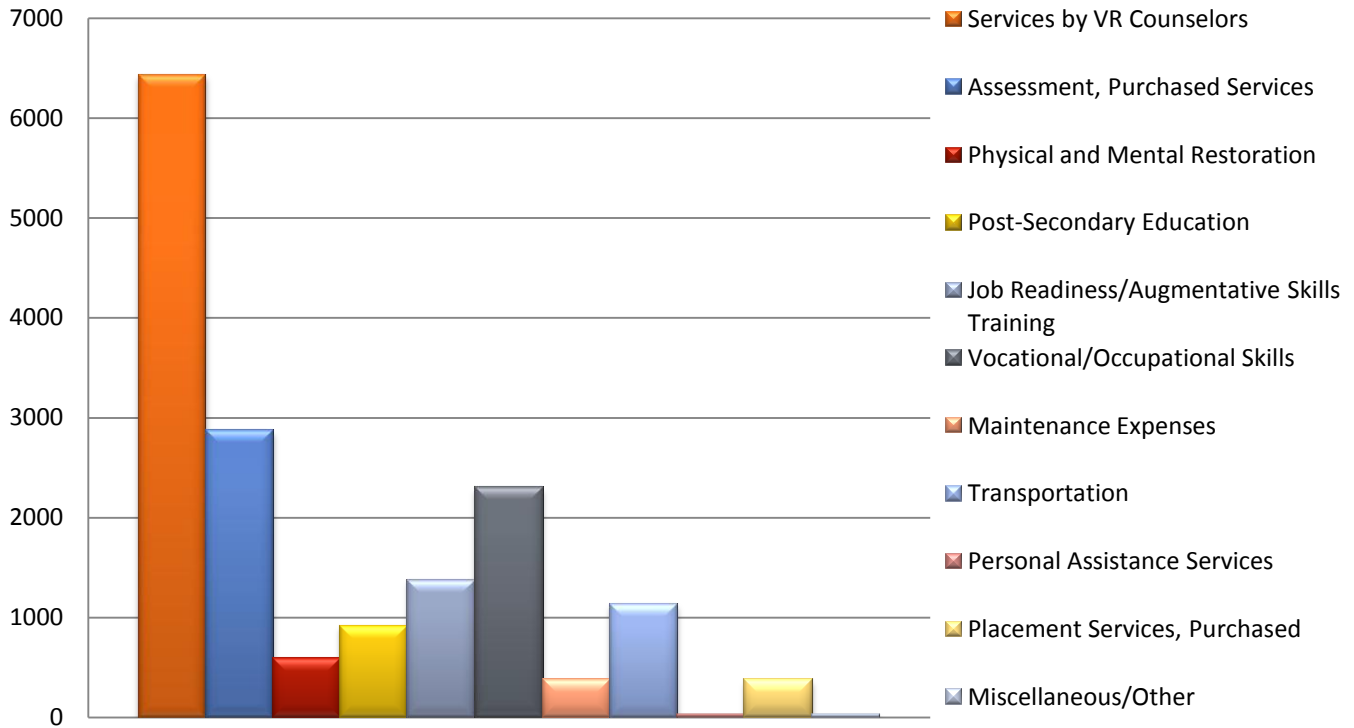
Through the Early Start Program, high school students with Developmental Disabilities can establish eligibility with the DD Agency and DVR, select a provider, and start planning prior to the beginning of their senior year. During the students senior or exit year, assessments are completed, job search is initiated, and employment begun prior to or immediately after graduation. Some programs include internship opportunities or volunteer work in the event the sluggish job market fails to yield a timely job.

• ***Supported Education Program***

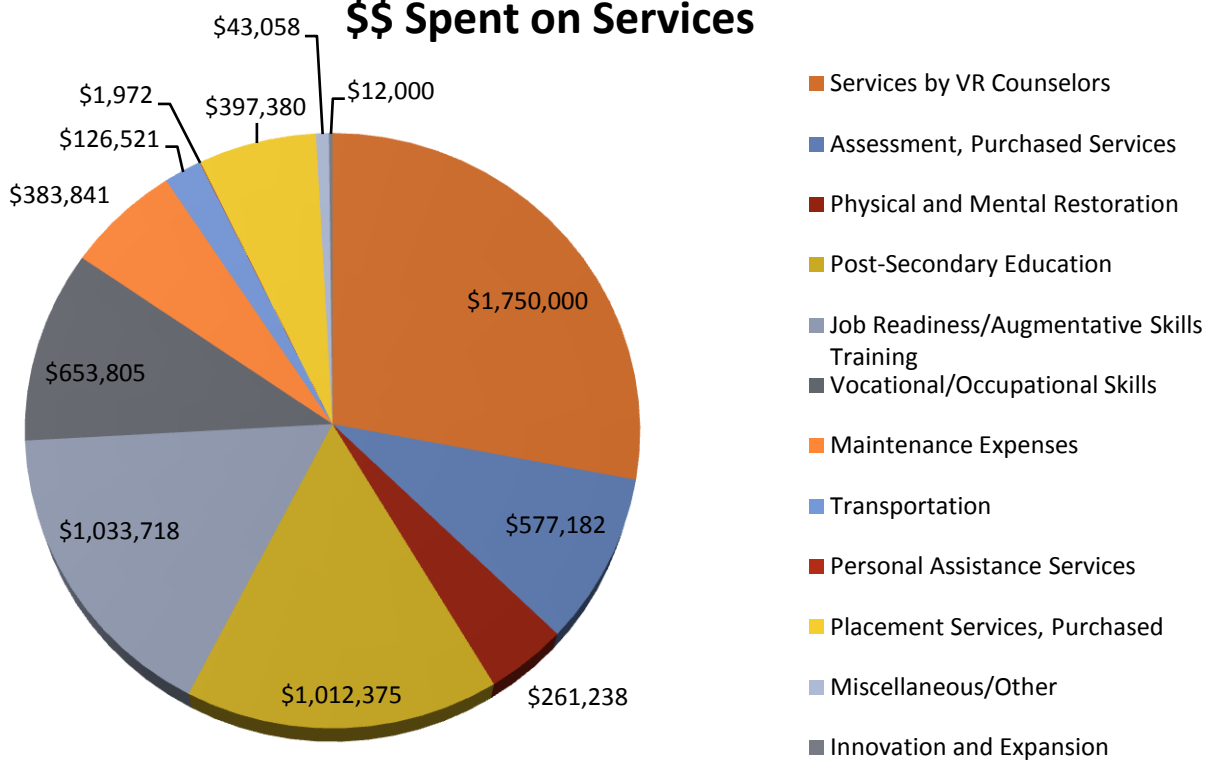
A large and growing number of Seniors have Community College in their career plan. Some students must complete remedial courses before they can enter degree or certificate programs. DVR policy provides students two semesters to successfully complete remedial courses and enroll into degree programs. In order to provide maximum opportunity for success, DVR collaborates with Delaware Technical and Community College on a supported education program for remedial students.

Students attend twice weekly sessions on campus, for training in study skills, task management, writing and communication, one-on-one tutoring, and extra time with classroom teachers. Students receive information about skill training programs available to them in addition to the degree/certificate programs.

Clients Receiving Services



\$\$ Spent on Services



DVR Offices



New Castle County

Wilmington

TTY/Voice – (302) 761-8275

Newark

TTY/Voice – (302) 368-6980

Middletown

TTY/Voice – (302) 378-5779

Kent County

Dover

TTY/Voice - (302) 739-5478

Sussex County

Georgetown

TTY/Voice – (302) 856-5730