



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

S TATE
R EHABILITATION
C OUNCIL

Annual Report for FY 2013

The SRC/DVRS Partnership Celebrates Accomplishments
October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

New Jersey Dept. of Labor

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Table of Contents

Contents

Rehabilitation Council Members _____	1
Message from the Chair _____	2
Beliefs, Mission, Function _____	3
Membership, Committees, Resources _____	5
Meetings, Trainings and Forums _____	8
Activities and Accomplishments _____	10
Significant Issues _____	24
Planned Activities for FY 2014 _____	28
SRC State Plan Recommendations _____	31
Summary _____	44
DVRS Offices & Contact Information _____	45

Rehabilitation Council Members

Council Membership is in accordance with Section 105 of the 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act and New Jersey Executive Order 110 and reflects a diverse range of disability groups, geographical areas, racial, ethnic and gender groups. Each member is appointed by the Governor of New Jersey. The Council represents a broad spectrum of individuals who are concerned with the vocational needs of people with disabilities and who support the objectives of the public rehabilitation program in New Jersey. As of 2013 representation on the Council is as follows:

Member	Representation
Clifford Sanders	Advocate 1
James R. Thebery	Advocate 2
Jamie C. Hilton	Advocate 3
Rebecca Shulman	Advocate 4
Patricia A. Tomlinson	Advocate 5
Thomas G. Jennings	Business Rep 1
James E. Seath	Business Rep 2
Margaret M. Englebert	Business Rep 3
Catherine Gacos	Business Rep 4
Nils R. Richardson	Community Rehab Program Rep
Lillie Lowe-Reid	Client Assistance Program
Robert Haugh	NJDOE – Office of Special Education Rep
Barbara Lee	DVRS Consumer
Carolyn D. Hayer	Parent Training & Info Center Rep
Kathleen W. Wilson	SILC
Nicholas P. Gacos	State Workforce Investment Board Rep
Janice Oursler	VR Counselor 1
Brian D. Sant'Angelo	VR Counselor 2
Ex-Officio	
Alice Hunnicutt	Director, DVRS

New Jersey State
Rehabilitation Council

Executive Committee

Kathleen W. Wilson
Chairperson

Cathy Gacos,
Vice-Chairperson

Jim Seath
Treasurer

Alice Hunnicutt
DVRS Director

Message from the Chair

December 26, 2013

Greetings:

As the Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, it is an honor to present our annual report for Fiscal Year (FFY) 2013.

As I review the contents of the report, two areas stand out. First, New Jersey became the 14th state to embrace Employment First and the DVRS provided Innovation and Expansion opportunities that identified Employment First as a priority. The DVRS also provided funding opportunities for skills training under the Employment First 4 Jersey notice of grant opportunity. Second, the local offices were given the opportunity to provide innovation through the division's Creating Local Opportunity to Stimulate Employment Rehabilitation (C.L.O.S.E.R.) project. The Monmouth office was able to support five consumers to start their own hydroponics business, the Hudson office was able to support transition age consumers with SAT training, and the Mercer office was able to partner with a construction company to train consumers who were also parolees. These innovations help consumers to get the skills they need to be successful in their employment choices.

This year we have chosen to highlight some of the positive feedback DVRS has received and the stories told by individuals who have benefited from the services received by DVRS's highly dedicated and talented staff.

The State Rehabilitation Council of New Jersey is pleased to provide this report and proud of the accomplishments of the NJDVRs on behalf of the people it serves. The SRC is confident that future challenges will be met with equal success, thanks to the dedication of its members, the DVRS staff and stakeholders.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen W. Wilson

Kathleen W. Wilson, MS, CRC
Chairperson
NJ State Rehabilitation Council

"It was brought to my attention that in September, Julie Ann Boyle and Susan Ballantyne demonstrated an extreme act of kindness and compassion.

One Tuesday afternoon someone looked out of the third floor office window and noticed an older woman standing in the middle of Hooper Avenue. She was with a second adult who was in a wheelchair. Hooper Avenue is a very busy four lane road. People drive very fast and aggressively. There is also a concrete barrier making it impossible to safely cross.

Susan and Julie immediately exited our building and went to their aid. Julie assisted the person in the wheelchair and got her out of the highway and onto the sidewalk. The older woman was very distraught. Susan was able to talk to her and learned that she and her disabled daughter were homeless. Susan convinced the woman to leave the highway and Susan and Julie brought them back into the LWD building. They then spent the necessary time contacting social services and connecting them with the appropriate services for housing.

"Way to go Julie and Susan.....great looking out!!!!"

(Kathy Space, Supervisor, Neptune DVR)

Beliefs, Mission, Function

SRC BELIEFS

As members of the New Jersey State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), we believe:

- That people with disabilities, like all people, have diverse strengths that must be defined and identified along many dimensions.
- That each person with a disability has value.
- In a public system of vocational rehabilitation that is responsible and accountable to those it serves and to those who fund it.
- In partnerships, affiliations and linkages.
- That optimal results in rehabilitation depend on an equal partnership between consumers and the professional (service provider).
- That all consumers should be given enough information to make informed choices.
- That all people with disabilities are ultimately responsible and accountable for the choices they make.
- That all people with disabilities should have the opportunity to maximize their potential.
- That respect for all is critical to this process.
- That it is necessary to support, further and exemplify diversity and multiculturalism within the disability community and the community at large.
- That the rights of people with disabilities should be advanced and protected.

**Rose Rudderow
(Neptune)**

"The remote control and hearing aids are working great. I cannot thank you enough for assisting me in receiving the assistance that is helping me hear things I have not been able to hear for several years. My family thanks you too because they no longer have to yell when they want to communicate with me. All kidding aside, my quality of life has changed for the better."
(Client)

"I wanted to let you know that yesterday I went to pick up my hearing aids at the Hearing Center in Freehold. I am liking them very much! Again, thank you for everything you have done for me. I feel so much better and confident wearing the hearing aids and I don't miss a thing now."
(Client)

**Marcela Dinoso
(Hackensack)**

"Marcela, words cannot express the gratitude I have for all the work you did to make this possible. I feel that now my whole life is going to change because I no longer have to struggle to make out what people are saying or pretend that I understood every word when I didn't. I don't have to keep apologizing for not hearing someone or something. Thank you for making this possible."
(Client)

SRC MISSION

The SRC is a partnership of persons with disabilities, advocates and other interested persons. It is committed to ensuring through policy development, implementation and advocacy that New Jersey has a rehabilitation program that is not only comprehensive and consumer-responsive but also effective, efficient and significantly funded. The SRC is dedicated to ensuring that persons with disabilities receive rehabilitation services that result in employment.

SRC MANDATED FUNCTION

The SRC, on behalf of the community it represents, reviews, analyzes and advises the New Jersey State Vocational Rehabilitation Program (DVRS) regarding the performance of its responsibilities. Council goals and activities are set annually and are in response to both National and State issues, as mandated by Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The focus of Council goals and activities includes but is not limited to Consumer Satisfaction, Statewide Needs Assessment, State Plan and Amendments, Policy, Extent/Scope/Effectiveness of Services, Interagency Agreements and New Jersey's Employment programs.

Irene Mora (Camden)

"I just spoke with Job Club client who called to tell me about being hired by the new Shoprite in Lawnside. He said the process consisted of various tests and interviews and ultimately it came down to three qualified candidates including himself. He told me that he really believes the interviewing skills he learned in your job club is what won the hiring team over. He said your training made a big difference in him getting through the process and actually getting the job. He wanted me to tell you that he really appreciates all that you have done in job club to help him. I want to thank you also - client and I are both thrilled about his new job. He doesn't start until July, but he is in - thanks Irene."

(Employment Specialist)

Helen Liu (Trenton)

"Thanks very much Helen Liu for your exceptional guidance and leadership for standing by me as a Supervisor in times of need and being an outstanding leader. I hope to emulate you and perform better. I thank you and Melvin Crawford for giving me this wonderful opportunity to follow my dream job!"

(Client)

Membership, Committees, Resources

Membership Development

The full Council participates in identification of potential members appropriate to the beliefs and mission of the SRC. Member attendance, vacancies, and upcoming term expirations are reviewed during the February and March meetings with recommendations made to fill vacancies according to the category the vacancy(s) represents. Special attention has been given to fulfill expiring terms this year due in part due to compliance needs stemming from the 2010 RSA monitoring. Nominations have been sent to the Governor's office and the SRC anticipates several new members. Nominations are made that represent compliance with Section 105 mandates; at least half of the SRC membership is comprised of persons with disabilities who are not employed by the DVRS. A wide range of disability representation has been achieved.

Officer Elections

Officers are elected bi-annually at the SRC May meeting for a two-year term. Officers for FFY'13 have been: Kathleen Wilson, Chair; Cathy Gacos, Vice-Chair; James Seath, Treasurer. The SRC will conduct elections in February 2013 for officer terms starting June 2014.

Committees

The SRC Chair, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, appoints committees annually to meet federally mandated activities and SRC priority areas. Each SRC

**Marcela Dinoso
(Hackensack)**

"I wanted to sincerely thank you for all the time and effort that you gave my son yesterday at our meeting. The way that you worked him and got him to open up and speak with you honestly was nothing short of a miracle! You truly have a gift for doing your job. My son is very lucky to have you as a counselor. When we left, he turned to me and said that he felt like he was treated as a human being struggling to get his life together as opposed to a number in a system. Thanks to you my son is committed to working this program to ultimately accomplish getting a job that he can be proud of and keep. It was an absolute pleasure meeting you and I look forward to working with you in the future."
(Parent)

Al Cain (Pleasantville)

"My heart is so grateful for you."
(Client)

Newark Staff

"Just to tell you that I today was my first day in the CNA class. I did enjoy it. Thank you so much. May God bless each of you at the office for the nice way you treat people!"
(Client)

member is expected to participate on a committee. The DVRS supports each committee by assigning a DVRS staff member to provide information as requested.

Standing committees include:

- **Executive Committee** – Comprised of the SRC Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and the DVRS Director as ex-officio.
- **Evaluation & Consumer Satisfaction Committee** – Activities include, but are not limited to, program evaluation activities and consumer satisfaction studies.
- **Policy Committee** – Activities include, but are not limited to, advocacy and education, policy and State Plan review, Administrative Code review, State Plan Public Hearings, Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
- **Legislative Committee** – Responsible for the review/monitoring of pending and current legislation, particularly with respect to impact on funding; suggest/develop legislation as needed.
- **Ad Hoc Committees, Task Forces, and Study Groups** – Are created on an as needed basis by the SRC Chair. Non-Council members may serve on these groups, but the Chair of the group must be a SRC member. Ad Hoc Committees include:
 - **By-Laws Review Committee** – Is appointed by the SRC Chair on even-numbered years to review and make recommendations to the full Council for needed revision.
 - **Membership Committee** – Is charged with developing plans to bring membership into compliance with RSA mandates

**Shari Stengel
(Hackensack)**

"We wanted to thank you for meeting with us and our son yesterday afternoon. You were so informative and we appreciate all your assistance in helping him with a Job Coach for his job. We understand that efforts will be made to make sure a Job Coach meets our son at his job to make for a smooth transition. Again, we appreciate all your help and advice. This is all new to us, but already you have made the process that much easier for us. Please let us know if you need anything further from us."
(Parent)

Leila Hosseini (Elizabeth)

"On behalf of the Cranford Achievement Program, I would like to thank you for coming to our school today and speaking to our seniors and their parents about the DVRS. We know they find your assistance extremely helpful. We truly appreciate your taking the time to visit Lincoln School."
(Educator)

**Tiffany Hood
(Pleasantville)**

"Tiffany - you were the BEST! Please know how grateful I have been with your professionalism and quality of work. You really made a difference."
(Client)

Resource Plan

The following DVRS staff provides support, attend, and participate in the activities of the Rehabilitation Council:

- DVRS Director attends all meetings and provides staff support to the executive committee.
- Two Assistant Directors provide staff support to the legislative and policy committees; the chief administrative analyst for the DVRS provides staff support to the evaluation committee.
- Executive Assistant to the Director provides minutes for every meeting and day-to-day requests that come from SRC members.
- Other DVRS staff members are assigned as needed to support the Council and as appropriate to their area of expertise.

For the period of 10/1/12 – 9/30/13, a \$46,500 budget was established for Council operating expenses. The budget covered: quarterly and special meeting costs, annual planning summit, member expenses to attend and participate in meetings and training, accommodations, training, printing costs, fiscal agent budget administration and miscellaneous funds needed to support Council activities as appropriate. Council activities stayed within the allocated amounts.

**Jessica Arnold
(Hackensack) & Deborah
Vaughn (Central Office)**

*"I can't thank you enough Jessica Arnold and Deb Vaughn for all your support to get my client started in her new job. She is so happy and I wish you could see the smile on her face while she is working. Job satisfaction for my clients is a job satisfaction for me. It warms my heart to see her doing so well. Thank you again for everything!"
(Job Coach)*

**Toni Gramigna
(Thorofare)**

*"Toni we just want to say thank you for all of your help. I know it took a long time but it ended with positive results. We just wanted to tell you thanks again."
(Client)*

Lori DeSantis (Thorofare)

*"I just wanted to say 'thank you' for all of the help you have given me over the last few years. It is greatly appreciated and not unnoticed. Thank you for helping the management of both my academic and professional growth."
(Client)*

Meetings, Trainings and Forums

Accessibility

The Council promotes inclusion at all sponsored meetings for members and other participants by providing, as needed, personal care attendant services, transportation services, interpreter services, computer assisted real-time transcription (CART) and assistive listening devices. Teleconferencing is made available to accommodate persons who have difficulty traveling, or who reside in rural or remote areas. In addition, all documents are sent out prior to each SRC meeting via email.

Regular New Jersey SRC Meetings

The SRC conducts quarterly meetings. Meetings were held on November 14, 2013, February 13, 2013, June 5, 2013 and September 11, 2013. Full Council activities are scheduled in the morning with committees meeting in the afternoon. Committee meetings are also held in the interim months, on an as needed basis. Conference calling is used when appropriate. Regular meetings are open to the public and interested stakeholders are encouraged to attend. Ethics training, mandated by the NJ State Ethics Commission, was held on September 11, 2013. An annual planning meeting was held on August 12, 2013.

SRC Members Participate in the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)

Council representatives regularly attend the CSAVR spring and fall meetings. There is a special track for SRC leadership nationally that meets the day before the general

**Emma Gordon
(Bridgeton)**

"I just wanted to extend my appreciation to you and your associates that helped me to improve my quality of living. These hearing aids have improved my ability at home and at work tremendously. I have been able to communicate with my fellow workers and family members on a much better level. I have been able to communicate with my vendors at work on the telephone with much more ease as in being able to hear them more clearly when speaking with them. I have been able to hear things that I haven't heard in a very long time. Thank you again for your help!"
(Client)

**Westampton Support
Staff**

"Thank you to our clerical support staff. We often tell you how the counselors could not do their job as well without your assistance. One of our participants reported that she feels special when she calls here and that all of the ladies try and make sure that she speaks to her counselor. She appreciates your efforts as do I."
(Ferne Allen, Supervisor)

CSAVR meeting begins. New Jersey SRC representatives attend this meeting in addition to the general CSAVR meetings. This year the SRC chose to become a member of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC). The NCSRC coordinates the track for SRCs at the CSAVR conferences in the spring and fall meetings.

NJSRC representatives participate in CSAVR Standing Committee meetings; including the Deaf, Deaf Blind, Hard-of-Hearing and Late-Deafened Standing Committee; the Transition Standing Committee and the Employment Standing Committee.

Several members of the SRC continue to work on the "Model State Plan for Rehabilitation Services for Individuals Who Are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard-of-Hearing and Late-Deafened" and have offered technical consultation throughout the country.

"Congratulations go out to the local offices for the incredible effort put out last year. Employment outcomes increased by 270 for a total of 4,028 individuals placed into competitive employment.

I want to thank Assistant Director Brian Fitzgibbons, Field Chiefs Keith McDermott and Teresa Owens for all the miles put on their cars providing direct support to all the offices on a regular basis. Thanks also go to Maryann Tiesler and Janette Nazon for the support provided to the field from Central Office.

Thanks also to Assistant Director David Free, our central office administrative support staff and the program development specialists who provide expertise in subjects ranging from Deafness, Autism, vehicle modification, supported employment, mental health, transition, and substance abuse to our new counselors and local businesses who need information and technical assistance about how to better support the consumers they hire through the DVRS.

Every staff member contributed to this effort. The LWD is fortunate to have such a dedicated team providing services to ensure individuals with disabilities in New Jersey have equal opportunity for high quality employment.

Thank you!"

Alice Hunnicutt
Director, Division of
Vocational Rehabilitation
Services

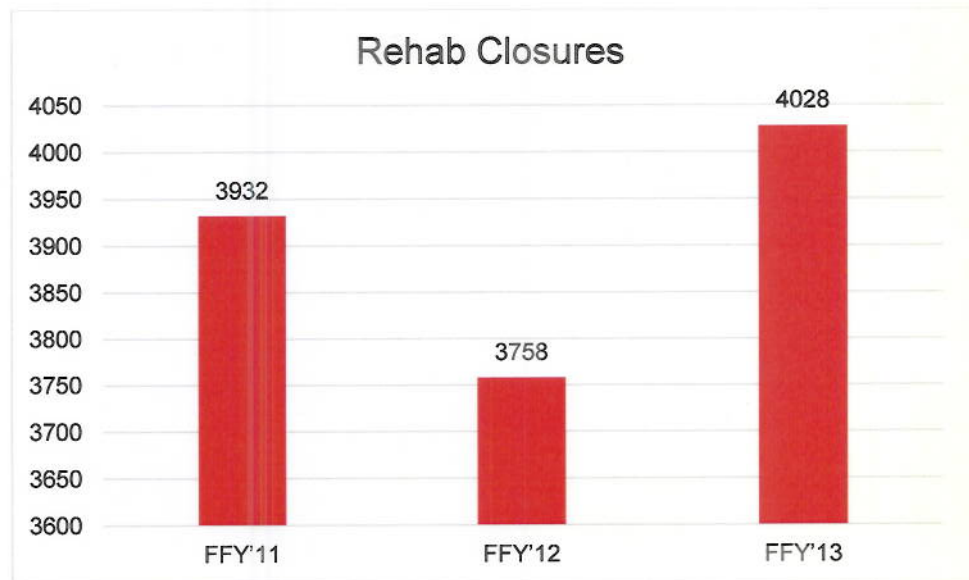
Activities and Accomplishments

All Eligible Consumers continue to be served

In FFY 2013, the DVRS served all categories of eligible consumers. The agency currently has the financial resources to serve all categories; however, it is projected that consumers needing services will increase. The agency will continue to assess the need to remain on an Order of Selection (OOS) in FFY'14, and, if the data indicates continued ability to serve all eligible consumers, the SRC will recommend that the DVRS go out of an OOS in FFY'15.

Successful Employment Outcomes

In FFY'13, Status 26 closures increased from FFY'12 numbers, to 4028. This increase is a reflection of a stronger economy as well as a reflection of the learning curve of all the new counselors that have been hired since FFY'12. In FFY'13 1725 females and 2303 males with disabilities were successfully rehabilitated.



**Tiffany Hood (Wildwood)
and Jen Washburn
(Pleasantville)**

"CASA of Atlantic and Cape May Counties wanted to thank you again for your collaboration on and participation in the 2013 Aging Out Day last week. Without your participation, our goal of helping older youth in foster care would not be possible. We have received a great deal of positive feedback from the sixty-three youth who attended this year's event. Thank you for your participation and we hope to work with you again next year and on future initiatives."
(CASA)

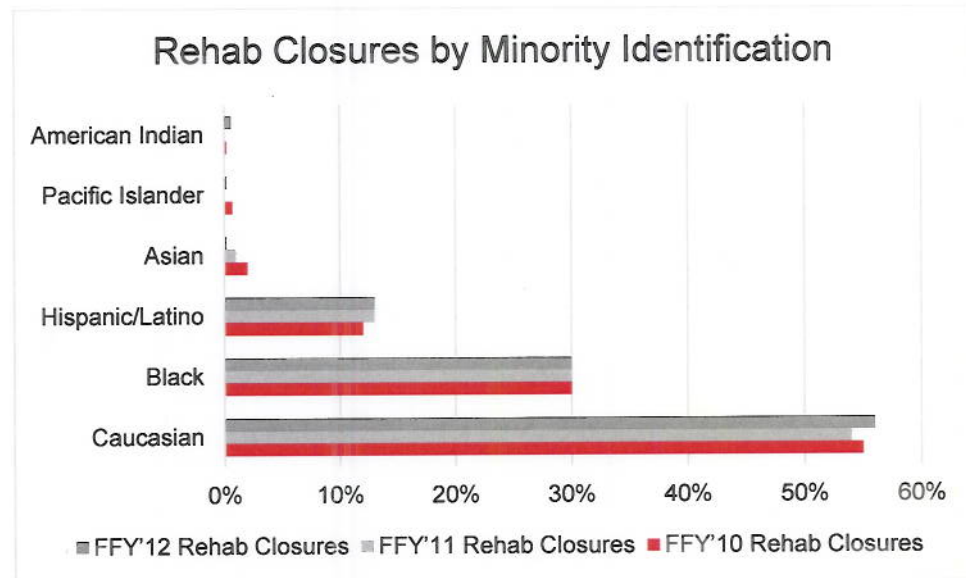
**Emma Gordon,
Pleasantville**

"I'm more than pleased with not only my hearing aids, but all the help you and the DVRS have done for me. Without this program I would not be able to afford the hearing aids and therefore unable to do my job 100%. I thank you again for all your help."
(Client)

"I am so appreciative of the ability to hear again. Now, I see how my family, close friends and co-workers had to adjust to my loss. I can give you an example: one of my close friends gave me a hug because I could actually respond in a timely manner when having a conversation. As I said before, thank you!"
(Client)

Minority Identification

Approximately 48% of all individuals served by the DVRS during FFY'13 are from minority groups, with 46% of rehab closures representing minority groups.



Referrals by Region (Caseload reflects new staff hired September 2011)

Northern Region

Office	Caseloads	Referrals
Paterson	9	679
Morristown	6	477
Hackettstown	5	635
Hackensack	10	818
Jersey City	10	817
Total	40	3426

**Margaret Custodio
(Bridgeton)**

"I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to get my CDL B through the services you provided to individuals who have disabilities like me. These services helped me for a promotion with more money. It will help me and my family to better ourselves. I also want to thank you for encouraging me."
(Client)

Ana Cortes (Jersey City)

"My son is so happy that he finally has his driver's license. I just wanted to thank you for your help in making this goal a reality for my son and our family. Thank you so much!"
(Parent)

**Ann Disare
(Westampton)**

"I writing to share some fantastic news with you. Today I was told that I will be made permanent at social security. I signed papers indicating my acceptance of the appointment. I would not have the job without your assistance. I wanted to take the time to express my gratitude one last time. Thank you."
(Client)

Central Region

Office	Caseloads	Referrals
Newark	16	1485
New Brunswick	7	926
Elizabeth	8	773
Somerville	5	672
Trenton	8	789
Neptune	10	824
Total	54	5469

Southern Region

Office	Caseloads	Referrals
Toms River	9	809
Camden	12	839
Thorofare	6	656
Westampton	6	636
Pleasantville	8	782
Bridgeton	7	721
Wildwood	3	261
Total	51	4704

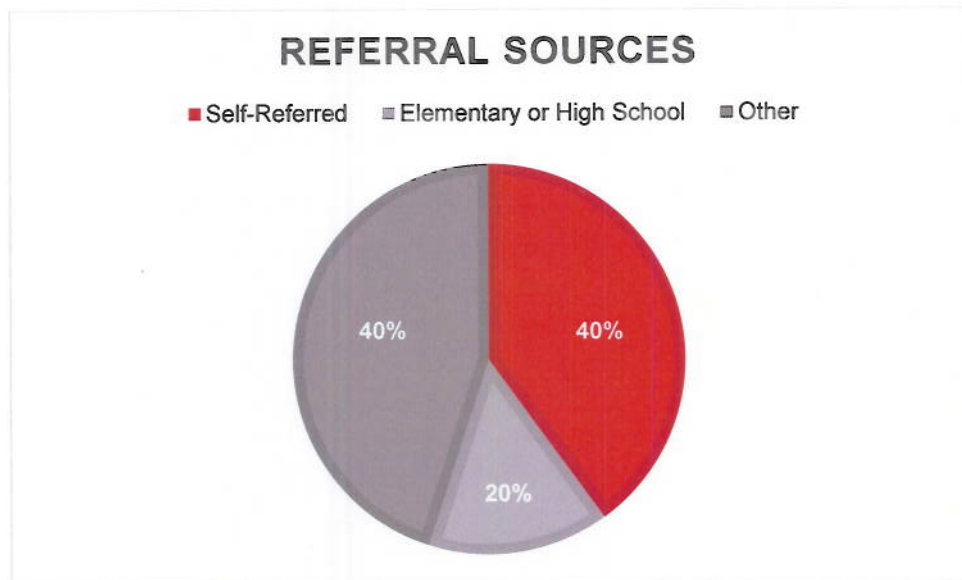
William Schulz & Maria Ongoco (Hackensack)

*"I would like to thank you on behalf of "GoodTemps" for another successful off-site registration day. We were able to successfully register 12 clients, and re-register two. This was indeed rewarding in assisting your clients in their job search! We look forward to continued success in referring and placing work ready candidates."
(Business)*

Rosemarie Perrone (Wildwood)

*"Thank you so much for meeting me yesterday on short notice. It meant a great deal to me and you answered a lot of questions that I had which were causing a bit of anxiety. I feel more confident today and so much more educated. I'm looking forward to our next meeting. Thank you for everything."
(Client)*

The DVRS received a total of 13,599 referrals during FFY'13. Referral sources included self-referral, secondary schools, CRPs, medical professionals, One-Stop Career Centers, Post-secondary Schools, Social Security Administration and Welfare. Of the 4,027 total rehabilitations, the following referral sources were the highest.



**Maxine Becker
(Hackensack)**

"Just a note to let you know how much we appreciate your going the extra mile to find, copy and send our son's C.O.E. It is a powerful document that encapsulates his history and provides suggestions for his future. Thank you also for being the voice of calm in a swirling world of paperwork, forms and documents."
(Parent)

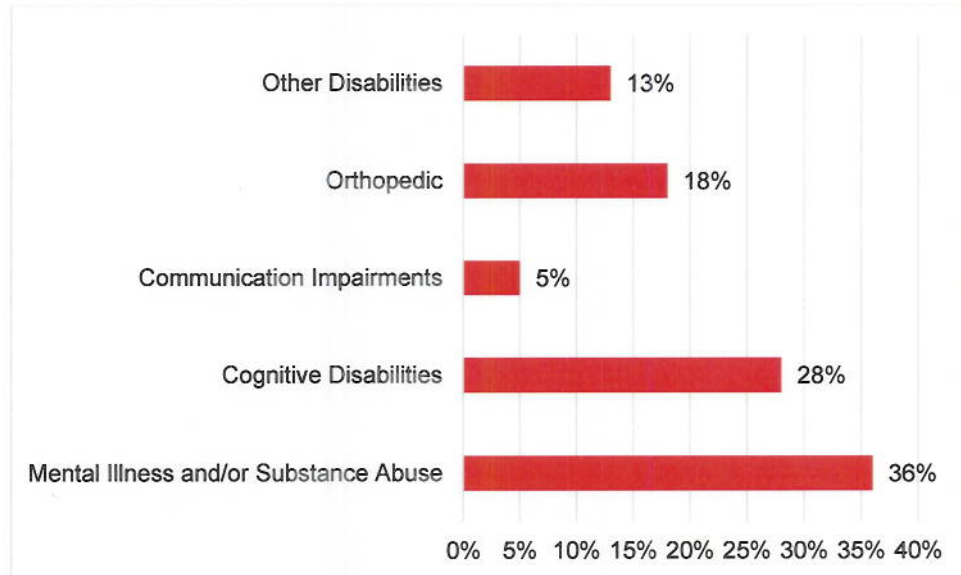
**Nicole LaTourette
(Bridgeton)**

"Congratulations to Nicole LaTourette who graduated from the University of Phoenix obtaining her Associates of Arts degree in Psychology. Way to go Nicole and we are so proud of you!"

**Colleen Hendrickson
(Wildwood)**

"Colleen received her 5th consecutive certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). Congratulations Colleen!"

Disabilities Served



Supported Employment Assists Consumers with Significant Disabilities

The DVRS successfully rehabilitated 1,199 individuals who received Supported Employment services in FFY'13; the following represent the most significant disabilities:

- Mental Illness
- Developmental Disabilities
- Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing
- Traumatic Brain Injury

In each of these disability groups the division worked with CRPs with specific expertise in the provision of services.

Individuals receiving Supported Employment Services in FFY'13 accounted for 30% of successful rehab closures.

Samia Haridi (Jersey City)

"My daughter is a client of your division and Samia Haridi is her counselor. It is my privilege and pleasure to author this letter. With the economic cutbacks and shrinking grants coupled with increased workloads, State agencies have been forced to do more with less. Unfortunately, sometimes clarity is sacrificed for brevity and quality is compromised for quantity. Samia Haridi has found the balance professionally. Ms. Haridi's work ethic seems strong and unsurpassed. It is evident that integrity and compassion play a vital role in her job performance. She appears to possess a wealth of information relevant to her position and the division regulations. She makes a complex process easily understood in a professional manner. Ms. Haridi's devotion to her duties is noteworthy. Ms. Haridi is not only an asset to the division, but a role model to my daughter. She instilled a sense of determination and an "I can do it despite my limitations" attitude in my daughter. Again, I commend Samia Haridi and thank your division for a job well done."
(Parent)

Transitioning Continues as a Major Initiative

Since 2002, the transition program for students with disabilities continues to be a major program initiative, with a Lead Transition Counselor in each of the 18 DVRS field offices. The Program Development Specialist assigned to working with Transition communicates regularly with these designated personnel. In FFY'13, the Transition Counselors statewide made significant impact on school systems and transitioning students as evidenced by the following:

- 13,180 Technical Consultations
- 928 IEP Meetings Attended
- 2772 Presentations/Meetings with school personnel or parents/students

In addition the DVRS presented at six *Dare to Dream* Conferences sponsored by Office of Special Education.

The DVRS is an active participant on the State Special Education Advisory Council and Transition Coordinator meetings, in conjunction with NJ DOE and OSEP.

An updated transition document was uploaded onto the DVRS website entitled "Steps in the DVRS Process." This document is a tool to assist students to prepare for their initial Intake with DVRS.

Transitioning to Post School Activities

The NJ Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs has provided funding to support a position within each of the state's 12 CILs to promote advocacy and teach classified and 504 students to self-advocate. This program was subject to a compliance finding from the 2010 RSA monitoring. In order to resolve the finding the DVRS had to cease its share of funding. The DVRS continues to provide technical

Dupree McCalla
(New Brunswick)

"I am extremely appreciative of the time and attention you have so graciously given to my son. I know he is far from your only client yet you make him feel like he is your only client. That says a lot!"
(Parent)

"Thank you very much for helping me out and especially for the Assistive Technology equipment. After seeing the features of the devices that were given to me, I can tell and imagine all the help they will offer in the fall semester. I spoke to my father and you will continue to receive my grades after each semester. Thank you once again."
(Client)

"Just wanted to say thanks for your assistance in helping me get funds for school. Thanks for your encouragement and kind words and having confidence in me. You are a great person. I will do my best in school! Thank you for everything!"
(Client)

Barbara Szabo
(New Brunswick)

"Barbara, just wanted to remark to the staff of DVR that you have been outstanding with call backs and with making yourself available for brief phone conferences for your clients. Just giving credit where credit is due."
(Vendor)

assistance to the CILs to help them with the fee-for-service program to work with VR clients.

Masters Degree Programs Collaborate with the DVRS

Rutgers University Master's degree program reports the following collaborative activities:

- The DVRS regularly provides practicum and internship placements.
- The DVRS and the SRC members have provided letters of support for grant applications for rehabilitation education program students at both the graduate and undergraduate level.
- The DVRS staff and the SRC members provide classroom lectures, mentor students, assist with case conferences and provide knowledge of current practices in the field.
- Several members of the DSU and the SRC are active members of the Rutgers University, School of Health Related Professions Rehabilitation Counseling Program Advisory Council.

In addition to supporting staff to attend Rutgers University the agency has also offered programs in the George Washington University and several other universities offering on-line support. In FFY' 13 the DVRS director advised the five identified counselors who still do not have their Master's Degree that they will no longer be able to perform the non-delegable functions of their job. The SRC supports the director with this initiative.

Tina Brandt
(Westampton)

"I appreciate all your help. All your positive reinforcement has helped me tremendously. I don't think I could have moved forward. Thank you."
(Client)

Jen Shaw (Thorofare)

"Thank you for meeting with my son. He is looking forward to the program and is determined to improve on the areas in question. Barring any unforeseen problems with transportation, he should be punctual in reporting to work on his assigned days. Again, I thank you for the productive meeting."
(Parent)

Tanya M. Onsongo (New Brunswick)

"I would like to thank Tanya Onsongo for all her kindness and help she gave me whenever I called. Your office should be so proud of her."
(Client)

"Thanks again for all your help. You were so patient and cooperative. You were more than kind. People like you aren't easy to find!"
(Client)

Mental Health Services

The DVRS continues to work in a collaborative effort with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) in providing Supported Employment services to consumers with mental illness. This is achieved through the funding and oversight of contracts with 22 Supported Employment programs across the state. The DVRS is represented on the NJ Mental Health Council through attendance at monthly meetings. The DVRS provides consultation regarding the DVRS policies and services to various New Jersey-based mental health agencies and organizations. For FFY 2013 an amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between the Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The RSA monitoring team has been providing technical assistance to the DVRS to resolve a compliance finding stemming from the 2010 monitoring of this collaboration.

National VR Network

Both individual DVRS consumers and businesses have greatly benefited from this national collaboration that has been activated by the CSAVR National Employment Network (The NET). The agency has also continued a partnership with the Business Leadership Network (BLN) and hopes to benefit from all of the information generated from the "Discoverability" project that is funded by the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG).

Regional Deafness Centers

Three regional centers serving individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened or with cochlear implants opened in 2009. They are as follows:

**Danielle Kwan
(Somerville)**

*"I am very happy and very grateful to work with you. It is a blessing having a job that makes me feel great. Thank you."
(Client)*

**Jennifer Johnson
(Neptune)**

*"Greetings. I have been meaning to reach out for years now. I have just been so busy working and continuing my education that I have allowed it to fall by the wayside. About five years ago, I came to you for help. I was a dually diagnosed 24-year-old with nowhere to go in life. Thanks to the one of a kind and diligent counselor, Jennifer Johnson, I was granted a considerable amount of financial assistance to go to cosmetology school. Although cosmetology was not the field for me, I am very grateful to your organization, and Ms. Johnson in particular, for setting me on the right path. After I completed the cosmetology program, I was able to complete an Associate's degree and obtain employment. I am now working on completing my bachelor's degree, which I am paying for myself as I continue to hold a full-time job. I have wanted to thank DVRS and Ms. Johnson for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to better my life. Thank you so much for your kind consideration."
(Client)*

- JVS Goodwill Career Center (operated by Jewish Vocational Service and Goodwill of Northern NJ)
- Career Development Center (operated by Bridges to Employment in Raritan)
- Career Success Solution (operated by Burlington County College)

The purpose of the centers is to provide the services necessary to enable eligible NJDVRS clients who are deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, or who have cochlear implants to prepare for, obtain, and retain employment. These centers offer vocational evaluations, job search support and advice on Assistive Listening Devices and appropriate individuals are encouraged to make appointments through the Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. As of September 30, 2013, 77 DVRS clients have been successfully placed by the centers.

One-Stop Career Centers Continue Efforts toward Disability Access

The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant:

- Advancing Opportunities, Inc. (AO) was hired in FFY 2012 to conduct a Universal Design Initiative in 18 One Stop Career Centers. This initiative includes site assessment, staff assessment and training, and equipment assessment.
- In September 2013, the AO contract was extended through December 31st and funding was increased to extend the initiative to another 7 One Stop Career Centers.
- The DVRS Office Managers are actively involved with their local WIBs and typically serve as the Chair of their respective Disability Committees.
- Accessibility assessments for both facilities and services are being conducted via checklists under section 118 of the ADA at all One-Stop sites. These

John Tkacz (Newark)

"John Tkacz received the National Certificate of Achievement for Supported Employment. He completed 51.5 contact hours through The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators Center and Rehabilitation Synergy Center to earn the certification. The Newark DVRS Office commends John Tkacz for this achievement."

Ann Disare (Westampton)

"Thank you for the excellent counseling and guidance that you have provided to my client. Clearly, he expended great effort to achieve such an admirable work and educational background as his disability is most significant. With your hard work and support of him, he is working in a job commensurate with his potential. I know he has already expressed appreciation. I am expressing mine—these are the type of cases that make it all worthwhile and make us want to come back the next day and try again."

Emma Gordon (Bridgeton)

"I received my hearing aids today. I saw Tara Fogel who is very nice and explained everything to me. You, the DVRS and Tara were wonderful."
(Client)

assessments are completed by the AO staff and status reports are given to each site to ensure that the goal of universal access is met.

- Accessible public access computers in the 25 affected One Stop sites are being replaced with new machines and monitors, and the accessibility software is being updated.

Grants

The DVRS supported several grant programs in FFY 13:

- **EmploymentFirst4Jersey** – The EmploymentFirst4Jersey Training Grant program is designed to promote competitive, integrated employment for people with any type of disability in the general workforce. By working with employers, the program will create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to obtain gainful employment in targeted industry sectors, local school districts and community rehabilitation organizations.
- **Innovation and Expansion** – The DVRS issued a new Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) for FFY'13. The DVRS has approximately \$2.2 million dollars to use for this NGO. The focus of the grants was Employment 1st, Statewide Social Security Benefit Counseling, Autism and other innovations.
- **Creating Local Opportunity to Stimulate Employment Rehabilitation** – The C.L.O.S.E.R. funding provided an opportunity for the local offices to submit ideas for creative opportunities for their clients. Neptune supported their consumers in an entrepreneurial endeavor for a hydroponics business; Jersey City provided support to DVRS transition students; Trenton worked with DVRS consumers who were also parolees in a construction industry training; Morristown and Hackettstown worked with Toys are Us to hire DVRS consumers; Bergen provided enhanced training for consumers interested in

**Marcella Dinoso
(Hackensack)**

*"I would like to make you aware of the assistance that your staff member Marcela Dinoso gave during the Bergen County Job Fair at Bergen Community College on March 25, 2013. We had a sight impaired man come to our registration desk during one of our busiest periods during the fair and ask for assistance to walk around the crowded employer area to speak with potential employers. Since the college was closed for the week, there were no aides available. I asked Marcela for her assistance with this individual which she gladly did. She calmly talked with him and assisted the client in a very professional manner. I would like to thank Marcela for her help on that very busy day and the teamwork she showed that we have at the Bergen One-Stop Center. Thank you."
(Bergen One-Stop Center)*

**Maureen Ritchie
(Paterson)**

*"Thank you, Maureen, for everything you have done."
(Client)*

food preparation; and Gloucester worked with Gloucester Community College to provide job development for consumers with intellectual disabilities on their campus.

Process Improvement:

Rehabilitation & Research Technical Assistance Center (RTAC)

The DVRS agency applied for and obtained a grant through the Institute of Community Inclusion / Rehabilitation & Research Technical Assistance Center for problem solving, identification and application of practice based solutions, and evaluation of related outcomes. It is a peer-to-peer knowledge exchange model that features strong evaluation components providing documentation of success. Features of the collaborative include face-to-face meetings, on-site and distance consultation, self-assessment, and tailored evaluation. The grant was awarded for \$50,000 and the project started in February 2013 ending in January 2014 with final reporting through February 2014.

This project worked closely with the Talent Networks in NJ to ensure DVRS clients become a natural component of job applicants. The project aimed to solidify a partnership with the Financial Services talent network, DVRS staff, VR clients and stakeholders.

Schedule A Hiring:

In December 2013, the DVRS hosted a Schedule A Hiring Event which is different than that of the traditional Job Fair model. DVRS consumers are pre-screened by the VR counselor, matched to the Federal Job lead, and scheduled for a specific interview with a specific Federal HR Coordinator. The interviews are conducted in private in the local DVRS host office. Federal agencies such as the Department of Defense Logistics,

Karen Carroll
Central Office

"I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Karen Carroll, PPDS for her efforts in coordinating the S.U.D trainings throughout the state. I don't, but Karen knows how much time and effort went into putting the regional trainings together. For the most part, it was a collaborative effort, but the lion's share of the work fell on Karen's shoulders. The trainings were well coordinated, informative and very worthwhile in presenting the NJDVRs Best Practices for Substance Use Disorders. I think DVRs has a better understanding of Substance Use Disorders as a result of Karen's leadership."

*(Marc S. Schweitzer
Supervising Rehabilitation
Counselor)*

Danielle Kwan
(Somerville)

"What a fantastic informational tour yesterday! Thank you for coordinating speakers from Bridges, the One-Stop Career Center and the Greater Raritan One-Stop. Our students have much information to share with their families as well as information we can review in the classroom."
(Educator)

the Department of the State, U.S. General Services Administration, IRS, Naval Air Command, SSA in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, U.S. Border Protection, Veteran's Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Mint, and Federal Bureau of Prisons, along with contractor Johnson & Johnson and U.S. Department of Labor have participated. Since the DVRs started the Schedule A Hiring Event, 42 individuals with disabilities have been hired via this activity.

Training for staff

The DVRs had an outstanding year in staffing and development, with 17 promotions, 18 new hires 69 training opportunities, three enrolled in the Certified Public Manager program and 45 staff complete and/or enrolled in NJ STEP Supervisory training. The division continues to use the TACE center to provide ongoing technical assistance and continuing education throughout the year.

In-Service Training Grant

The DVRs was a successful applicant under the State Vocational Rehabilitation Unit In-Service Training (CFDA 84.265A) Program, which is a five year discretionary grant through RSA. The goal of this project is to assure opportunities for employment, independence and the integration of people with disabilities into the community by expanding the training, education and skills of rehabilitation personnel through a managed system of continuing education. In FFY'13 the DVRs was able to send several staff members to conferences, including the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), the New Jersey Rehabilitation Association (NJRA) summer and winter conferences, and the Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA) annual conference. Additional staff members were able to attend conferences specific to their area of expertise as well.

Hurricane Sandy

New Jersey was pummeled by this major storm at the beginning of FFY 2013 and the DVRS offices throughout the affected areas provided crisis counseling services, volunteered for food and clothing drives, and worked after hours and during the weekends to help New Jersey residents with disabilities in need.

Vito Palo (Camden)

"Camden One-Stop gives credit to Vito Palo, Manager for taking it upon himself to form the "appearance" committee and follow-up with it. Kathy said that this is the first and only non-mandatory One-Stop Partner Committee. Vito grabbed everyone's interest to begin discussing the appearance of our staff and One-Stop and how we can help our customers with this issue."

Jennifer Veneziani (Bridgeton)

"I would like to thank you for your participation in our parent meeting on April 10, 2013. It shows your dedication for our students to give of your time in the evening. Providing information to our parents and students as they prepare for their futures is important for their success in adulthood. Parents are very appreciative for the information and students will benefit with continued support services after graduation. I am very proud to be a part of such a committed team that is devoted to helping our students. Once again, thank you!"
(Educator)

Significant Issues

Appointments

Appointments to the SRC were a significant issue to resolve for FFY 2013. The DVRS and the SRC worked together this past year with the Governor's Appointment office to provide all the paperwork necessary so appointments would be made. The SRC members received their appointments in early December 2013. The membership is now fully constituted and strategies are in place to develop a pipeline of applicants to ensure that the SRC remains fully constituted moving forward.

State Match

The SRC was very aware and expressed concern regarding the state match needs of the DVRS in FFY 2013. The executive committee met with the LWD deputy commissioner to express their concern and discuss possible strategies to acquire state match. The SRC chair presented a request for state dollars to the Casino Revenue Commission this past year and has been invited back to discuss this option in early 2014. The DVRS developed a notice of grant opportunity (NGO) utilizing state dollars to develop training for DVRS customers in the industry sectors identified in the LWD unified state plan; the SRC was supportive of this strategy and is hopeful that these state dollars continue to be available next year.

**Toni Gramigna
(Thorofare)**

*"Just an update on my hearing aids. I can hear so many sounds it is unbelievable. THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!! The gift of sound is amazing, and I cannot even begin to tell you how thankful I am for this organization and the dramatic effect you are going to have on my life. One never knows how many things we take for granted until something is taken away. Thank you for giving me back my hearing. This is truly a wonderful gift that you are able to give people. The impact that you have on other people's lives is truly amazing and you seem like you really care about the people you help. I am grateful that I was able to find your organization especially someone as dedicated as you. Thank you for changing my life."
(Client)*

**Gilda Escobar
(Hackensack)**

*"Thank you for a great meeting and your time and input. I could see your sincere caring and effort on the part of my son. You are a great asset to D.V.R. and all your consumers. Thank you for all you do from the bottom of my heart! And keep your toes and fingers crossed we hear from this B.C.C. Manufacturing Training Program."
(Parent)*

Standards and Indicators

In FFY'13 the DVRS met or exceeded all RSA Standards and Indicators except 1.5 (earnings ratio). Despite the overall economy and numerous staffing challenges the DVRS managed to successfully rehabilitate 4,028 persons with disabilities in NJ.

The earnings ratio indicator continues to be a challenge in New Jersey due to the high per capita income of the state. The DVRS has no control over these earnings. This particular indicator affects most of the northeastern states due to the higher income levels of these states. The SRC supports a change in this RSA Indicator to make it more equitable to all states.

RSA Monitoring

The RSA monitoring report which resulted from the monitoring visit in April, 2010 was provided to the agency in March 2011. The SRC receives a compliance update from the DVRS at every meeting. The DVRS has resolved eight of the 11 findings to date. Of the three remaining findings, two are on targeted to be resolved within the first quarter of 2014 and the remaining finding has made progress with technical assistance from the RSA.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)

The DVRS and the SRC are preparing a CSNA during FFY 2014. Preliminary goals have been identified, in particular an Employment First goal to improve outcomes for consumers with significant intellectual and complex disabilities; a goal to improve communication and outcomes for consumers who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing; a goal to improve outcomes for consumers with disabilities who are also served through the criminal justice systems; and a goal to improve community rehabilitation programs in New Jersey.

Nedi Koch (Morristown)

"My son has been seen by Mrs. Koch since May of 2012. I just wanted to let you know how invaluable Mrs. Koch has been to Adam. Navigating the murky waters of going to a four year college are challenging to say the least. Mrs. Koch has worked very hard to give my son every opportunity to succeed and in the process of it all is very patient and kind to him. We both wanted you to know, as her supervisor, that she has been very helpful to us and we look forward to working with her towards my son's future goals."
(Parent)

Helene Simms (Paterson)

"I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me these past months. I know you may not feel like you did much for me, but I felt like I benefited greatly from our interaction and I just want to say, "Thanks!" I recently recommended you to a "colleague" of mine. If you hear from him, that's where he got your name."
(Client)

Unified State Plan (USP)

The DVRS was very involved in formulating the Unified State Plan (USP) developed in FFY 2012 that will be the blue print for the state for the next five years regarding providing appropriate services to all job seekers of New Jersey.

The USP identified four core values:

Driving Investments Based on Industry Needs

- The DVRS worked with the industry sectors identified in the USP, in particular the financial services industry, to develop a process to make sure that DVRS consumers have access to the jobs that available within that industry. The DVRS will role out this process to the other industries identified with the USP.

Meeting Jobseekers Where They Are

- The USP identified strengthening services for special populations. The DVRS worked on this strategy through its delivery of in-person services for consumers. The local offices offered job clubs for interested consumers and counselors helped individuals network, build resumes, and maneuver through various on-line applications for employment.

Equipping the Workforce for Employment

- The DVRS provided access to training programs that directly responded to industry needs through the partnerships established with the LWD talent networks. DVRS customers that demonstrated a need to strengthen literacy and basic skills were able to utilize the one-stop career center (OSCC) programs when appropriate.

**Nedianne Koch
(Morristown)**

"Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks. I want to thank you Nedi for all your help in allowing Bethel Ridge to fully train my daughter to excel in her bagger job at ShopRite. Her job coaches showed much patience and respect for Stephanie and were relentless in correcting her actions so that she would work appropriately with customers. Special Olympics, which ShopRite supports, was founded on the belief that people with intellectual disabilities can, with proper instruction and encouragement, learn, enjoy, and benefit from participation in individual and team sports. Special Olympics believes that consistent training is indispensable to the development of an individual's sports skills. This correlates also to learning a job. Individuals with special needs need consistent training to master the skills necessary for learning the job. The benefit is that they will remain at the job they are trained for many years. They also are good conscience employees with good work ethics, always willing to work hard, are punctual, and love to work. My daughter loves her job. They have increased her schedule and she has shown them that she has the stamina to work more hours in addition to being happy and the customers love her."
(Parent)

Increasing System Accountability

- The DVRS is in the process of upgrading its current data base system to a full Alliance AWARE system. The planned roll out of the upgraded system is scheduled for August 2014. A second phase will include an interface to the LWD AOSOS data base; this will ensure that the LWD captures complete information regarding the jobseekers that enter into the various doors of the workforce system.

The plan identifies that individuals with disabilities are a priority; the Governor's Executive Order declaring that New Jersey is officially an *Employment First* state was embedded as a philosophy that will drive services to job seekers with the most significant disabilities. The DVRS continues to provide leadership within the state in providing services to individuals with disabilities seeking employment.

Return on Investment (ROI)

The LWD plans to evaluate each major area in the department to fulfill the goal of systems accountability written in the USP. The SRC met with LWD executive management and discussed how to partner with the evaluation of the DVRS and include a Return on Investment (ROI) assessment as part of the bigger evaluation. The LWD Deputy Commissioner also met with the full SRC at their strategy planning day to gather input from the members. The SRC membership felt that the ROI should be a component of evaluation for the DVRS and agreed to partner with the LWD to ensure that the DVRS evaluation would include ROI as part of its assessment.

Judy Dorrbecker
(Jersey City)

"I was impressed with Judy right from the start. She took the time with me by helping review my career goals and recommended strategies for achieving them. Her advice was priceless. She gave me hope on how to achieve the skills I needed to pursue employment. I especially appreciate her patience, kindness and assistance at such a difficult time in my life. Judy has made a difference in my life. I'm hoping to be starting school in a couple of weeks for a certification in Computer Concepts and Applications at Eastwick College. I believe this program will give me the knowledge to pursue a wonderful job. For me this is the break I so desperately needed. It is truly a gift and I am most grateful!"
(Client)

Patience Okotie-Isekenegbe (Bridgeton)

"Patience guided me to my degree. She is kind, patient, caring and a wonderful counselor. I would also like to thank you for allowing me to go to school. Patience worked hard to get me what I needed before classes started which I really appreciated."
(Client)

Planned Activities for FY 2014

Meetings:

- Continue quarterly Council meetings;
- Conduct an annual planning summit as a one day event;
- Conduct public forums in geographically diverse areas to obtain input regarding services delivered and communicate with the community; and
- Support the agency's efforts to meet on a regularly scheduled basis with service providers and/or other agencies for planning, problem solving, grant development and other purposes as needed.

Committees:

- Enhance and support the sub-committee structure itself; and
- Enhance and support the recommendations of the sub-committees by full disclosure of sub-committee recommendations in advance of meetings where possible and follow up by the full SRC.
- Continue consumer satisfaction activities, analysis and follow up recommendations to ensure the DVRS is meeting the changing needs of its consumers. Utilize Survey Monkey for electronic delivery, response and analysis of satisfaction feedback.

SRC Membership:

- Develop screening guidelines for recruitment and membership and review membership activities/status at each Executive Committee meeting, including resignations/expiration of appointments;
- Provide guidance re: issues relating to recruitment and approval of members; and

**Marianne Hanifin
(Neptune)**

*"I want you to know that I am so grateful for you. Without you I would not be where I am today. I am so proud of the fact that I am the first in my family to go to and graduate from college. Because of you I will make my dreams come true."
(Client)*

**Ann Disare
(Westampton)**

*"I was on a panel on Saturday for the NJCDD Partners in Policymaking session with several other agencies and non-profits. When it came time for Q&A, I was ready for anything and was delighted to hear a compliment about Ann Disare. One of the participants indicated that she has been working since she was 18 and has DVRS to thank. First it was Donna Brown and more recently she mentioned how Ann has been so supportive, kind and encouraging. She said that Ann would never give up on her and that is what will motivate her to get back to work. That was great to hear especially from a woman who is studying to be an advocate. Great work Ann! Thanks."
(Brian Fitzgibbons, Assistant Director)*

- Conduct new SRC member orientation/training, including consideration of joint efforts with the CBVI.

Communication:

- Continue to look at opportunities and encourage the use of technology including, but not limited to conference calling, long distance learning, and/or a dedicated web site for purposes of information sharing, receiving input, training of members (including staff), emergency and routine notifications.
- Implement use of Go to Meeting and Go to Webinar software.

Educational Efforts:

- Continue leadership in providing training, support and access to the One-Stop systems regarding persons with disabilities and the workforce;
- Develop educational information regarding the services provided to, successes and outcomes of the DVRS constituents, including legislative district break down; and
- Implement ROI study protocol to demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of the DVRS services.

Advocacy:

- Continue to advocate for funding which will provide support to the DVRS for staffing, programs, staff development and vocational rehabilitation services as mandated by the RSA and the demands of NJ's population;
- Advocate for funding to support the DVRS' efforts to expand services through grants and other means as appropriate to support a full range of services to individuals, including those in transition;
- Advocate for funding to support the RSA's requirements for state match;
- Provide support to the DVRS in applying for grants that enhance successful employment outcomes for persons with disabilities; and

**Donna Erickson
(Hackettstown)**

*"I wanted to say thank you for all your help over the past four years. With your help I was able to get both my Associates and Bachelor's degree. I am happy to inform you that I did very well in school and graduated in the top 10 percent of the Business School at William Paterson. Upon graduation I pursued a full-time position and landed a job as an accountant making a decent salary and 100 percent fully covered health benefits. In three more months my job will pay for my MBA. I can never thank you enough for making it a pleasant experience. Thank you!"
(Client)*

**Lesley Jack
(Westampton)**

*"I have finally made my milestone in accomplishing my Bachelor's degree. The battle was fierce, the journey was scary, tearful, frustrating and rough but with your well written mail and encouraging words, I made it through. You believed in me more than I did in myself and because of the high esteem and praises you placed on me I had no other choice but to keep climbing to the top. I made the Dean's List and even awarded membership into Phi Beta Kappa."
(Client)*

Collaboration:

- Support the DVRS' effort to gain approval for paid internships.
- Participate in development of goals and work plan to enhance services to consumers who are the most significantly disabled.
- Continue active involvement with the CSAVR National Employment Network (The NET).
- Partner with the DVRS in the development of a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, in particular to develop goals and work plan to implement an Employment First strategy for consumers who are the most significantly disabled, to improve communication and services to consumers who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, to support the rehabilitation needs of consumers who are coming out of the criminal justice system and to improve services to consumers living in poverty.

Al Cain, Pleasantville

"I want you to know how overjoyed I am to have received my hearing aids. I appreciate your kindness and patience. I hoped, but never really believed I would be eligible to be approved for your program. You made me comfortable and treated me respectfully. Thank you."

(Client)

"I found Mr. Cain to be very informative, considerate, and professional. He walked me through the procedures that I needed to comply with and made me feel very proud to possibly become a recipient of hearing aids. I picked up my hearing aid and I heard sounds. I never in my life have been able to hear. So, I sincerely would like to thank the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for this program and for employing such an extraordinary counselor like Mr. Cain."

(Client)

**Michaela Macauley
(New Brunswick)**

"I wanted to tell you thank you for your help in my job search. I was offered a good position last week as an administrative assistant. Everything is going great so far. Thanks again for all your assistance."

(Client)

SRC State Plan Recommendations

The New Jersey State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides oversight and advises the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), the designated state unit (DSU) within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). The LWD is the designated state agency (DSA). The SRC is a partnership of people with disabilities, advocates, and other interested persons who are committed to ensuring through policy development, implementation, and advocacy that New Jersey has a rehabilitation program that is not only comprehensive and consumer-responsive but also effective, efficient, and significantly funded. The SRC is dedicated to ensuring that people with disabilities receive rehabilitation services that result in gainful employment. Representing the myriad of diversity that is New Jersey, council members believe that individuals with disabilities are the "untapped resource" to the business community and assert that disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of American life. Members of the SRC in New Jersey believe in a public system of vocational rehabilitation that is responsible and accountable to those it serves and to those who fund it; they believe that competitive jobs generate tax revenue and enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to spend discretionary income which contributes to the state's economy.

SRC recommendations for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2013 and status updates

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC appreciates the success the DVRS had in 2011 with filling staff vacancies. Hiring of qualified staff and maintaining an appropriate number of personnel are integral to providing quality services to individuals with disabilities. The SRC recommends that the DVRS evaluate its procedures for recruitment.

Tina Brand
(Westampton)

"Tina Brand guided me through the process and was very clear in the agency's mission to help those in need. I am so grateful that you supported her efforts on my behalf. In addition to the emails I sent to Tina during the transition time (application process to final resolution), I just wanted to express my appreciation for the consideration offered to me by your office in obtaining new hearing aids!"
(Client)

Marva Ferguson
(Bridgeton)

"Just want to thank you again for taking the time to participate in our panel discussion. Your background and experience in this area added an important perspective to this panel. I look forward to furthering strengthening the connection between our two organizations. Talk to you soon."
(Disability Support Coordinator)

Samia Haridi (Jersey City)

"Congratulations to Samia on getting her Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification. We wish continued success and good luck in all her career endeavors."
(Anand Sumaithangi, Manager)

Status Update:

The DVRS was able to increase its counselor positions by 25 for a total of 140 DVRS counselors beginning in October 2012. Since that time the DVRS has promoted managers and supervisors in all of the local offices. In the central office, the DVRS was able to add two chief positions, two program planning development specialist (PPDS) positions, one secretarial, and one executive assistant position. Overall the DVRS has seen an increase of 31 positions. The DVRS identified one PPDS to manage the comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) needs of the division, provide training to staff, and manage the training grant. This staff member has the responsibility to communicate with potential applicants and the universities that train vocational rehabilitation counselors throughout the year and ensures that the DVRS has a number of appropriate candidates whenever there is a posting for a position.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes the importance of hiring qualified counselors to administer vocational rehabilitation services to its customers. In order to ensure that the DVRS hire the most highly qualified staff the SRC recommends that the DVRS evaluate its candidate eligibility requirements and implement a "Category R" established by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) as a condition for future new staff.

Status Update:

The recent expansion of the educational requirements adopted by the NJ Civil Service Commission to include a master's degree in a closely related field was designed with the assistance and advice from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). At the time this was done because there were not enough candidates with the rehabilitation counseling degree in certain areas of the state. Since the Category R has been adopted by CRCC the agency will begin to explore the option of seeking the

**Judith I. Kail
(Elizabeth Office)**

*"Ms. Kail I thank you so much for all of the time took to meet with me personally in our interview and for following up on my file. I truly am grateful for all of the work you put into my case. Thank you."
(Client)*

Ann Disare (Westampton)

*"Advancing Opportunities came yesterday and installed the computer, chair and the Dragon Software. This is going to help me more than you can imagine. I wanted to take a minute to say thank you. You have been a real support for me and I appreciate all you do!"
(Client)*

Barbara Szabo (New Brunswick)

"Barbara Szabo received a Certificate of Appreciation Award from Harold J. Wirths, Commissioner that reads as follows: In appreciation of your perfect attendance for the year 2012 and your continued dedication to the State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development."

Gus Bailey (Elizabeth)

*"I would like to say thank you for what you have done for me. I greatly appreciate your help and services to you and your Supervisor and staff."
(Client)*

advanced graduate coursework and making it available for those individuals seeking to qualify for the certified rehabilitation counselor (CRC) designation.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC acknowledges its duty to examine the success of the DVRS program through public hearings. The SRC recognizes the importance of keeping open lines of communication with the DVRS and consumers of vocational rehabilitation services. The SRC recommends that the DVRS explore technology and alternate public hearing venues to maximize opportunities for consumer input.

Status Update:

The DVRS provided a public forum from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. though teleconferencing in April 2013. By utilizing technology the division was able to provide the opportunity for individuals to attend with little interruption to their work day. All of the attendees were positive regarding the teleconference format.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that jobseekers with disabilities sometimes require innovative approaches to enhance their chance to garner gainful integrated employment. The SRC recommends that the DVRS pursue strategies such as using paid internships and increase the use of on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers as appropriate.

Status Update:

The DVRS investigated its use of OJT opportunities during the FFY 2012 year to establish a base line of application. The field team met with every office and discussed OJT with the counselors to make sure that they understand how and when OJT's are appropriate for consumers. While the DVRS was unable to implement any paid internship opportunities last year several local offices were able to sponsor specialized OJTs in the construction trades. The DVRS plans to provide paid

Kamlesh Mehrotra
(Newark)

"Thank you and the wonderful staff at the DVRS in Newark for all the knowledge and experience that your program has given me. From the beginning you and your staff have guided me with trust, faith, and extreme encouragement. The process from the beginning and throughout has been very professional and caring for this individual to have hope and willingness to a new career. Your standards of excellence has awarded me the opportunity to revisit school at the age of 50. Today, I want to thank you and also to let you know I will never be able to repay your generosity and eagerness to helping me to achieve today, actually I received my CDA/Chemical Dependency Associate. I am now licensed in the State of New Jersey through the Certification Board to practice as a substance abuse counselor. Again, graciously I thank you."
(Client)

Emma Gordon
(Bridgeton)

"Thank you for all of your help."
(Client)

internships through its creating local opportunities to stimulate employment rehabilitation (C.L.O.S.E.R.) projects in Neptune and Camden this summer.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that people with disabilities need full access to the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system. The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue in its leadership in providing training, coordination, support, and technical assistance regarding universal access to the OSCC system throughout New Jersey.

Status Update:

The DVRS is currently co-located in 15 OSCC throughout the state and staff meets regularly to discuss ways to provide services to individuals in each location. The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) from the USDOL has provided increased training opportunities in the pilot counties of Cumberland-Salem, Burlington, Passaic, and Bergen counties for staff to develop integrated resource team methodologies and benefits planning expertise for OSCC staff. Additionally, the DEI is providing funds for designated staff in all OSCC locations to be trained in universal design approaches to increase the access throughout the state.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC is mindful that there are emerging groups of people, in particular individuals with autism spectrum disorders, persons with criminal backgrounds, and persons with substance use disorder who demonstrate a need for intense vocational rehabilitation. The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue to develop and enhance services to these segments of the state's population.

Status Update:

Over the last year, the DVRS developed a comprehensive substance use disorder (SUD) best practice manual for counselors and regional training was scheduled in summer 2013. The DVRS also identified autism spectrum disorder as a priority

**Adekoya Brown
(Newark)**

"I just wanted to write to you about my experience last week with Mr. Adekoya Brown. I visited the office with my son who has Asperger's syndrome. Mr. Brown welcomed us warmly and put us at ease right away. He was extremely informative, helpful, empathic, professional and personable. He spoke eloquently and we could tell his heart was completely in his work. My son and I were both really delighted to receive such excellent services from him. Your agency is truly lucky to have such a dedicated counselor."
(Parent)

Thorofare Office Staff

"I just wanted to let you know that we reviewed our books recently to check on accounts that may be past due. I was extremely pleased to see that your office is completely up-to-date. I can't overemphasize how much we appreciate that and how much it helps our office. Thanks for the good work."
(Vendor)

population in an innovation and expansion notice of grant opportunity (NGO) posted in October 2012 and subsequently has awarded five grants specifically focused to provide integrated employment services to individuals with Autism. The DVRS partners with stakeholders who work with persons with criminal backgrounds to make sure that any individual who qualifies for DVRS services is appropriately referred. Additionally, the Trenton local office piloted a training opportunity for parolees with disabilities to work in the construction industry.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that the DVRS program is affected by state funding cuts. The Council also understands that an inability to match funds from the state will impact the ability to draw down full federal funds for Title I. The SRC understands that at this point the DVRS will be flat funded for state year 2013, and it recommends that the DVRS identifies and advocates strategies to ensure that state matching funds will be consistently available for future fiscal years.

Status Update:

The LWD executive management meets monthly to discuss how to make sure the program garners the necessary match in order to draw down full federal funds for Title I. The DVRS developed an NGO using approximately two million dollars of workforce development partnership funds (WDP) that can be applied toward match. The DVRS is also working closely with our Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) to identify if any consumer services being provided may qualify as state match dollars. The SRC chair presented a request for state dollars to the Casino Revenue Commission this past year and has been invited back to discuss this option in early 2014.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recommends that the DVRS examine its policies regarding the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including employment.

**Joseph Guarracino
(Toms River)**

*"Thank you Joe for everything. It's wonderful to work with you! Have a great weekend and thanks again."
(Parent)*

Amy Kaboski (Neptune)

*"Thank you for your professionalism in obtaining my hearing aids. My hearing diminished to such an extent that my position as a classroom substitute teacher was in jeopardy. In addition to becoming a much more effective teacher, I am experiencing other personal benefits. People no longer need to repeat their words, television is set at a civil noise level, telephone conversations are manageable and most importantly my spirits have been lifted in my battle with bladder cancer. I can't thank you enough"
(Client)*

**Elizabeth Guzman
(Camden)**

*"I wanted to say thank you again for giving me the information I needed for the job fair. Everyone was so helpful and kind. Please let me know if you have any other career related events. I really need a job but even more so to start my career. Thank you and I appreciate your advice."
(Client)*

Status Update:

The DVRS director wrote a letter for school personnel and families informing them about transition services available to eligible students. This letter has been placed on the DVRS website and will be updated as appropriate. The DVRS also developed marketing information about transition; one is geared specifically to students and the other is geared toward school or vendor staff that work with students. The DVRS has also assigned local office counselors to every high school and staff members are expected to provide information about DVRS services and meet with groups when requested. The DVRS has also worked with the Centers for Independent Living to develop a transition-based fee-for-service curriculum to use for students with disabilities.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue to educate the community and policy makers as to the services, successes and outcomes of the state public vocational rehabilitation program, including the return on investment from using vocational rehabilitation services.

Status Update:

The DVRS keeps a dashboard on every major program that provides a monthly update on activities within the division. Additionally, the executive committee of the SRC will be meeting with the deputy commissioner to discuss a return on investment (ROI) study. The deputy commissioner has expertise regarding evaluation methodology and the DVRS is looking forward to a rigorous evaluation.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC is excited that the Governor has declared through proclamation, that New Jersey become the 14th *Employment First* state. The SRC recommends that the DVRS

Helene Simms (Paterson)

"I just wanted to write and thank you so much for all you have done to help my son get started in his new school. As you know, it's more than just a school; he is embarking on a career that will enable him to be self-sufficient and a contributing member of society.

Your part in this process was significant. When we wanted to jump at the first course we came to, you wouldn't allow us to proceed without looking at two other alternatives, wherein we found the full program that would much better suit him. I was most impressed with how you worked with my son. You treated him with respect and ensured that he fully understood what was expected of him, and what was going to happen. He was always eager to work with you as a result.

Of course, we were thrilled that he was able to get funding from the State to make this possible. But the best part of this experience was working with someone who was sensitive to all our needs, was competent and professional at all times.

Thank you, Helene. You have made a difference in a young man's life."
(Parent)

continue to develop, revise and monitor agreements with other state agencies and community partners to ensure success of this critical change in policy.

Status Update:

The DVRS has been working closely with the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to revise current policies and procedures with respect to supported employment, DDD/DVRS referrals, and the Extended Employment program.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC understands the importance of working with community-based organizations that provide supported employment services that are integral to the success of many customers of the DVRS. Since it has been many years since vendor rates have been assessed, the SRC recommends that the DVRS reevaluate its current hourly rate for supported employment.

Status Update:

The DVRS has begun the process by establishing an internal workgroup that is evaluating several service fees including supported employment. The Community Rehabilitation Program unit has developed a survey that will be sent to all local DVRS offices for feedback. The results of the survey will be used to discuss possible fee changes. The DVRS will invite a sample of vendors to discuss any proposed adjustments and the SRC will have opportunity for input prior to formalizing.

Dupree McCalla
(New Brunswick)

"The interview went very well and they have offered me the job as a Wellness Specialist/Peer Professional. I am so very excited! The job pays \$35,000 a year. I want to thank you. You were such an integral part of my educational experience and success."
(Client)

"I am extremely appreciative of the time and attention you have so graciously given my son. I know he is far from your only client yet you make him feel like he is your only client. That says a lot!"
(Parent)

Michaela Macauley
(New Brunswick)

"Thank you so much for all your tireless work helping me to return to work. It has been a long road, but I could not have asked for a better companion to travel this road than you. You will be in my thoughts and prayers now and always. It is because of you that I am finally once again able to return to work and make a difference in the world. I have always said 'I am not looking for a hand out, just a hand!', and you are that hand Michaela. Thank you so much."
(Client)

State Plan Recommendations for FFY 2014

The SRC and the DVRS jointly developed and reviewed elements of the state plan. An assessment of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation delivery system has resulted in the following recommendations based on information gathered from the public forums held Tuesday March 26 via teleconference; Thursday March 28, 2013 held in Burlington County; Thursday April 4, 2013 held in Hunterdon County; and Tuesday April 8, 2013 held in Cumberland County.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC appreciates the continued success the DVRS had since 2012 with filling staff counseling vacancies and backfilling supervisory personnel. Hiring of qualified staff and maintaining an appropriate number of personnel are integral to providing quality services to individuals with disabilities. The SRC recommends that the DVRS restore the rehabilitation counselor aide position within the local offices as a method of recruiting more consumers with disabilities to the front line staff. The aide position requires an associate's degree and offers flexibility in hiring and can act as a feeder to the counseling position.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts the recommendation and notes that the Civil Service Commission recently tested for the rehabilitation aide position. Upon the announcement of the test, the agency conducted a campaign to reach out to consumers and employees interested in this paraprofessional opportunity. The DVRS will work towards reestablishing this vital position within the local offices.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC acknowledges its duty to examine the success of the DVRS program through public hearings. The SRC recognizes the importance of keeping open lines of communication with the DVRS and consumers of vocational rehabilitation services.

Ed Faver (Elizabeth)

"Thank you again for all you have done. All your support throughout these past four years and your continued support as I move on to the next chapter in my life really mean a lot to me."

(Client)

Rosemarie Rudderow (Neptune)

"Thanks for everything Rosemarie. I couldn't have done it without your help! Enclosed is my Dean's List letter. This is my sixth Deans List letter! One more semester to go."

(Client)

Al Cain (Pleasantville)

"Thank you so very much for all the help you gave me while I was attending Stockton. I wouldn't have graduated without you and I will always be grateful!"

(Client)

"Thanks for everything"

(Client)

"Just want to let you know that I finished school today and will graduate on this Friday. Thank you for your support."

(Client)

The SRC appreciates the efforts made by the DVRS in 2013 to utilize technology for its first public forum teleconference and recommends that the DVRS continue to explore technology and alternate public hearing venues to maximize opportunities for consumer input.

Agency Response:

The DVRS appreciates the continued need and accepts the recommendation and will explore alternate venues and the use of technology to enhance participation of consumers at our public hearings.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that jobseekers with disabilities sometimes require innovative approaches to enhance their chance to garner gainful integrated employment. The SRC recommends that the DVRS pursue strategies such as using paid internships for DVRS consumers and increase the use of on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers as appropriate.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will develop strategies that increase innovative approaches to ensure that jobseekers with disabilities garner gainful integrated employment.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that people with disabilities need full access to the One-Stop Career Center system. The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue in its direction regarding universal access to the One-Stop Career Center system throughout New Jersey.

**Nohemi Andujar
(Camden)**

"I was so excited to hear that you are the DVR person for this case. It is great news for Mr. V. You had such great success with another person that I referred to your program."

**Lindsey Aquino
(Thorofare)**

"Thank you so much for all of your unwavering support, especially in helping me to return to school this spring 2013 semester. Lindsey, please know that I really appreciate your professional involvement and personal commitment in my life. I'm so grateful in regards to this positive partnership that I have cried tears of joy!"
(Client)

**Sharon Ulm-Singleton
(Neptune)**

"I thought I would share with you this great accomplishment of being on the Dean's List. Thank you for being a part of the process in helping me achieve this goal."
(Client)

**Kudos to the Neptune
Office**

"I have to say, dealing with everyone at the Neptune office has been delightful! I can't tell you how much I appreciate your warm support."
(Client)

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts the recommendation and will continue to provide technical assistance, training, information and coordination regarding universal access design to the One-Stop Career Center system throughout New Jersey.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC is mindful that there are emerging groups of people, in particular individuals identified by the Governor's *Employment First Initiative* who demonstrate a need for intense vocational rehabilitation. The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue to develop and enhance services to these segments of the state's population.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will develop policies and procedures as appropriate to provide tailored vocational rehabilitation to emerging groups of people, in particular individuals identified by the Governor's *Employment First Initiative*.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that the DVRS program is affected by state funding cuts. The Council also understands that an inability to match funds from the state will impact the ability to draw down full federal funds for Title I. The SRC understands that, at this point, the DVRS will be flat funded for state year 2014, and it recommends that the DVRS identifies and advocates strategies to ensure that state matching funds will be consistently available for future fiscal years.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will work with the SRC to implement strategies to identify match funding to preserve the ability to draw down full federal funds for Title I.

Linnett Howell
(Bridgeton)

"Thank you so much for your help in finding Brian a place where he can be comfortable and get help he needs. He is doing better just by getting out of the house and being around people who don't treat him different and like him. Hopefully he will get to the point where he can leave Easter Seals but until then we are so grateful for your help in finding the right place for him now."
(Parent)

"Thank you so much for letting me better my studies and to be steps closer to one day getting a full time job with a college degree. Thanks you for all that you do."
(Client)

Rosemarie Perrone
(Wildwood)

"I wanted to say thank you for the personal hearing system. I have to say I used it for the first time on the 15th and I absolutely love it. I can hear. Last year I was so frustrated at a meeting - I couldn't hear anything. I was so angry and just had my boss finish up the meeting because I was getting disgusted with myself on having to ask everyone to repeat themselves. I can't thank you enough for this product. From the bottom of my heart I want to sincerely say thank you for all the help you have given me and for the information too."
(Client)

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC further recommends that the DVRS develop strategies that will enhance opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities currently participating in segregated employment programs who, through informed choice, identify the desire to move into integrated employment.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will work with community providers to develop strategies to provide opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities to move into integrated competitive employment.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recommends that the DVRS examine its policies regarding the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including employment.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will continue to examine policies regarding the transition of students with disabilities from school to employment. The DVRS is keeping careful eye on the current reauthorization drafts for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA); proposed language mandates increased services for students in transition.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue to educate the community and policy makers as to the services, successes and outcomes of the state public vocational rehabilitation program, including the return on investment from using vocational rehabilitation services.

Agency Response:

Julie Ann Boyle
(Toms River)

"I just wanted to send you a quick thank you today! I have had some unique challenges with a few clients recently and you have been very insightful with your suggestions and input. It is wonderful to know that I have your support. Have a great weekend!"
(Vendor)

Rose Rudderow
(Neptune)

"I passed my NCLEX! I really can't thank you enough for all your help. You've been wonderful."
(Client)

Elaine Soto-Ortiz
(Trenton)

"I'm very grateful for Ms. Ortiz. She has been vital in all my endeavors to gain employment at this time. God bless everyone at DVR."
(Client)

Rajashree Venkatraman
(Trenton)

"Thank you so much for seeing what I could not."
(Client)

The DVRS accepts the recommendation and plans to assess the actual return on investment for state funds. The DVRS and the SRC are working closely to develop this assessment. The LWD is currently rebranding the programs within workforce development, including the DVRS, to update existing information for distribution.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC is excited that New Jersey became the 14th *Employment First* state. The SRC recommends that the DVRS take the lead to develop, revise and monitor agreements with other state agencies and community partners to ensure success of this critical change in policy.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will work with other state agencies to develop, revise and monitor agreements supporting policies that promote *Employment First* in New Jersey.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC understands the importance of working with community-based organizations that provide supported employment services that are integral to the success of many customers of the DVRS. The SRC appreciates the assessments being done concerning vendor rates and recommends that the DVRS continue to reevaluate its current hourly rate for supported employment.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will continue to evaluate its fee structures. The DVRS will elicit input from the SRC prior to finalizing any changes.

SRC Recommendation:

Deborah Vaughn
(Central Office)

"We benefited from the guidance of Deborah Vaughn, Program Specialist at DVRS Central Office. Throughout the two year Project ABLE's Customized Employment project, Deborah was instrumental in the success of this project by working cooperatively with us and guiding us in the development of the program, identifying and overcoming barriers and support of customized employment. We are grateful for her expertise and knowledge in the rehabilitation field and her loyalty to serving people with disabilities. We also acknowledge DVRS for their funding of this specialized employment initiative and to provide Goodwill with the opportunity to be on the forefront of the customized approach to employment."
(Vendor)

Shobha Ayyappan
(Newark)

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done for me in these past years. I will always be forever grateful to you and DVR for making me a better person today and for my new career in cosmetology. I love this field. This is truly my dream come true. Thank you so much."
(Client)

The SRC is aware that New Jersey is a very diverse state and recommends that the DVRS evaluate demographics of disability populations to keep abreast of possible underserved populations.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts this recommendation and will develop strategies to determine disability populations by region. This information will be gathered as part of the DVRS comprehensive needs assessment and will be used to establish goals for the DVRS state plan in FFY 2015.

**Jocelyn Gamble
(Neptune)**

"I cannot thank you enough for the thorough presentation you gave my class this week. My students expressed that they were very pleased with the experience. I, too learned a number of things about DVR services that I was previously unaware of. On behalf of the Psychology and Human Services Department at Brookdale Community College and myself, I would like to express appreciation for your efforts and the willingness of DVR supervision to allow the time for you to help educate my students".
(Educator)

Camden DVRs

"Kudos for Vito, Irene and the Camden staff for assisting the one-stop and BSR in putting together a job fair specifically targeted to persons wanting to work in the supermarket industry. Through Vito's assistance in setting up the logistics for the event and Irene assisting with her event planning efforts, the Camden One-Stop and the county offices were able to merge together for the benefit of consumers laid off from Genuardi, Super Fresh and ACME stores. The BSR states, "Thank you, Vito. Appreciate you and your team's support. Your team is great!"
(Employer)

Summary

During FFY'13, the Rehabilitation Council worked cohesively and productively, partially as a result of renewed emphasis on the tools at hand, committee structure, staff and member dedication and focus on staffing to achieve maximum employment outcomes. Members worked closely with each other, the DVRs, Department of Labor and Workforce Development personnel, other state agency directors, and most importantly with the constituency it is mandated to serve. It made recommendations on topics of importance to the Federal and State governments, and supported the participation of the DVRs in local initiatives.

The Rehabilitation Council has benefited from the support and cooperation of the New Jersey DVRs. The Council looks forward to another year of challenges and successful outcomes for persons with disabilities who seek employment and other services through the New Jersey DVRs.

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