



West Virginia

S R C

State Rehabilitation Council

“Majestic Barns of West Virginia”

2014 - 2015 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends ~

With much pleasure, I would like to present the SRC's annual report for 2014 ~ 2015.

For the past six (6) years I have represented labor on this Council. I have attended not only our Council meetings, but national conferences annually. Having this opportunity allowed me to see how Councils function and network with each other.

West Virginia is a leader in all areas of services, programs and meeting the requirements set by RSA. To be a small part of that is an honor. Our Council members are unique and have been a pleasure to know and work beside. Each person demonstrates a commitment that is unquestionable and takes to heart the purpose of why they are serving on the SRC.

As my term ends and I hand the reigns over to my successor, I do this with the greatest of honor. I am privileged to have served as the SRC Chairperson and to have been a part of the work that The Division of Vocation Rehabilitation provides for our state. Being a member of the Council, I have also met wonderful people throughout the United States and our territories who value the mission and vision of who we are and what we do.



My sincerest best to you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheryl S. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sheryl S. Johnson
WV SRC Chairperson



Dear Colleagues ~

As the years unfold before me at the WV SRC, I am proud to be a small part of the ever changing opportunities for people with disabilities in West Virginia. The old barns captured throughout West Virginia in the pictures of our Annual Report reflect many images. People are much like the characteristics of these *distinctive* barns.

The boards in these barns are different and no two are alike due to weathering and age. This *uniqueness* cannot be duplicated, such as the services offered by WV DRS. Each individual has specific needs, services and programs.

The *durability* of these structures mirror people. Individuals with differing abilities have endured the changes through time and are willing to still adapt to these changes to make life better. Knowing there are resources available is a major key in helping them to achieve their personal visions and goals.

These barns represent a symbol of *strength*, the ability to withstand the changes that have occurred around them. As an advocate, the SRC has also *weathered* many storms and helped lead the march for a better future. The vocational rehabilitation foundation is solid and the SRC is part of the basis keeping this movement strong.

Old barns, like people, have a voice and stories to tell, if we only listen. Robert Frost said "we are here for a purpose. As we age year after year, it is our job to build and teach, by example and rote..." Our job is not finished by far. With pride, the WV SRC is humbled to be a partner and supporter for the WV Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Agency staff and the citizens they serve.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherry A. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sherry A. Taylor
Executive Director



WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

Dear Friends of the State Rehabilitation Council:

On behalf of the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), I'm grateful for the State Rehabilitation Council's strong commitment to working with DRS and its administration to meet the employment needs of West Virginians with disabilities.

As rehabilitation professionals, we work one-on-one with people with disabilities to help them find the opportunities that will enable them to build upon their abilities and assets so they can find their place in the workforce. With each client, we look at the whole picture and help him or her to see the obstacles that are hindering employment and we look at the individual strengths that will ultimately help each client to succeed on the job.

Each member of the State Rehabilitation Council brings dedicated service and unique experiences to this collaborative partnership. With a vigilant commitment to establishing essential goals and monitoring ongoing performance, the partnership between DRS and SRC empowers those we serve by promoting self-sufficiency and maximizing employment potential to ensure a smooth transition into the work environment.

The effectiveness of this partnership is demonstrated by the 2,090 number of individuals successfully rehabilitated by DRS during fiscal year 2015.

Thank you for your continued dedication to enabling and empowering individuals with disabilities to work and live independently.



Sincerely,

Donna L. Ashworth

Donna L. Ashworth
Director

Our Mission Statement

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council is to review, analyze and advise the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services regarding its program eligibility, performance and effectiveness in empowering individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment goals.

Our Vision Statement

The West Virginia SRC's vision is to ensure that all people with disabilities are provided with an equal opportunity to receive the vocational rehabilitation services for which they are eligible.

Our Council Composition

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council is composed of a maximum of twenty-six (26) members and no less than fifteen (15) members. These appointments are made by the Governor for three (3) year terms and individuals may only serve two (2) consecutive terms. The majority of the members (51%) must be individuals with disabilities or represent a person with a disability and not be employed by WV DRS.

The Council must have members representing the following:

- Business, Industry and Labor (at least four (4) representatives);
- Client Assistance Program (CAP);
- Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP);
- Current or former WV DRS Applicants or Recipients;
- Parent Training & Information Centers (PTI);
- State Education Department Representative;
- State Workforce Investment Board Representative (WIB);
- Assistive Technology Representative;
- Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC ~ standing member);
- Director of WV DRS (ex-officio member); and
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (ex-officio member).



The knowledge and expertise of the Council members is a valuable asset in carrying out the mission and goals of the SRC. Members take their responsibilities seriously spending a great deal of time and effort to fulfill their duties. Monitoring and advising WV DRS on the issues services, programs and policies which impact the lives of West Virginians with disabilities is essential.

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (WV SRC) is established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (ACT), and 34 CFR 361.16-361.17 of its implementing regulations. The SRC gives advice to and works in partnership with the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WV DRS).

In compliance with the guidelines of the 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, the WV SRC must perform the following functions, after consulting with the State Workforce Investment Board:

In partnership with WV DRS, the Council:

- Develops, agrees to, and reviews WV DRS goals and priorities;
- Evaluates the effectiveness of their program and submit annual progress reports to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Commissioner;
- Conducts a statewide needs assessment of individuals with disabilities living in the State every three (3) years;
- Advises WV DRS regarding vocational rehabilitation activities; and
- Serves on the Policy Consultation Group.

The Council assists in the preparation of the State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation, amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments and evaluations, including those necessary for WV DRS to satisfy the requirements of developing a “comprehensive system of personal development” and establishing an “order of selection.”

Our responsibilities also include reviewing and analyzing consumer satisfaction. The WV SRC monitors agency functions and the employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals. This information is compiled by an independent consultant, presented to the agency and Council, and then posted on the WV DRS and WV SRC websites.



COUNCIL PURPOSE

The Council strives to enrich and maintain the working relationships between WV DRS, the WVSILC, the centers for independent living and other state and national partners.

Members of the Council and SRC staff perform other functions that are determined appropriate and comparable to other required functions, provided they are consistent with the purpose of Title I of the ACT and its implementing regulations.

To outline our responsibilities, achievements and accomplishments, our annual report is prepared and submitted to the Governor and RSA on the status of Vocational Rehabilitation services in West Virginia. This report is disseminated to our state representatives and to SRCs throughout the United States and US territories. This is available on the WV DRS and WV SRC websites.



WHAT WE DO

One of the most important responsibilities of the WV SRC is to advise, make recommendations and assist the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (WV DRS) in preparing their State Plan for Vocational Services. The overall purpose of the State Plan is to assure that State and Federal governments play a leadership role in promoting employment for persons with disabilities and to ensure a link between citizen participation and the legislative process.

The Council is responsible for reviewing and analyzing the effectiveness and satisfaction of rehabilitation services provided by WV DRS from information gathered from the clients. The Council does not assist in the resolution of any individual case issues. Consumer Satisfaction Surveys are mailed by the WV SRC to all clients statewide whose case has been closed. The collected data is returned with only the client's district and category for the information to be compiled by an independent contractor annually. The report is available on the WV DRS & WV SRC websites or upon request from the WV SRC office.

The WV SRC Executive Director serves as an active member of the WV DRS Executive Management Team and on various agency, statewide & national committees and task forces. The WV SRC Executive Director and other members of the Council are involved in the development, revision and implementation of agency policies and their strategic planning. In keeping with this role, the Council supports the agency's legislative strides within the state and nationally, educating leaders on vocational rehabilitation needs, accomplishments and its future.

Keeping abreast of national trends, trainings, legislative agendas and innovative networking is vital to the success of the Council. To assure this aspect is met, the WV SRC participates in the continuing education provided through the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) and Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR).

Our goal is to ensure that people with disabilities are provided with an equal opportunity to receive the programs, services and supports needed. We work diligently in our pursuit for consumer satisfaction and endless ways in which services can be improved or developed.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- WV SRC met six times during past fiscal year
- Members reviewed and amended Mission, Vision & Bylaws
- WV SRC website was redesigned, launched and mobile friendly
- Received State of the Agency presentations by WV DRS Director or her representative at each WV SRC meeting
- Council was provided up-to-date information at each Council meeting regarding Agency performance and standards and indicators.
- Council made recommendations in writing for the WV DRS State Plan and received their plan of action for suggested recommendations
- Members received various presentations by WV DRS staff were made to Council for education of programs & services offered by the Agency
- Continued partnering with the WV Statewide Independent Living Council (WV SILC) and WV DRS for the Essay Contest focusing on the impact of the Disability Movement for all WV high school seniors
- Council serves as the Policy Consultation Committee for the Agency to assist in drafting, reviewing and amending Agency policy
- Provided guidance and suggestions on spending of stimulus funds (ARRA)
- Council members attended the Ability Works program in October, 2014
- Members received written annual financial compilation report by an independent contracted auditor
- Nominated and received new member appointments from Governor Earl Ray Tomblin



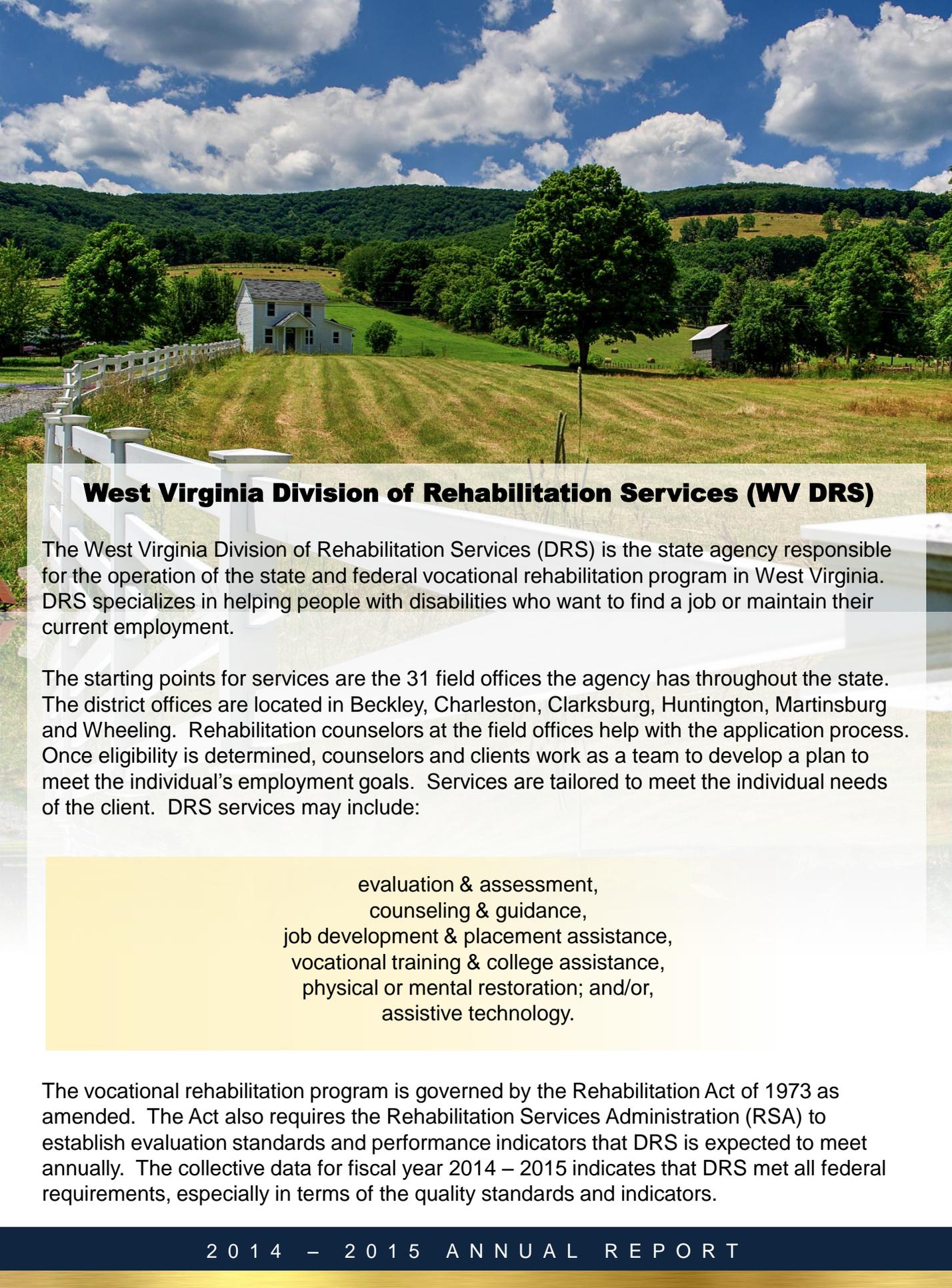
ACCOMPLISHMENTS (continued)

- Submitted WV SRC Annual Report to Governor, Secretary of State, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), legislature, members of Congress, all US states & territories and other required individuals
- Annual Reports are available on the WV SRC website for viewing
- Updated and mailed the Consumer Satisfaction Survey to all closed cases
- The 2014 - 2015 Consumer Satisfaction Survey summary presented orally and in writing to Council members by consultant Dr. Denetta Dowler
- Consumer Satisfaction Report posted on WV SRC and WV DRS websites
- Executive Director serves on the National Steering Committee of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) representing Region 3
- Executive Director serves as the Region 3 Liaison
- Council is an active, participating member of the NCSRC
- Executive Director serves as Vice President of the NCSRC
- As Vice President of NCSRC, the Executive Director assists, facilitates, plans and participates in NCSRC nationally scheduled conference calls, Board of Director meetings, and the NCSRC trainings & conferences held in the spring and fall
- Council members and WV SRC staff along with WVDRS staff attended the spring and fall Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conferences in Bethesda, Maryland and Miami, Florida
- Attended and made presentation at the 8th Annual Summit on Performance Management in Vocational Rehabilitation in San Diego, California on Best Practices in the State Rehabilitation Council-Vocational Rehabilitation Partnership: West Virginia's Model with WV DRS Director
- WV SILC and WV SRC held a joint meeting & drafted a joint plan of action plan
- Council has representation on the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) Advisory Committee
- Council member facilitated communication between WV DRS and Construction Trades Apprenticeship Programs across West Virginia.
- Set up WV SRC display and participated in annual Disability Advocacy Day in January at State Capitol



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Comply with the functions of the Council as stated in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended to ensure the Council is meeting the federal requirements;
- WV SRC continues to be a member of the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) Executive Management Team;
- Continue our strong partnership with WVDRS management staff and personnel acting as an advocate, confidant and agency ambassador;
- Receive regular updates from agency Director on WVDRS' efforts to increase public awareness of services and programs;
- Council shall be educated and knowledgeable about services and programs within WVDRS;
- Serve as the Committee for WVDRS Policy;
- Maintain an active role in the National Coalition of the State Rehabilitation Council (NCSRC) participating on the national steering committee, attending state and national conferences to bring the information gained to the enrichment of the Council;
- Participate in the Council for State Vocational Rehabilitation Administrators (CSAVR);
- Disseminate consumer satisfaction surveys to all closed WVDRS cases and have independently prepared compilation report given electronically and verbally to Council members and designated VR staff;
- Conduct combined public forums with WVDRS and the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) to educate the general public about WVDRS and the role(s) of the Council(s);
- Encourage Council members to become an active member of their local CAC;
- Keep WV SRC website updated with current data and information;
- Use social media to link the WV SRC to other partners giving access on the internet to the Annual Report, website and during public awareness events; and,
- Plan and collaborate a joint annual meeting with WVDRS and WV SILC.



West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WV DRS)

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is the state agency responsible for the operation of the state and federal vocational rehabilitation program in West Virginia. DRS specializes in helping people with disabilities who want to find a job or maintain their current employment.

The starting points for services are the 31 field offices the agency has throughout the state. The district offices are located in Beckley, Charleston, Clarksburg, Huntington, Martinsburg and Wheeling. Rehabilitation counselors at the field offices help with the application process. Once eligibility is determined, counselors and clients work as a team to develop a plan to meet the individual's employment goals. Services are tailored to meet the individual needs of the client. DRS services may include:

evaluation & assessment,
counseling & guidance,
job development & placement assistance,
vocational training & college assistance,
physical or mental restoration; and/or,
assistive technology.

The vocational rehabilitation program is governed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. The Act also requires the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to establish evaluation standards and performance indicators that DRS is expected to meet annually. The collective data for fiscal year 2014 – 2015 indicates that DRS met all federal requirements, especially in terms of the quality standards and indicators.



STATE PLAN

For Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Services Programs

The Council makes recommendations each year to be included in the Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Vocational Services. These recommendations are based on reports provided during regular Council meetings, memorandums and other communication offered by the agency director and/or the staff of the WV DRS. These reports guarantee the SRC is receiving factual updates and pertinent information to make accurate observations, decisions and recommendations.

This task is taken very seriously by the Council knowing that the acceptance of the State Plan assures the Federal government that WV DRS will operate its vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs in accordance with the provisions of this Plan, as well as meeting federal statutory, regulatory and policy requirements. The SRC proudly commends the WV DRS on their exemplary manner in which they have demonstrated in exceeding the requirements of the Rehabilitation Services Administration's (RSA) Standards and Indicators.

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (WV SRC) is proud to be a supportive partner of the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WV DRS). The agency continues to receive the national recognition for the achievements gained for their unique programs and diverse services helping to ensure that people in West Virginia with disabilities identify and achieve their employment goals.

Our Council maintains a diverse group of individuals comprised of West Virginians who represents many backgrounds, including business, labor & industry, Client Assistant Program (CAP), Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), other services providers, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, Workforce Investment Board, West Virginia Department of Education, consumers and consumer advocates. The WV SRC is proud to have these valued partners, as well as with the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (WV SILC). These steadfast partnerships remain the core of our mission and vision allowing the Council insight of consumer needs.

Sharing agency data regarding programs, services, policy, fiscal status or other pertinent issues is invaluable. WV DRS continues to provide beneficial updates when making presentations to our membership during Council meetings or as needed. We greatly appreciate the WV DRS liaison to our Council, Michael Meadows, who is considered a valuable asset, informed resource and contributor by our members.

The WV SRC understands the agency's obligation in achieving the highest standards and indicators that were set by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). West Virginia continues to be one of the few states to have achieved this feat. Senior Manager of State Plan and Program Evaluation Pisnu Bua-lam had assured that all members have a clear understanding of what this means to the agency and allows time for members to ask questions during his regular presentations. With the new changes in the law, he continues to educate the Council members that WV DRS has exceeded other states in this realm.

The WV SRC is pleased to present the following comments for the State Plan to the WV DRS:

Observation 1: The agency should strive to educate the general public regarding the WV DRS office locations to ensure knowledge and the continuum of agency services and programs. The agency has utilized newspaper inserts, community events and public broadcasting as a means to assure awareness of the available services within WV DRS in all areas of the state.

Recommendation: *The WV SRC recommends this practice be continued with a continuing emphasis directed into underserved areas of the State.*



STATE PLAN Continued

Observation 2: Reaching students prior to their junior and senior years is imperative in establishing an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) outlining available options and securing those programs and services are in place as the student transitions into their next phase of life is a priority for WV DRS. The agency currently has VR counselors with offices physically located in high schools in West Virginia – Cabell Midland, Huntington High, Parkersburg South, Brooke High School, Wheeling Park High School and John Marshall High School.

Uncertainties continue that once students are preparing to leave the secondary school system and move forward into higher education that students, parents and their advisors/counselors, the students may not be fully aware of services available through DRS.

Recommendation: *The WV SRC recommends working with four (4) to six (6) additional high schools and/or vocational schools to establish VR offices to be physically located on the campus of those selected schools. This would provide more assistance to those students and their families in an effort to gain applicants for services at an earlier age.*

Observation 3: With the demographics and cultural backgrounds of West Virginia, effective communication must be innovative. Finding the most efficient avenue to educate students and their families regarding available WV DRS services and programs is a continuing challenge. Effective, good communication is a key factor.

Recommendation: *The WV SRC recommends that WV DRS:*

- *Submit articles for school newsletters for educating individuals on services and programs that are available;*
- *design a one page handout to be included with registration packets disseminated to students at the beginning of each school year; and,*
- *prepare articles for the distribution in state newspapers when highlighting special areas, such as Education, Business, Employment and other sections or avenues of interest for WV DRS to illustrate services and programs offered by the agency.*

Observation 4: Ahead of the national trend, WV DRS has made and continues a concerted effort on making transition a priority. Establishing and maintaining partnerships within the secondary school system and institutions of higher education is essential.

The formation of a committee to assist in the development of a plan to educate institutions of higher education throughout West Virginia could strengthen these relationships. This committee comprised of WV DRS staff, WV SRC members, educators and other pertinent parties should survey those bodies for their awareness and then provide assistance in enhancing communication and relationships so that students needing the services can be better served.

Recommendation: *In this continuing quest to assure that students with disabilities, parents and their advisors/counselors, are cognizant of the services and programs offered through WV DRS, the Council recommends this committee be implemented to enhance the relationship with the institutions of higher education to assure students are knowledgeable of all services, programs, technology and adaptations to reach their employment outcomes upon completing their education.*



Observation 5: To assist in providing continuing education to WV DRS counselors and school personnel, the agency has partnered with the Department of Education to establish a strong link between WV DRS and the school system. This link will continue to serve as a vital component in the referring of students at a younger age having an informed understanding of community based services offered by WV DRS.

Recommendation: *The WV SRC recommends this component be continued to strengthen knowledge of policies, referral processes as well as emerging trends and practices on an annual basis.*

Observation 6: Transportation issues continue to be a state and national concern. The lack of personal and public transportation has been a repeated challenge. WV DRS offers varying opportunities for instruction in learning to drive when barriers are present. All high schools currently offer their students driver's education classes.

Recommendation: *Considering the long term goal for all students is to be employed, the Council suggests that VR counselors stress the IPE include driver's education training for students with disabilities. This may require occupational and/or developmental visual evaluations may be beneficial. The driver education instructors working need to be supplied with the WV DRS driving program for technical and adaptive support or training.*

Observation 7: In looking toward the future, the agency expects an influx in the next few years of youth having drug and/or alcohol related issues and needing services. This will be an area to have specialized programs and skills.

Recommendation: *The WV SRC recommends that the Agency provide staff with the training and technical assistance needed to expand their knowledge of drug addiction related diseases.*



Observation 8: With the national trend focusing to work more closely with individuals who are within the corrections system who have disabilities, WV DRS has implemented a position for a Behavioral Health and Corrections Specialist. This Specialist will focus on youth with mental illness, ADD and learning disabilities to name a few who do not get along in society.

Although the agency already works with the juvenile detention programs, providing more in depth early intervention services to this underserved group of individuals will be of benefit.

Recommendation: *The WVSRC recommends that the Agency continue to establish relationships with the Behavioral Health and Corrections communities in order to expand services to those individuals with disabilities being served by these Agencies.*

Observation 9: The agency is constantly striving to compensate for the growing numbers of staff reaching retirement age and the void left in not only the job vacancy, but the knowledge lost as these individuals leave. During the past several years, select employees have been chosen to attend the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute ~ *Executive Leadership Seminar Series* year long experience.

The mission of this leadership program is to enrich the leadership vision, knowledge and skills of rehabilitation leaders, through a powerful organizational learning experience that reinforces passion, learning, creativity, and strategic thinking in the public program of vocational rehabilitation. The Institute offers the opportunity for rehabilitation leaders in public programs of vocational rehabilitation across the nation to enrich their knowledge, skills, and understanding to meet the constantly changing needs and expectations of their consumers, employers and community partners.





STATE PLAN Continued

This national program provided the opportunity for those individuals to work in teams with staff from other states on assignments and tasks to broaden their learning curve, to make a blueprint of potential programs or services and bring new or critiqued philosophies to West Virginia.

Recommendation: *The Council strongly recommends the agency continue sending staff to this invaluable training opportunity to help strengthen the evolution of staff and future leadership of the agency.*

Observation10: WV DRS conducts a VR State Conference annually. Speakers from a myriad of areas are brought to this conference to expand the knowledge and bring new creative ideas for program and service delivery. This conference provides the opportunity for the VR staff from throughout the state to spend three (3) days sharing experiences, issues and talking with guest speakers and administrative staff.

Recommendation: *Promoting team building and giving the opportunity for an educational experience enhancing job performance is vital to the continuing success of the agency and enriching staff development. The Council strongly encourages the agency to continue this means of edification and reinforcement for staff.*

Observation 11: In the past, the agency conducted an interagency Emerging Leaders Program designed to help staff who were interested in management positions to become better informed in all facets of the day to day operations of DRS. This program was intended to give in depth training in all management areas to prepare interested staff as job opportunities became available.

Recommendation: *The Council highly recommends the Emerging Leaders Program training be reinstated to assure qualified individuals are prepared to assume these positions as seasoned staff retire or leave the agency.*

The WV SRC is indebted to the open communication and continuous support received from Ms. Ashworth and her staff. Serving as a pacesetter to other states who are eager to replicate the relationship, accomplishments and structure of the WV DRS and WV SRC is without question humbling. The Council strives to maintain this collaboration and embraces the opportunity to serve as a partner and trusted confidant of the WV DRS. The Council would once again like to congratulate the WV DRS staff for your achievements, recognition and determination to provide ultimate services and programs while meeting the standards and indicators set by RSA.



Occupation of Individuals Vocationally Rehabilitated

	FFY 2015	Percent
• Management Occupations	101	5.26
• Business and Financial Operations Occupations	30	1.44
• Computer and Mathematical Occupations	20	0.96
• Architecture and Engineering Occupations	27	1.29
• Life, Physical and Social Science Occupations	14	0.67
• Community and Social Services Occupations	90	4.31
• Legal Occupations	7	0.33
• Education, Training and Library Occupations	112	5.36
• Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media Occupations	27	1.29
• Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	169	8.09
• Healthcare Support Occupations	106	5.07
• Protective Service Occupations	52	2.49
• Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	138	6.60
• Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	137	6.56
• Personal Care and Service Occupations	145	6.94
• Sales and Related Occupations	146	6.99
• Office and Administrative Support Occupations	242	11.58
• Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations	11	0.53
• Construction and Extraction Occupations	83	3.97
• Installation, Maintenance and Repair Occupations	45	2.15
• Production Occupations	238	11.39
• Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	133	6.36
• Military Specific Occupations	4	0.19
• Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Clerk	0	0.00
• Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Operator	1	0.05
• Homemaker*	3	0.14
• Unpaid Family Worker	0	0.00
Total	2,092	100%

*Occupation outside the competitive labor market



Personal Characteristics – State Rehabilitation Clients Federal Fiscal Year 2015

TOTAL ANNUAL EARNINGS OF THOSE RECEIVING VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

- At Referral \$17,320,888
- After Rehabilitation \$48,089,808
- Percentage increase in annual earnings due to rehabilitation 177%

	FFY 2015	Percent
• Number of individuals rehabilitated (with an employment outcome)	2,090	
• Number (percent) of vocationally rehabilitated individuals placed in competitive employment	2,087	99.00
• Number of individuals with significant disabilities served	12,412	93.97
Total number of clients served	13,209	

EDUCATION AT CLOSURE OF INDIVIDUALS VOCATIONALLY REHABILITATED

• No formal schooling	0	0.00
• Elementary education (grades 1 – 6)	28	1.34
• Secondary educations, no high school diploma (grades 9 – 12)	110	5.26
• Special education certificate of completion/attendance	77	3.68
• High school graduate or equivalency certificate (regular education students)	584	27.94
• Post secondary education, no degree	279	13.35
• Associate degree or Vocational/Technical Certificate	217	10.38
• Bachelor's degree	367	17.56
• Master's degree or higher	96	4.59
• Any degree above a Master's – e.g. PhD., EdD., J.D.	21	1.00
• Vocational / Technical Certificate or License	307	14.69
• Occupational credential beyond undergraduate degree work	2	0.10
• Occupational credential beyond graduate degree work	2	0.10
Total	2,090	100%

Personal Characteristics

State Rehabilitation Clients Federal Fiscal Year 2015

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS FROM EACH DISTRICT SERVED

	FFY 2015	Percent
• District 1	2,207	16.71
• District 2	1,599	12.11
• District 3	2,147	16.25
• District 4	2,700	20.44
• District 5	2,906	22.00
• District 6	1,650	12.49
Total/State	13,209	100%

EDUCATION AT APPLICATION OF INDIVIDUALS VOCATIONALLY REHABILITATED

• No formal schooling	0	0.00
• Elementary education (grades 1-8)	33	1.58
• Secondary education, no HS diploma (grades 9-12)	622	29.76
• Special Ed certificate of completion/attendance	101	4.83
• High school graduate or equivalency certificate (regular education students)	556	26.60
• Post-secondary education, no degree	345	16.51
• Associate degree or Vocational / Technical Certificate	138	6.60
• Bachelor's degree	127	6.08
• Master's degree or higher	55	2.63
• Any degree above a Master's e.g. Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D.	3	0.14
• Vocational / Technical Certificate or License	108	5.17
• Occupational credential beyond undergraduate degree work	1	0.05
• Occupational credential beyond graduate degree work	1	0.05
Total	2,090	100%

AGE AT APPLICATION OF INDIVIDUALS VOCATIONALLY REHABILITATED

• Less than 20	661	31.63
• 20 through 34	457	21.87
• 35 through 44	295	14.11
• 45 through 64	599	28.66
• 65 and over	78	3.73
Total	2,090	100%

Personal Characteristics Continued

RACE OF INDIVIDUALS VOCATIONALLY REHABILITATED

	FFY 2015	Percent
• White	1,923	92.01
• Black or African American	126	6.03
• American Indian or Alaska Native	16	0.77
• Asian or Pacific Islander	14	0.67
• Hispanic or Latino	11	0.53
Total	2,090	100%

GENDER OF INDIVIDUALS VOCATIONALLY REHABILITATED

• Male		
• Female	1,108	53.01
Total	982	46.99
	2,090	100%

REFERRAL SOURCE OF INDIVIDUALS VOC. REHABILITATED

• Educational Institution (elementary/secondary)	570	27.27
• Educational Institution (post-secondary)	118	5.65
• Medical Health Provider (public or private)	212	10.14
• Welfare Agency (State or local government)	12	0.57
• Community Rehabilitation Program	79	3.78
• Social Security Administration (Disability Determination Service or District Office)	8	0.38
• One-stop Employment / Training Centers	42	2.01
• Self-referral	655	31.34
• Other sources	250	11.96
• American Indian VR Services Program	0	0.00
• Centers for Independent Living	1	0.05
• Child Protective Services	0	0.00
• Consumer Organizations or Advocacy Groups	1	0.05
• Employers	2	0.10
• Faith Based Organizations	2	0.10
• Family / Friends	75	3.59
• Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Providers	1	0.05
• Mental Health Providers (Public or Private)	36	1.72
• Public Housing Authority	0	0.00
• State Dept. of Correction / Juvenile Justice	4	0.19
• State Employment Service Agency	10	0.48
• Veteran's Administration	1	0.05
• Worker's Compensation	0	0.00
• Other State Agencies	9	0.43
• Other VR Agencies	2	0.10
Total	2,589	100%



West Virginia

 State Rehabilitation Council

PRIMARY DISABLING CONDITION OF INDIVIDUALS VOCATIONALLY REHABILITATED

SENSORY COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENTS

	FFY 2015	Percent
• Blindness	20	0.96
• Other visual impairment	72	3.44
• Deafness, primary communication visual	22	1.05
• Deafness, primary communication auditory	24	1.15
• Hearing loss, primary communication visual	24	1.15
• Hearing loss, primary communication auditory	356	17.03
• Other hearing impairments (Tinnitus, Menier's Disease, hyperacusis, etc.)	4	0.19
• Deaf – blindness	2	0.10
• Communicative impairments (expressive / receptive)	6	0.29

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS

	FFY 2015	Percent
• Mobility orthopedic / neurological impairments	135	6.46
• Manipulation / dexterity orthopedic / neurological impairments	33	1.58
• Both mobility and manipulation / dexterity orthopedic / neurological impairments	33	1.58
• Other orthopedic impairments (e.g., limited range of motion)	80	3.83
• Respiratory impairments	45	2.15
• General physical debilitation (fatigue, weakness, pain, etc.)	84	4.02
• Other physical impairments (not listed above)	156	7.46

MENTAL IMPAIRMENTS

	FFY 2015	Percent
• Cognitive impairments (impairments involving learning, thinking, processing information and concentration)	554	26.51
• Psychosocial impairments (interpersonal and behavioral impairments, difficulty coping)	415	19.86
• Other mental impairments	25	1.20
Total	2,090	100%



West Virginia
SRC
State Rehabilitation Council



West Virginians Receiving Rehabilitation Services by County

	FFY	%		FFY	%
Barbour	27	1.3	Mineral	35	1.7
Berkeley	63	3.0	Mingo	34	1.6
Boone	22	1.1	Monongalia	55	2.6
Braxton	4	0.2	Monroe	14	0.7
Brooke	52	2.5	Morgan	13	0.6
Cabell	193	9.2	Nicholas	27	1.3
Calhoun	0	0.0	Ohio	78	3.7
Clay	4	0.2	Pendleton	20	1.0
Doddridge	3	0.1	Pleasants	7	0.3
Fayette	49	2.3	Pocahontas	23	1.1
Gilmer	1	0.0	Preston	17	0.8
Grant	40	1.9	Putnam	34	1.6
Greenbrier	82	3.9	Raleigh	80	3.8
Hampshire	28	1.3	Randolph	46	2.2
Hancock	56	2.7	Ritchie	3	0.1
Hardy	47	2.2	Roane	15	0.7
Harrison	38	1.8	Summers	11	0.5
Jackson	31	1.5	Taylor	10	0.5
Jefferson	44	2.1	Tucker	13	0.6
Kanawha	184	8.8	Tyler	12	0.6
Lewis	11	0.5	Upshur	18	0.9
Lincoln	34	1.6	Wayne	43	2.1
Logan	33	1.6	Webster	5	0.2
Marion	38	1.8	Wetzel	17	0.8
Marshall	47	2.2	Wirt	4	0.2
Mason	17	0.8	Wood	101	4.8
McDowell	33	1.6	Wyoming	51	2.4
Mercer	123	5.9			
			TOTAL	2,090	100%



CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

The WV State Rehabilitation Council in conjunction with the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) conducted a survey of consumer satisfaction with DRS services in West Virginia. The Council developed an instrument that asked consumers to rate their level of agreement with statements about the services they may have received through WV DRS. Consumers were also asked about specific information related to jobs and to their rights as a consumer.

The surveys were distributed during the year to consumers whose cases were closed in Status 26 (successful closure) or Status 08, 28, or 30 (unsuccessful) during the September 2014 to August 2015 time period. The Council also wanted to examine the pattern of responses for transitioning youth and color coded the surveys so that youth could be identified.

Demographic Information

This year, there were 438 people who responded to this survey. They represent each of the six districts of West Virginia and 50 of the 55 counties in the state. None of the responders indicated that they lived in Doddridge, Logan, Ritchie, Taylor, or Tyler County. Districts 3 and 4 had the highest level of representation in this sample (19% and 21% of responses, respectively). District 5 represented about 10% of the total responses. The distribution across Districts was a little more even in this sample than has been true in previous years.

Respondents were asked about their disabling condition. The type of disability most often reported was sensory (44%) with most reporting a hearing-related impairment. Motor-related disabilities represented about 15% of the sample, Cognitive impairments were 14%, Mental Health impairments were 9%, Cardiac/Respiratory were 3%, and Various/Other disabilities represented 14% of the sample (for those who reported their disabling condition).

The surveys were sent to consumers whose cases were closed during the program year. About 65% of the respondents were in the Status 26 (successful closure) group and the remaining 35% were closed in Status 08, 28, or 30. There is a clear difference in the level of satisfaction of these 2 groups as evidenced by their response to the satisfaction items. In this sample, there was a larger proportion of consumers who had their case closed as “unsuccessful.” It is typical that the responses are about 80% successful versus 20% unsuccessful. This year, the breakdown is 65% successful versus 35% unsuccessful. This larger proportion of unsuccessful closures may contribute to the lower satisfaction levels that were observed in this report.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY continued

Most of the 390 people who included age information were between 25 and 70 years of age (78%). When asked about their work status, 69% of responders reported that they are currently working (as opposed to 80% last year), nearly 10% were looking for work, 12% reported that they were unable to work, 4% were retired, and 5% were in school/training. No one indicated that they do not want to work (0%).

Number and % of responses by WV DRS District:

	DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3	DISTRICT 4	DISTRICT 5	DISTRICT 6
Number of Responses	64	77	82	90	42	75
% of total responses	15%	18%	19%	21%	10%	17%

Satisfaction Items

This year's responses, overall, indicate a somewhat lower level of satisfaction than the previous year's responses. However, there were 14 percentage points fewer responders who were in the "successful" or Status 26 closure group this year. That is, 79% of the previous sample were in Status 26 as compared with 65% for this sample. Historically, those in the Status 26 group report markedly higher satisfaction with services than all other groups. This difference in the nature of the sample may be one contributor to the lower levels of reported satisfaction for this report.

The Transitioning Youth responses were generally lower than the responses from the whole sample. This has been a trend for those in the Transitioning Youth group.

Rights Information

Consistent with previous surveys, most (77%) of the consumers reported that they were given specific information about their rights (or at least 1 right) as a client. Consumers who reported that their rights were explained, most often were told about their right to "Participate in developing my rehabilitation plan" (86%). Consumers reported that they were least often told about their rights to request another counselor (37%) and to contact the Client Assistance Program for help in resolving differences (36%). These findings are nearly identical to the previous survey responses.

DISTRICT OFFICES

DRS Administrative Offices
107 Capitol Street
Charleston, WV 25301
304-356-2060 / 800-642-8207

Beckley – District 4 Office
800 New River Town Center
Beckley, WV 25801
304-256-6900

Cabell Midland High School
2300 US Route 60 East
Ona, WV 25545
304-743-7496

Charleston – District 1 Office
4701 MacCorkle Avenue, SE
Charleston, WV 25304
304-356-2371

Disability Determination Section-
Charleston
500 Quarrier Street, Suite 500
Charleston, WV 25301
304-343-5055

Disability Determination Section-
Clarksburg
320 West Pike Street, Suite 120
Clarksburg, WV 26301
304-624-0200

Clarksburg – District 2 Office
107 Cambridge Place
Bridgeport, WV 26330
304-842-2951

Elkins
1025 North Randolph Avenue
Elkins, WV 26241
304-637-0205

Fairmont One-Stop
Veterans Square 320 Adams Street,
Suite 106
Fairmont, WV 26554
304-367-2714

Huntington – District 5 Office
2699 Park Avenue, Suite 200
Huntington, WV 25704
304-528-5585

Huntington High School
Highlander Way
Huntington, WV 25701
304-528-6511

Keyser
67 North Tornado Way
Keyser, WV 26726
304-788-2313

Lewisburg
3293 Jefferson Street N, Suite 105
Lewisburg, WV 24901-5733
304-647-7515

Logan
P.O. Box 896
Logan, WV 25601
304-792-7060

Marshall University
One John Marshall Drive
113 Prichard Hall
Huntington, WV 25755
304-696-2394

Martinsburg – District 6 Office
489 Mid-Atlantic Parkway, Suite 2
Martinsburg, WV 25404
304-267-0005

Moorefield
151 Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park Rd
Suite 3
Moorefield, WV 26836
304-538-2701

Morgantown
Sabraton Plaza 1415 Earl Core Road
Morgantown, WV 26505
304-285-3155

Mullens
316 Howard Avenue
Mullens, WV 25882
304-294-5653

Oak Hill
549 Mall Road
Oak Hill, WV 25901
304-465-3025

Parkersburg
State Office Building
400 5th Street
Parkersburg, WV 26101
304-420-4580

Parkersburg South High School
State Office Building 400 5th St.
Parkersburg, WV 26101
304-420-4916 or 4580

Point Pleasant
209 5th Street
Point Pleasant, WV 25550
304-675-0867

Princeton
195 Davis Street
Princeton, WV 24739
304-425-1256

Putnam County
115 Liberty Square
Hurricane, WV 25526
304-767-0819 or 760-7082

Rehab Tech Department – North
5000 Greenbag Road F14 and F15
Morgantown, WV 26501
304-285-3163

Rehabilitation Programs
10 McJunkin Road
Nitro, WV 25143
304-760-7166

Ripley
206 Stone Drive
Ripley, WV 25271
304-373-0313

Romney
P.O. Box 943
Romney, WV 26757
304-822-3957

Sistersville
714 Wells Street
Sistersville, WV 26175
304-652-2354

Spencer
321 Market Street
Spencer, WV 25276
304-927-0954

Summersville
830 Northside Drive, Suite 113
Summersville, WV 26651
304-872-0813

Teays Valley
115 Liberty Square
Hurricane, WV 25526
304-760-7082

Weirton
100 Municipal Plaza, Suite 200
Weirton, WV 26062
304-723-5311

Welch
110 Park Avenue, Suite 200
Welch, WV 24801
304-436-3175

Weston
306 Market Place Mall
Weston, WV 26452
304-269-0547

Wheeling – District 3 Office
1324 Chapline Street, Suite 200
Wheeling, WV 26003
304-238-1092



National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils, Inc.

National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC)

In November 2005, a handful of people affiliated with their State Rehabilitation Councils (SRC) shared lunch during the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Conference in San Diego, California. The group began considering the benefits and drawbacks of establishing a national organization. Those present were not elite, some were Governor-appointed volunteers serving on their respective Councils; others were staff with the sole responsibility of working for a Council while some were agency staff assigned to provide support to their respective SRC.

There was also diversity in the structure of those Councils – those who were well-resourced while others had no budget. The various states and territories included representation from agencies with Blind and general programs as well as those with combined programs. Despite the notable differences, there was a great deal in common.

That common ground and the power of the collective potential is what led a motivated core of individuals to move forward from brainstorming to organizing. A national Steering Committee was formed and with the support of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has convened regular national conference calls of the SRCs on a bi-monthly basis. In addition, the Steering Committee meets on a regular basis to further the structure and development of the NCSRC.

For the past several years prior to each CSAVR Conference, the NCSRC is now providing an extra full day of training for any members to network with other states learning the detailed responsibilities and tools needed to have an effective Council. Members choose the topics areas in which they would desire more training.

NCSRC continued

The Sunday SRC Sessions has focused on strategic planning that has included the drafting of the mission and vision statements, core values and bylaws. The organizational documents along with the strategic plan goals and activities have evolved during the CSAVR Conferences at the Sunday Sessions. As a result of tenacious commitment by a number of SRC representatives, the hard work was finalized at the CSAVR 2007 Fall Conference held in San Antonio, Texas.

The result is seen in a foundation which will position all SRCs to be more effective within their respective states and as a national entity. Through these trainings opportunities, SRCs are instructed on their role, responsibilities and requirements. The people attending bridge relationships with other SRCs forming strong peer support and access to ongoing information pertinent to their Council.

The NCSRC is now a 501(c)(3). This will allow additional training and opportunities for the Coalition. The NCSRC encourages all states to sign the NCSRC Resolution to enrich their Council further. For more information: National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) or www.ncsrc.net.

NCSRC MISSION:

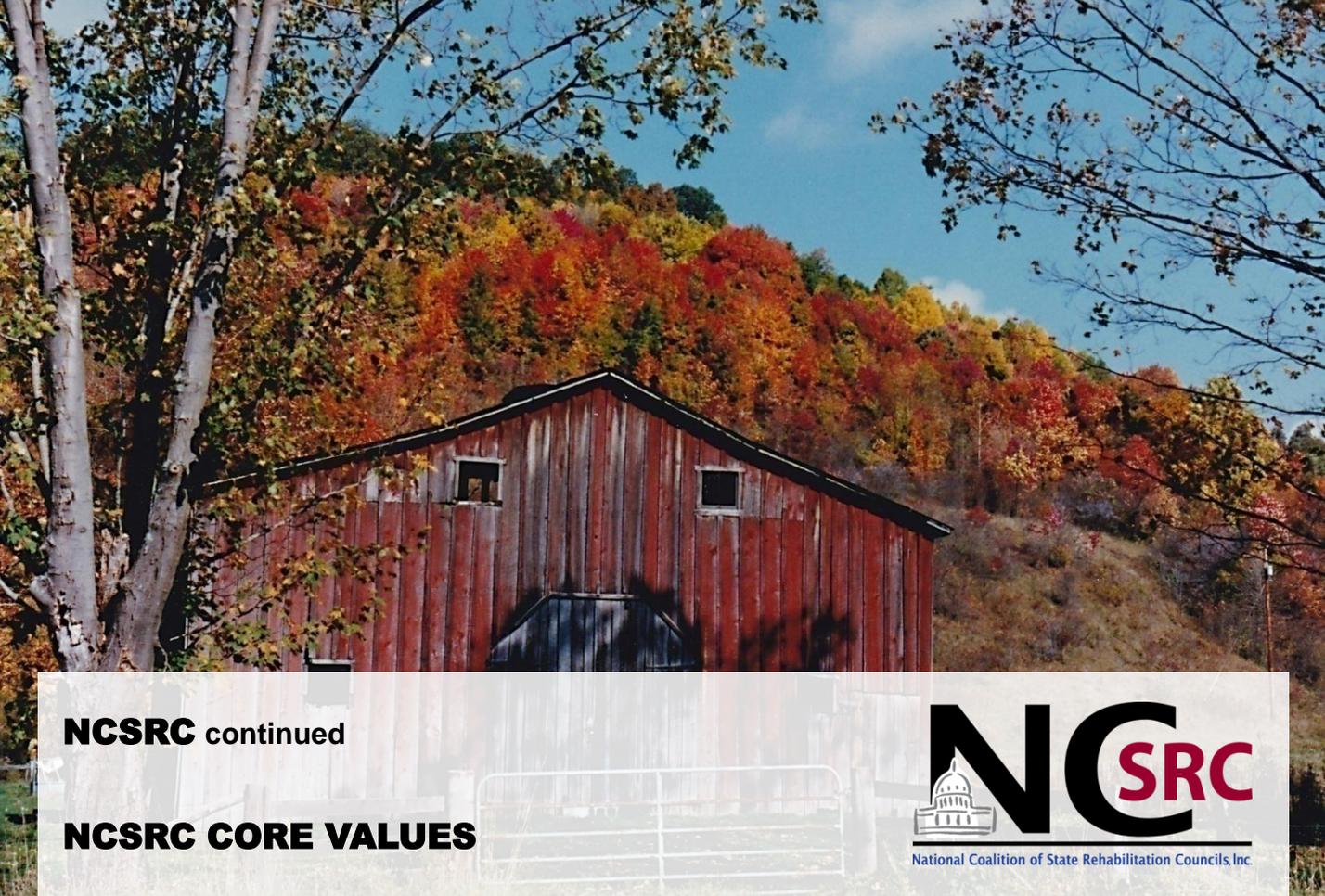
On behalf of people with disabilities, our national membership coalition will advocate for and work in partnership with the national public vocational rehabilitation system's continual quest for excellence.

NCSRC VISION:

NCSRC will be the premiere national organization of the consumer voice to enhance the employment opportunities of persons with disabilities through the public vocational rehabilitation system.



National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils, Inc.



NCSRC continued

NCSRC CORE VALUES



INTEGRITY - We are honest and straightforward in all that we do. We treat everyone with dignity and respect. We act responsibly with resources entrusted to us. We are accountable and act in accordance with these values.

COMMITMENT – We support the full implementation and enforcement of disability non – discrimination laws, particularly the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

EXCELLENCE – We trust that customers of public vocational rehabilitation will be empowered to make choices which lead to ultimate independence.

ADVOCACY – We will work to educate and inform the public and government policy makers regarding issues affecting people with disabilities

DIVERSITY – We will uphold a broad definition of diversity that honors and appreciates disability alongside race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, and religion as an integral part of the human experience.

LEADERSHIP – We will foster leadership among people with disabilities that upholds excellence, quality and inclusive opportunities.

JOINING THE WVSRC

The Council continuously accepts applications for membership from interested citizens. Those applications which meet the specific areas needed are reviewed by the Council and then forwarded to the Governor's Office for appointment. Members serve at the pleasure of the Governor of West Virginia. Members may not be employed by WV SRC or the State of West Virginia. There must be this balance that reflects our state's diversity.

The Council must have a minimum of fifteen (15) members, comprised of both voting and non-voting (ex-officio) status. The majority of our members must be persons who self-identify as having or represent someone with a disability. Our membership must include representatives from the following:

- Disability and advocacy organizations
- Business, industry, and labor
- Community rehabilitation service providers
- Client Assistance Program
- Vocational Rehabilitation/Visual Services Counselors
- Current or former consumer(s) of WV DRS Services
- Parent Training Information Center
- State Board of Education
- State Workforce Investment Board
- Assistive Technology Representative
- Statewide Independent Living Council
- Director of WV DRS

Members may serve no more than two consecutive three year full terms. Attendance at the meetings is expected. If a member has more than two consecutive absences, a letter of explanation will be requested, and removal from the Council may be a result. The Council meets six (6) times a year. The February meeting is a conference call. There are various committees of the Council which may require additional time.

Members will receive reimbursement for approved reasonable and necessary Council expenses as needed to support their active participation at business meetings and other related Council functions. This may include travel, meals, lodging, registration for meetings and personal assistance services.

Applications are due to the SRC by May 31st yearly. You may request membership applications by contacting the WV SRC office at (304) 356-2089 or (800) 642-6207 or email sherry.a.taylor@wv.gov for more information.

OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS



**Eric
Arnold,
Charleston**

Serving on the State Rehabilitation Council provides a unique opportunity for a wheelchair-bound individual like me, who has benefited greatly from the Department of Rehabilitation Services, to enrich the lives of those in the handicapped community. The State Rehabilitation Council is a diverse collection of careers, minds and people that I am proud to be invited to, and I anticipate witnessing our impact on the lives of those we serve.



**Cheri
Bever,
Hurricane**

I am proud to serve alongside my colleagues on the Council as we work to improve employment options and outcomes for West Virginians with disabilities. By ensuring the development and accessibility of quality vocational rehabilitation programs and supports, the WV SRC promotes dignity and self-determination for every person served while fostering a highly talented and diverse workforce.



**Sherry
Breeden,
Charleston**

Being one of the newest members of the State Rehabilitation Council I am excited and honored to belong to a group who advocates for people with disabilities, in their efforts, to achieve employment. I look forward to doing my part in making a difference!



**Dr. Lawrence
Dolecki,
Baker**

To be a member of the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council has been my privilege and honor. This is truly a hand's on working Council whose dedicated, knowledgeable members make sure that the citizens of West Virginia with disabilities receive all of the vocational rehabilitation services to which they are entitled.



**Sheryl
Elkins,
Oak Hill**

The reason I'm excited to serve on this committee is to be able to help me understand the services that are available to our special needs children and adults.



**Dr. Greg
Epps,
Charleston**

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council consists of individuals who truly care about the wellbeing of all the people of our state. It has been a privilege for me to work this past year with the other members of the Council. They are a passionate group of individuals who collectively make a difference in the lives of others. I am honored to be involved with the Council as we work toward helping to provide opportunities to the citizens of West Virginia.



**Mary Pat
Farrell,
Charleston**

I am honored to serve on the Council. The collaboration is strong as the members strive to improve the lives of persons with disabilities. It is an exciting time as we move forward to strengthen the transition services for our youth.



**Ginny
Gattlieb,
Charleston**

Serving on the State Rehab Council has been an invaluable experience. By becoming more knowledgeable about the needs and problems facing people with a variety of disabilities, I am able to work with the Council members to improve services so that consumers can have more choices and control of services provided.



**Robert
Gray,
S. Charleston**

Helping to serve the needs of those individuals with disabilities is personally rewarding is so many aspects and enriching our state.



**Jennifer
Gillenwater
Hurricane**

Participating on the SRC is giving me the opportunity to contribute my expertise and represent my vocational rehabilitation counselor peers. This experience is helping me to become more aware about the issues on our state and national levels and how that affects our Agency.



**Scott
Gossard,
Petersburg**

I have been an advocate for persons with disabilities my whole career. After surviving a traumatic brain injury, I recognize that we all are an accident away from being disabled. Serving on the SRC allows me to better focus my efforts.



**Cathy
Hutchinson
Huntington**

As the SILC chair it is my responsibility to represent the SILC and assist the SRC any way I can if it is my knowledge or my time.

OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS



Sheryl
Johnson,
Charleston

The knowledge I have gained over the last six year will help me in my future endeavors and the people I serve in the WV labor movement.



Brenda
Lamkin,
Buckhannon

As Director of WV Parent Training & Information, I look forward to opportunities to work with others supporting effective transition programs for students with disabilities. The SRC has a diversity of members that provide a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other.



Janet
Lintala,
Beckley

I am excited to be part of such a diverse and dynamic group and continue our mission to enable those with disabilities to work and live independently.



Deborah
Lovely,
S. Charleston

Since my retirement as the Director of WVDRS, I value this as an opportunity to continue to contribute to this wonderful program that I so deeply believe in for individuals with disabilities.



Linda
Maniak,
Charleston

I am proud to have the privilege of serving on the SRC. Their mission is to partner with DRS to ensure individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to attain their goals which will also help all of West Virginia. It is rewarding to work with a council that is involved in helping others achieve.



Kathy
McKinley,
Charleston

Having served on the WV SRC for 6 years, I have benefited from the knowledge and diversity of the committee. While working to provide input for the state plan, the WV SRC forges robust relationships that together make all West Virginians stronger.



Ray
Morton,
Beckley

The State Rehabilitation Council collaborates the views of its membership to add perspective to help the Division of Rehabilitation Services continue to improve its services and programs to help individuals with disabilities.



Karen
Ruddle
S. Charleston

The SRC in West Virginia has a unique opportunity to grow with Rehabilitation Services as changes in policies and procedures are implemented at all levels. It is an exciting time for our State.



Cindy
Tucker,
Dunbar

I was an ad hoc member of the Council for several years. Since my retirement from DRS, I have now been appointed to the Council as a voting member and am anxious to more active in helping bring change to WV. It is been exciting to be able to vote and have more of an impact on the council.



Debbie Wanzer,
White Sulpher
Springs

It is an honor to be involved in the planning and delivery of services to West Virginia residents with disabilities.



Ray
Woods,
St. Albans

I am excited to be a member of the West Virginia Rehabilitation Council, and work with such distinguished professionals.



Stephanie
Thorn,
Charleston

Serving on the SRC is important because people with disabilities continue to face numerous barriers to employment. It is important for West Virginia Advocates (WVA) to collaborate with members of the SRC to identify and mitigate these barriers to employment. As the State's Protection and Advocacy (P&A) organization for individuals with disabilities, WVA is part of a national network of P&As, and we have access to information and resources regarding best practices in employment for individuals with disabilities which we can share with the SRC.



MASON RYCK

Disability Rights Movement

When I first heard about the 2014 disability history essay contest, I must admit that I had no interest or intent of submitting an entry.

Fortunately, my grandfather saw the entry form on our dining room table and encouraged me to enter. He didn't share or elaborate his reasons on why I should enter, except to state the Disability Acts were some of the most important pieces of legislation ever enacted in United States history. Intrigued by his comment, I began to conduct my own research on the topic.

What I found was mind boggling and a real eye opener for a seventeen year old who had no understanding of what people with disabilities had overcome. For centuries, people with disabilities were labeled as helpless, deformed, abnormal, and non-productive. They were viewed as a burden on society which were better served in an asylum, institution, or a circus for entertainment. The disabled were ridiculed based on their physical or mental features rather than their potential value and benefit to society. The Trans Allegheny Lunatic Asylum in Weston, West Virginia was constructed and opened in 1864 to house such physical and mental afflictions.

It wasn't until the early 1900's that the disability movement began its fight for equal rights and protection for people with disabilities. The catalyst for the movement began shortly after World War I when disabled veterans were provided rehabilitation for their military service to this nation. However, the public mainstream continued to view the disabled as abnormal with the primary focus being on a medical fix or permanent cure. This public perception continued even though Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the first American president to have a disability, recognized the need for more rehabilitative care for all the disabled.

Following World War II, veterans once again became vocal about their physical and mental disabilities incurred as a result of war. Veterans were now demanding more employment opportunities so they could re-enter back into society as productive American citizens. This outcry resulted in disabled veterans being entitled to both rehabilitative care and vocational training. However, these veteran benefits did little to address the public access and transportation issues confronting the disabled. In addition, the veteran programs weren't available to the general public thus leaving millions without rights, care, or opportunities.

In the early 1960's the disability movement aligned itself with the Civil Rights movement, demanding equal rights and treatment of all people regardless of race, gender, or disability. During this period, the disability movement was primarily spearheaded by the parents of disabled children. They demanded their children be provided the same educational opportunities as other children, without having to be institutionalized. Legislation was eventually enacted in the mid 1960's protecting the civil rights of people regardless of race and gender; however, it wasn't until the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that the civil rights of people with disabilities were protected. For the first time in US history, people

Disability Rights Movement, continued

with disabilities were now protected by law for equal employment opportunities. This milestone legislation eventually led to the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, entitling disabled children equal access to the same public education as other children. In 1996, the act was renamed the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA). In addition to a name change, the new law provided that the parents of disabled children be involved in any educational decisions affecting their children. To facilitate decision making, educators and parents were to complete an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each disabled child.

Although significant progress had been made in providing and protecting the rights of the disabled in government agencies and public schools, it wasn't until the passage of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 that required all businesses to provide the disabled with equal employment opportunities, equal access rights, and reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation mandated that all businesses would support the disabled through job restructuring, work site modifications, and specially adaptive equipment and technology. Failure to meet these requirements could result in a discrimination complaint on the basis of disability.

Today more than 50 million individuals have benefitted from the disability movement and legislative acts of the 20th century. Disabled people from all walks of life are now fulfilling their lifelong dreams with protection from discrimination or concerns of being institutionalized. They are not only successful in life but have made significant contributions to society as artists, athletes, educators, actors, politicians, public servants, and in numerous other professions and occupations. Some famous people with disabilities who have made a positive impact on society include Stephen Hawking, Christopher Reeve, Peyton Manning, and Helen Keller.

Equally important are the numerous advancements that have been made in medicine, science, and research as the result of the disability movement. Today, there are state of the art prosthetic devices that allow amputees to accomplish physical movements and activities that were once impossible to achieve. Advances in technology now allow those with spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, and hearing and visual impairments to perform activities of daily living that many of us take for granted. Housing alterations and adaptive equipment are allowing the disabled to drive automobiles and live independently without assistance from family members, health workers, or local agencies.

I can personally attest to the positive impact the disability movement has had on my own family. A number of my family members have recognized disabilities that in the past would have resulted in institutional care and lack of opportunities. Those disabilities include military injuries, mental illness, visual and hearing impairments, speech impediments, and cleft palate malnormalities. Although I have never viewed these loved ones as disabled, less than fifty years ago society would have labeled and stigmatized them preventing these family members from equal employment opportunities. I now understand and appreciate my grandfather's comment that the disability acts were some of the most important pieces of legislation to ever be passed in US history.



Front row left to right: Cindy Tucker, Michael Casey, Ray Morton, Scott Gossard, Ray Woods, Bob Gray, Ginny Gattlieb, Deb Wanzer and Michael Meadows.

Back row left to right: Jennifer Gillenwater, Sherry Taylor, Sheryl Elkins, Cheri Bever, Sherry Breeden, Mary Pat Farrell and Janet Lintala.

Absent from photo: Donna Ashworth, Eric Arnold, Larry Dolecki, Greg Epps, Cathy Hutchison, Sheryl Johnson, Brenda Lamkin, Linda Maniak, Kathy McKinley, Karen Ruddle and Stephanie Thorn



Special Thanks to Michael Meadows from the WV SRC



Michael Meadows,
Charleston

The Council is very appreciative of the guidance, support and history that Michael brings to our Council. He serves as the WV DRS liaison and contributes to our Council with the highest regard and undaunted values. His passion and dedication for what he does shows in all of his endeavors and is exemplified in his ethics. We are proud to have him as our liaison and hope he serves in that capacity for many more years.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

Section 105 (a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, as amended

Nomination for Gubernatorial Appointment

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ County _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Phone # _____ Evening Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

Fax # _____ Email Address _____

***My disability is:** _____ ***Sex** _____ ***Race** _____

****This information is voluntary and is requested only to assist the nominating committee in ensuring diversity on the Council.***

The Rehabilitation Act requires that individuals with disabilities who are not employees of the Division comprise at least a majority of the Council membership.

While the disclosure of a disability is not mandatory, it is very helpful in the selection process. Under the Rehabilitation Act, the following definition of "an individual with a disability" applies for purposes of disclosure ~ "any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, or has record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment."

Members of Council mandated for appointment by the Governor that are subject to the nomination process are listed below. Please check all that apply:

____ Representative of a parent training and information center

____ Representative of a community rehabilitation service provider

____ Individual representing:

____ business

____ industry

____ labor

____ Representative of disability advocacy groups representing a cross-section of:

____ Individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory and mental disabilities

____ A representative of an individual who has difficulty in representing themselves or is unable due to their disability to represent themselves

____ Individual who is a current or former applicant of, or recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation

____ Representative of the State Workforce Investment Board

____ Other (please explain) _____

Experience & Qualifications (you may attach sheet with additional information):

I am interested in serving on the Council because:

References:

Name	Address/Organization	Daytime/Cell Phone
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APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 31

Questions regarding the Council or the application process may be directed to:

WV State Rehabilitation Council
P. O. Box 445
Institute, West Virginia 25112-0445

You may contact us at:
Telephone: (304) 356-2089 or 1-800-642-8207
Fax: (681) 235-2162
Email: sherry.a.taylor@wv.gov

I certify that the information I have given in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge:

Signature

Date



State Rehabilitation Council

Office Location:
107 Capitol Street
Charleston, WV 25301

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 445
Institute, WV 25112-0445

Phone:
(304) 356-2089 • (800) 642-8207
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www.WV-SRC.org



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