



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

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C OUNCIL

Annual Report for FY 2018

The SRC/DVRS Partnership Celebrates Accomplishments

October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018

New Jersey Dept. of Labor

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**New Jersey State
Rehabilitation Council**
Executive Committee
**Rebecca Shulman
Chairperson**
**James R. Thebery
Vice-Chairperson**
**Wayne Roorda
Treasurer**
**Peggy Englebert
Past Chairperson**
**David Free DVRS
Acting Director**

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 2018 representation on the Council is as follows:

Member	Representation
Joanne Norflet	Recipient of VR Services
James R. Thebery	Advocate 1
Wayne Roorda	Advocate 2
Rebecca Shulman	Advocate 3
Patricia A. Tomlinson	Advocate 4
Thomas G. Jennings	Business Rep 1
James E. Seath	Business Rep 2
Margaret M. Englebert	Business Rep 3
Charles Dodge	Disabled Rep. 1
Mohsen Badran	Community Rehab Program Rep
Lillie Lowe-Reid	Client Assistance Program
Bill Freeman	NJDOE – Office of Special Education Rep
Lorna Runkle	Business, Industry & Labor Representative
Carolyn D. Hayer	Parent Training & Info Center Rep
Nantanee Koppstein	SILC
Margaret Gilbride	Advocate 5
Janice Oursler	VR Counselor 1
Kathleen Wilson	Disabled Rep. 2
In process	State Workforce Development Board
David Free	Acting Director, DVRS, Ex-Officio

**YIGAL FALK
(TRENTON)**

I am writing this letter to tell you about my experience today at the DVR office in Trenton. My son had a meeting with Mr. Yigal Falk, we went in as a family looking for information. My son has been classified as learning disabled throughout his entire schooling. So trying to find a job on his own was getting very difficult. Mr. Falk, in my opinion went above and beyond his call of duty. He made the process simple and explained the DVR services that my child is entitled very easy to understand. Mr. Falk was a very needed and important part in this next stage of life for my son. Thank you for all your help. (Client)

**COLLEEN
HENDRICKSON
(WILDWOOD)**

Colleen was/is wonderful! Full of knowledge, understanding and compassion. She is an asset to DVRS. (Client)

From the first time of my meeting/interview conversation, Colleen explained everything...very professional, making me aware and going through every detail. Sure was great process. (Client)

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the State Rehabilitation Council of New Jersey, it is my privilege to present the 2018 Annual Report to our stakeholders. Having been elected to chair the SRC during the past year, my term of office started in June 2018. I want to personally thank Peggy Englebert, past SRC chair for her assistance during this transition, for her words of wisdom and for handing over the “official” meeting gavel. Peggy has agreed to stay on as Past Chair so her expertise will continue to be utilized in the coming year.

SRC members make up a wonderful mix of individuals who have disabilities, family members, advocates and business representatives. We are assisted by representatives from a variety of State Agency partners and everyone brings valuable information to share and discuss as we move forward to complete the valuable mission we are entrusted with.

The SRC had a busy, productive year backed by the guidance of our dedicated membership, our excellent relationship with NJDVRS under the leadership of both Director, Alice Hunnicutt for the first quarter of the year and Acting Director David Free for the balance of the program year. The Council also wants to recognize the strong support of our DVR liaisons, whom we especially thank for their organizational skills that keep us meeting in a timely, structured manner.

This year the SRC and DVRS held 4 Public Forums throughout the state, all of which were well attended by both the community and by members of our Council, who heard firsthand the concerns of a wide range of individuals. Prominent themes this year included the need for more information about Pre-Employment Transition Services and how these services were working in New Jersey. Family members and educators at the forums also wanted to know how they could access these services for their children and students.

During the past fiscal year, NJDVRS which had been experiencing a significant staffing shortage, was given permission to hire 20 new Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and this has significantly helped to fill some of the vacancies and enabled additional individuals to be provided with services. There will also be manager and supervisor vacancies filled in the coming year and the SRC is pleased that these staff shortages are being addressed.

With the emphasis on Pre-Employment Transition Services and students encouraged to look at career opportunities earlier and earlier in their educational curriculum, the need for DVRS services will only increase with the anticipated outcome being more individuals who have disabilities becoming successful in the workplace.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Shulman

Rebecca Shulman, M.A., C.R.C, L.R.C.

Chair, New Jersey Rehabilitation Council

**ELAINE SOTO-ORTIZ
(TRENTON)**

My son, Samuel, is a client of Mrs. Ortiz. I wanted to take a moment to let you know how happy we have been with her help. She listens intently, shows genuine care for both my son and for me (his mom), and was efficient in getting his paperwork processed.

When our first employment specialist didn't work out, Mrs. Ortiz had the foresight to keep Sam's case file open, and now that we are looking for a job coach, she was quickly able to locate Sam, and help us. All the information was there, right at her fingertips. I can only speak from my own experience: I have had to deal with many people of the 25+ years since my son's initial diagnosis, and Mrs. Ortiz is up there in the top ten, if not higher. It is a pleasure to work with her. In a world where people are quick to complain, I thought it might be nice to hear praise. (Parent)

**GINA SARRACINO
(TOMSRIVER)**

Thank you for the information on this. I am so glad you are a part of a group of people in my corner to help me. People like you truly make a difference, just wanted you to know that. You always get right back to me and I appreciate it. Have a good evening. (Consumer)

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.

**ADEKOYA BROWN
(NEWARK)**

I wanted to let you know that after a year at Inspirit-Tech, Joseph is planning to go back to college. He worked for the company for a year, and is grateful for the opportunity to enter the working world. But he has also realized that if he wants to find other jobs, his way forward is pretty narrow without a college degree. The idea is that he will give notice in the next few days, and focus on applications to local schools so that he can live at home and attend college in the fall, or even in the summer if possible. His bosses at Inspirit-Tech have given him great evaluations over the past year, and Joseph has proved to himself that he can handle the requirements of daily employment--and, in fact, because the call center work can be very stressful, it's given him the confidence that he can handle many other kinds of jobs, even without the generous accommodations provided by this company. So I wanted to thank you for all you have done to put my son on a good path, and to help him build the skills and confidence he needs to go forward. You have changed a life for the better.

(Parent)

**KAMLESH MEHROTRA
(NEWARK)**

Thank you again for everything you have done and are doing to assist me. I feel I would have been so lost in this process without your guidance. (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.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law July 22, 2014, reauthorized the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 under title IV. It is important to note that most provisions under title IV went into effect upon enactment of WIOA. The SRC is committed to ensuring appropriate support to the DVRS in its implementation of WIOA.

**MICHAELA
MACAULEY (NEW
BRUNSWICK)**

I spoke with (parent) about the meeting and she was so very happy with the plan and all your efforts. She feels that you are very kind and that this is such a gift for her son and her family. She really wanted me to pass these compliments on to you as well. I wish I could have been at the meeting and I was so pleased to hear that you will try to assign him to a male job coach. I could not have asked for a better outcome for this young man. I hope that he will really build his skills with this experience. Thank you again for all your help and extra efforts. If you need anything from me just let me know. I hope that you have a wonderful rest of the summer. (Patricia Miller, Skylands Family Support)

**LORIDESANTIS
(THOROFARE)**

This program changed his life and enable him to get an education, a trade, and the ability to support himself and his family in the future when he gets one...lol. I am so happy, grateful and thankful to you for all your help along the way with everything you did to help us achieve this for Andrew. He did all the work, we just helped get him the funding and the right tools! Thank you so very much Lori!!!!"

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 June meetings with recommendations made to fill vacancies according to the category the vacancy(s) represents. The SRC is fully compliant with the requirements under Section 105 in the law; members have been appointed by the Governor and 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. The following new officers were elected in June 2018: Rebecca Shulman, Chair; James R. Thebery, Vice-Chair, Wayne Roorda, Treasurer and Peggy Englebert, Past Chairperson. The officers were elected for a two-year term through June 2018.

Committees

The SRC Chair, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, appoints committees annually to meet federally mandated activities and SRC priority areas. Each SRC 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 Committee** – Activities include, but are not limited to, program evaluation activities and consumer satisfaction studies.
- **Legislative and 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, pending and current legislation, particularly with respect to impact on funding.
- **Transition (Pre-ETS)** – Responsible for initiatives relating to providing pre-employment transition services, transition services, and services to youth with disabilities as outlined in WIOA.

**JENNIFER GRANT
(SOMERVILLE)**

Hi Jennifer. They are wonderful! Yes, I'm still at Branchburg. I cover 4 schools now and I've been busy this past winter due to the flu outbreak. They closed the schools for a day because all the bus drivers were sick. The FM system is terrific. I use it all the time. I place mic on the table and receiver around my neck, it makes a big difference. The Bluetooth technology allows the sound to go directly into the ear so that the volume doesn't have to be high. Before, there was only the volume to hear better. But that wasn't very effective. As the volume increased the sound became less clear. So yes, it's a really good thing. Everyone remarks about my new "ears". And thank you for all your assistance. I'm happier to part of the hearing world again.
(Client)

**SHARON ULM-SINGLETON
(NEPTUNE)**

Thank you so much for your assistance. Joyce and I are blessed to have a loving and compassionate counselor like you. Have a great day.
(Parent)

- **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

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/policy and emerging issues committees; the executive assistant to the DVRS director provides staff support to the evaluation committee and day-to-day requests that come from SRC members.

- Executive secretary to the director provides minutes for every meeting and prepares handouts for all SRC meetings.
- Other DVRS staff members are assigned as needed to support the Council and as appropriate to their area of expertise.

For the period of 10/1/17 – 9/30/18, 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.

**EMMA GORDON
(BRIDGETON)**

Dear Emma,
I wanted to let you know that on 07/27/18 I received the set of hearing aids that your department approved for me. I am currently evaluating them and so far they are a big improvement in my ability to hear in my current job. I have another meeting with Donna at Total Hearing Care on August 10th for further adjustments and training. I will keep you informed. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity that you and your staff have given me in receiving these hearing aids and a chance to better myself with my current employer and the future.
Sincerely,
(Client)

**JODY
CLASSEN
(BRIDGETO)**

Just wanted to say "thank you" ... I feel like we are heading in the right direction and I'm happy with today's progress.
(Parent)

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 1 2017, February 14, 2018, June 13, 2018 and September 26, 2018. 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. An annual planning meeting was held on August 8, 2018.

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 CSAVR meeting begins. New Jersey SRC representatives attend this meeting in addition to the general CSAVR meetings. The New Jersey SRC is 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.

**ALAAFIA AJIBADE
(NEWARK)**

Dear Mr. Ajiade, thank you so very much. I realize that in the beginning, I was too aggressive towards you. Please forgive me. You are a wonderful person and very kind. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your dedication of giving your time and resources to my daughter. Even though she may not see you anymore. The gift of being able to handle herself in interviews is a gift that will not stop giving. Thank you for the handouts, printouts, and emails. I wish you well in your assignment and your training. You were made to help people and never let anyone, who may be misunderstanding you, like I did at first, take your joy. I'm very grateful to you - and me and my daughter - we appreciate you.
(Parent)

**DANIELLE KWAN
(SOMERSET/HUNT
ERDON)**

Thank you so much Mrs. Kwan this is great news. I appreciate everything you are doing for me. This will be such a help. Have a great day and God bless you.

2018 Public Forums:

The following public forums were held during this reporting period:

Dates	Venue	Attendance	Interpreters Provided	# SRC/DVRS Attendees	Written Testimony provided
March 12, 2018	Essex County	21	Y	4	Yes
March 13, 2018	Warren County	12	Y	4	None
March 21, 2018	Camden County	21	Y	3	None
April 6, 2018	Mercer County	9	Y	3	Yes

JAMIE CHRZAN (NEW BRUNSWICK)

I'm so sorry for not updating you! Brian from Brant's Driving School was here two weeks ago. We lost a couple of hours because Brian had to fix the equipment (Mobility Works installed the joystick backwards so that gas was brake, left was right, and so forth) but everything went smoothly for the rest of the week, which was great. I just have to practice on my own now to get more comfortable. Thanks so much for your help and sticking with me through this long and complicated process. I really appreciate your hard work in making this happen!
(Consumer)

SUSAN BALLANTYNE (TOMSRIVER)

I want to thank you for helping to make a bookkeeper out of me. Thank you for your aid and guidance
(Client)

Thank you once again for your assistance with Daniel. I will be forever grateful. Dan is working in Old Bridge for an insurance company. He has been there for a little over 3 months. He loves working. He is so happy and confident like a different person. Actually working on driving again. Thanks once again.
(Client)

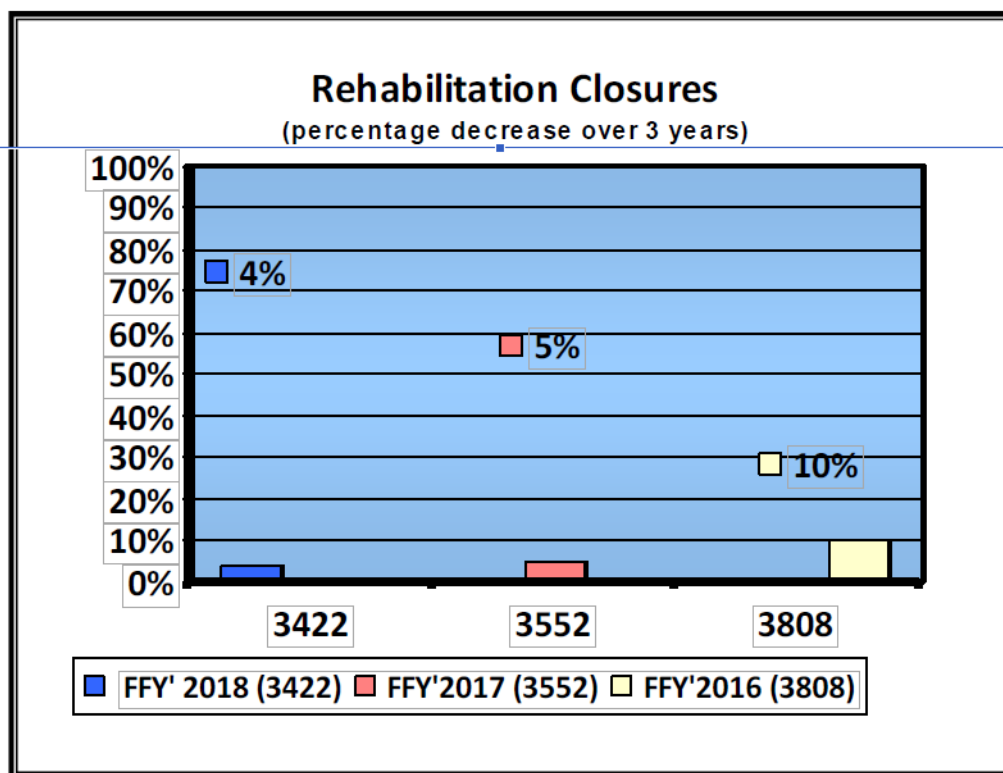
Activities and Accomplishments

Eligible Consumers Served in 2018

In FFY' 2018, the DVRS served all categories of eligible consumers. The agency currently has the financial resources to serve all categories; however, it was projected that with the implementation of the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (W.I.O.A.) the agency would need to go into an Order of Selection. DVRS did not need to go into an order of selection in FFY' 2018 due to realignment of federal funds emphasizing Pre-Employment Transition Services for students and youth. In addition, the Department of Human Services has implemented policy changes that now require all individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (ID/DD) who seek support through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to seek employment services first with DVRS.

Successful Employment Outcomes

In FFY' 18, closures decreased from 3,552 in FFY' 2017, to 3,433 in FFY' 2018. This decrease is less than 4% from FFY' 17. Quality of the rehabs remains at its highest level even with the decline of rehab in total. Rate of decline has slowed down in 2018 due to hiring of new staff. DVRS has hired 20 new Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor 1 employees, promoted 11 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor 2 employees, and promoted 4 Manager 1, Vocational Rehabilitation Service employees.



**Danielle Kwan,
Somerville Office**

You are awesome. I really, really appreciate your support – emotional as well as employment. You never forget the personal side, compassion for my circumstances. This has been a lonely journey at times, it is nice to have someone who just plain cares. (Client)

40 hours a week, 17 an hour!!! I'm salary with 35000 a year! Oh my gosh, I know. It feels insane but so natural. I feel like I am who I always was meant to be, and everything I've been through has just made me stronger and more aware. I thank you SO much, without DVR I'm not sure I would have even went back to school!!! (Client)

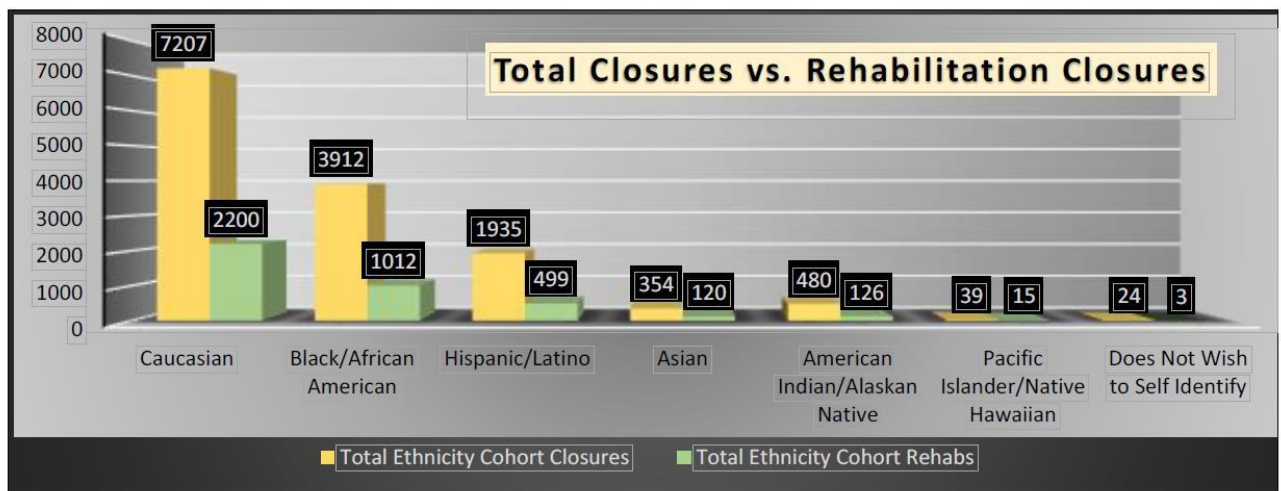
**PATIENCE
OKOTIE-
ISEKENEGBE
(BRIDGETON)**

Patience has been extremely helpful by taking and guiding me through this process. I am grateful for all her help! Sincerely, (Client)

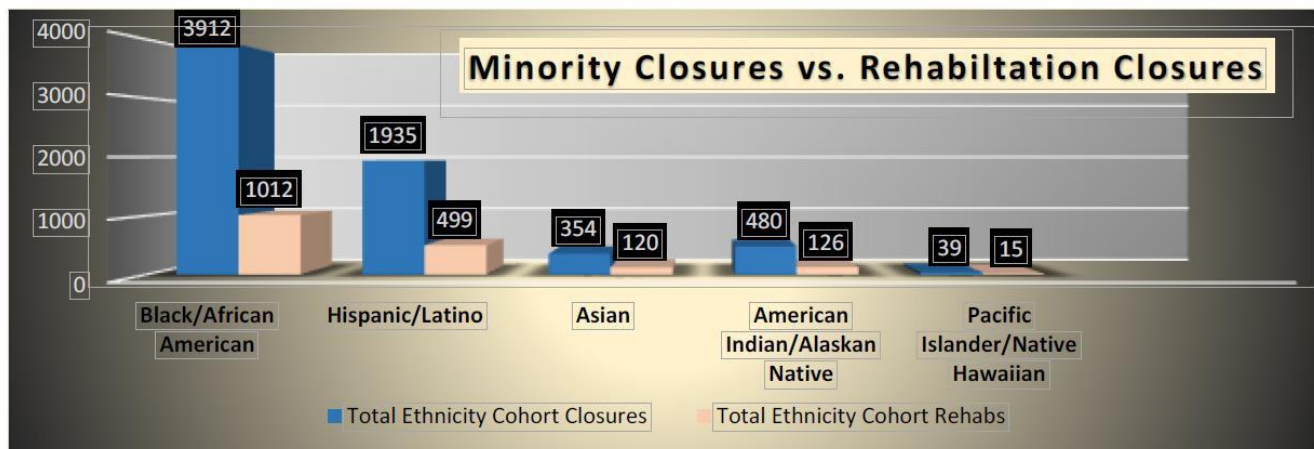
Minority Identification

There were 11,819* closed cases in FFY'18. DVRS served all these individuals and closed their cases for other reasons or were successful rehabilitations. 29% of all the closures are rehabilitations and 52% of the total rehab closures are from minority groups.

****Please note: Consumers can choose 2 or more minority identifiers on their applications or wish to not identify.**

Minority Identification

Total Closed and Other Closures by Ethnicity Identification for FFY' 2018



Total minority closures in FFY'18 are 1,772 out of all rehabilitated closures.

**Emma Gordon
(Bridgeton)**

Thank you to you and your staff for helping me get my hearing aids! You made the process easy and thorough, taking the time that I understood everything and enabled me to hear all that I was missing. Thank you again for everything.
(Client)

**Yigal Falk
(Trenton)**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you so much for your kindness and helpfulness during our meeting this morning. With any new situation the element of uncertainty and trepidation occurs. Your very friendly and cordial manner dissipated any of the latter elements. I am so very pleased that Anna can look to you for assistance and guidance.
(Client)

**Jody Classen
(Bridgeton)**

I got your voicemail last week explaining about the referral for people with SSI. You were very helpful :) Just wanted to say thank you.
(Client)

Northern Region**Referrals by Region**

Office	Caseloads	Referrals
Paterson	7	881
Randolph	7	674
Hackettstown	5	651
Hackensack	10	1,484
Jersey City	10	1,281
Total	39	4,971

Patience Okotie-Isekenegbe (Bridgeton)

Patience has been very kind and helpful throughout this whole process. I couldn't have asked for a better counselor.
(Client)

I am happy with the way that DVR and you have assisted me in my pursuit of my degree. I look forward to working with you in the future as well.
(Client)

GILDA ESCOBAR (HACKENSACK)

I just wanted to thank you for everything you have done for me and my family in helping me with the grant money for college and the books. You sticking with my case and helping me through the four years made a huge difference and I just wanted to take the time to send you a BIG THANK YOU! I graduated in the Fall semester of 2017 with a BS in Forensic Science and Biology. And I hope you enjoy the little pictures I sent (not shown). I am the first from my family to graduate from a university and you were a big help in it.
(Client)

Central Region

Office	Caseloads	Referrals
Newark	16	2,665
New Brunswick	9	1,985
Elizabeth	9	1,397
Somerville	6	1,192
Trenton	9	1,206
Neptune	8	1,095
Total	55	9,540

Southern Region

Office	Caseloads	Referrals
Toms River	9	1,809
Camden	13	1,827
Thorofare	5	757
Westampton	6	811
Pleasantville	8	1,082
Bridgeton	7	1,133
Wildwood	2	217
Total	50	7,636

ELIZABETH CONTE**(SOMERVILLE)**

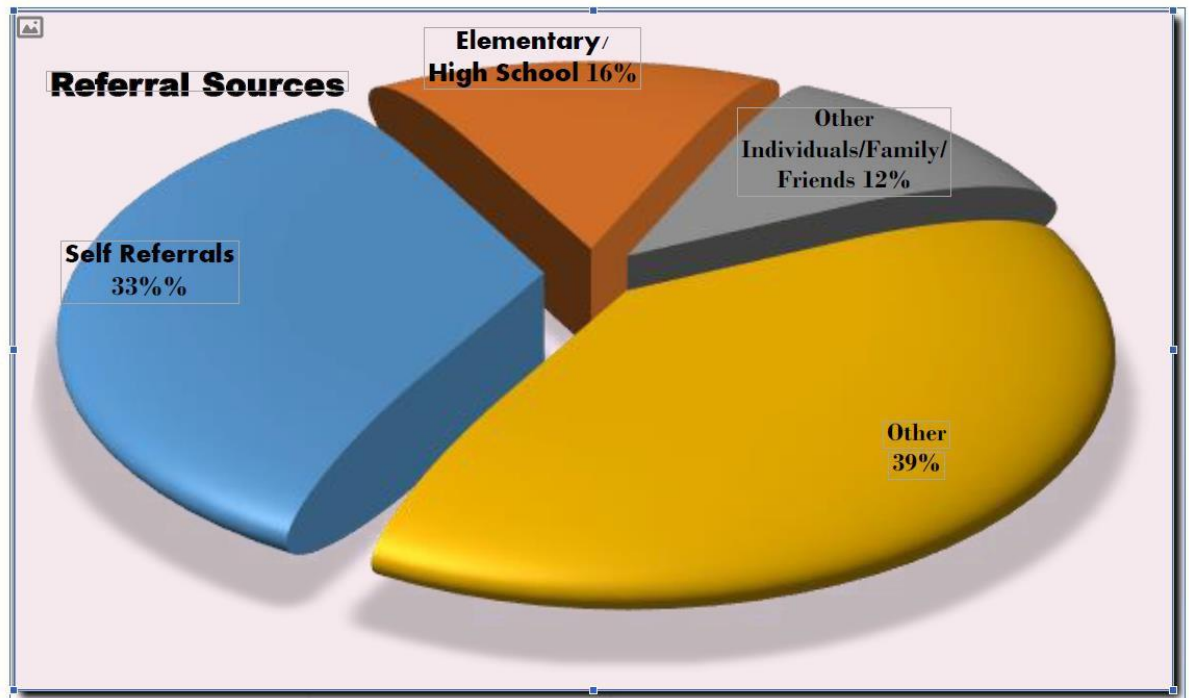
I apologize for the delayed correspondence. I'm very busy at work, but doing very well. The manager who hired me is very supportive of my day to day responsibilities and always provides me with guidance. I let Tiffany know that it may be best to check in once a month. DVR has provided me with the opportunity to get back on my feet and I'm forever thankful for that. However, I believe the services are no longer necessary.
(Client)

DONNALEE SNYDER (TOMS RIVER)

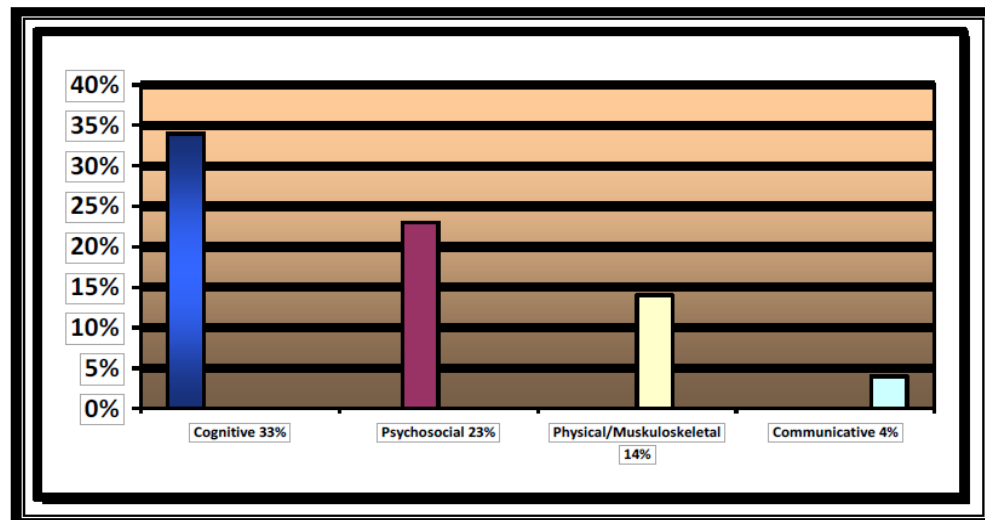
I'm writing you to let you know that I just finished the second year of the course of Automotive Technician II. I really appreciate all your help and support. I couldn't have made it without you. Thanks to you and all the staff of DVR in Toms River, NJ. I wish you the best and I hope to see you soon. Thanks.
(Client)

Referral Sources

The DVRS received 22,147 referrals during FFY'18. Of the 3,422 total rehabilitations, the following referral sources were the highest; Self Referrals, Elementary/High School, Other Individuals and Other. Some of the other referral sources include CRPs, medical professionals, One-Stop Career Centers, Social Security Administration, employers, family and friends, welfare, etc.

**Disabilities Served**

DVRS serves a wide range of disabilities; in 2018 Cognitive and Psychosocial were the largest group served. These two groups made up 74% of all disabilities served. 26% was made up the "other" consumers and they had a range of disability impairments.



KATHLEEN MAUER (PATERSON):

Thank you for participating in the Autism Panel Discussion on Wednesday night at the Public Safety Academy. Your presentation about the resources available through the NJ DVRS was a valuable component to the discussion and helped families with special needs understand that they do have options available to their children as they approach adulthood. The attendees I talked with afterwards were grateful to learn about the NJ DVRS. It was a pleasure meeting you and working with you on this event. Thanks again for your commitment to serving the needs of Passaic County residents.
(Marcia Diljak, Aide to Freeholder John Bartlett)

DIANE STRAUSS (CENTRAL OFFICE)

Thank you for calling me back today. Least of all thank you for your kindness.
(Consumer)

Supported Employment Assists Consumers with Significant Disabilities

The DVRS successfully rehabilitated 1,013 individuals who received Supported Employment services in FFY'18; the following represent the most significant disabilities:

- Cognitive Impairment 20%
- Psychosocial Impairments: 11%

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'18 accounted for 30% or a third of all successful rehab closures.

Employment First

Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. WIOA was created to provide state and local areas the flexibility to collaborate across systems in an effort to better address the employment and skills needs of employees, jobseekers, and employers.

In the development of the plan, DVRS specifically focused on strategies to increase the participation rate of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

For example, DVRS has been updating agency policies/procedures to advance Employment First concepts. The agency developed the Supported Employment Services manual and the procedural guidelines for Job Coaching Services to help operationalize WIOA procedures and to deliver consistent services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

DVRS also created a career counseling program. The purpose of the program is to provide career counseling to I/DD individuals who are employed in an occupational training center and are working at a commensurate wage. Counselors from local offices provided counseling services to individuals in all of the extended employment facilities funded in LWD, and also provided counseling services to other providers as requested. In total, over 4,000 counseling sessions were done by DVRS.

DVRS has partnered with the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities to update its supported employment guidelines and procedures. The purpose of the collaboration is to improve the continuum of services being offered and to improve communication.

**AMY HOEHMAN
(NEPTUNE)**

Hi Amy, I'm doing great! These hearing aids are 10x better than the ones I had. The Bluetooth with my phone has been the best. I can hear better and understand better. I can have better conversations inside the dojo (ie, a martial arts room). I am so happy with these hearing aids. Thank you guys so much! Hope this finds you well! Forever grateful.
(Client)

**KATIE
CZAJKOWSKI &
MOSS REHAB
(BRIDGETON)**

Thanks again both of you for your support during my break from work and for continuing to do more than what's just expected. I'm VERY grateful to have you as part of my team!
(Client)

**PATIENCE
OKOTIE-
ISEKENEGBE
(BRIDGETON)**

I am happy with the way that DVR and Patience has assisted me in my pursuit of my degree. I look forward to working with her in the future as well.
(Client)

Transitioning to Post School Activities

The reauthorization of WIOA made significant changes to the DVRS responsibility for transition services. Specifically, the law requires that the public VR program provide pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to all students with disabilities. DVRS identified strategies to ensure that all transition students with disabilities have the opportunity to receive these services.

In 2018, DVRS initiated and created a Fee for Service program that provides Pre-Employment Transition Services in all 21 New Jersey counties. Additionally, DVRS awarded nineteen, one year contracts for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

DVRS has dedicated Pre-Employment Transition Counselors in each of the 18 DVRS Offices. Counselors have planned and organized Transition Fairs throughout the state. These transition events allow stakeholders to collaborate with each other and provide information to the public on DVRS services.

DVRS Counselors work alongside state education representatives to initiate and organize the most appropriate services for students with disabilities in order that the student's transition from secondary to post-secondary life is centered around choice and the ability to engage in meaningful competitive integrated employment.

**Emma Gordon,
(Bridgeton Office)**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the DVRS (through Emma Gordon and her staff) for helping me go through the process of obtaining my hearing aids. I am very happy and feel very blessed to have them. This is my "second go round" with this program and they have been professional and helpful in every aspect of the process. This is a wonderful program for people with disabilities that just need a little extra help, through job placement or as in my case with financing. I would have never been able to afford these on my own. Just wearing them for the first day has been such an improvement. Thank you so much for allowing me to be part of this program.
(Client)

**MARCELA
DINOSO
(HACKENSACK)**

Just wanted to contact you and let you know I'm still working at C21, it's going on 9 months, and loving my job. And to let know everything is all good. Thank you for being there for me.
(Client)

Master's Degree Programs Collaborate with the DVRS

The SRC continues to recommend that DVRS maintain its requirement for counselors to have Master's degrees in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field, and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission requires it as a prerequisite to become a Counselor for the DVRS. The School of Health Related Professions at Rutgers University has a Master's degree program in Rehabilitation Counseling, and DVRS reports the following collaborative activities:

- The DVRS regularly provides practicum and internship placements in all local offices.
- 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 school has an excellent record for receiving these grants.
- 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.
- The SRC members take part in focus group activities of this program that helps forge new initiatives for the program. 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, The University of Wisconsin at Stout and several other universities offering on-line support.

Staff Development and Training

Although DVR no longer has specified training funding dollars, staff continue to pursue professional development and CRC credits. Staff attend rehabilitation specific presentations, vocational rehabilitation conferences, such as APSE and GSETA, take advantage of department internal Human Resource trainings, participate in the department's tuition assistant program for credit specific continuing education coursework and attend state government trainings such as supervisory and public management opportunities.

**DANIELLE KWAN
(SOMERVILLE)**

It is with the greatest of pleasure to tell you that I have been formally offered the forecasting position at the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma. Today, I accepted that offer and will probably start in the spring. Thank you in advance and also thank you for everything you and DVR have done for me up to this point. Without this aid, I never would have made it this far!
(Client)

Yes, things are going well. I'm now the fitness director of retro and still continuing my education at RVCC. Thank you so much for all of your help. I couldn't have done this without you and I appreciate it tremendously.
(Client)

I apologize that I have been so hard to reach. Last night I received your letter regarding closing my case, which I have signed and will stick in the mail tonight. I wanted to let you know how grateful I am for the services DVR provided and that you were a really big help throughout this whole process. A couple months ago, I got a promotion and started working a new job with the Appellate Division in Trenton. None of this would have been possible without your assistance. Thank you so much! If you need anything else, please let me know. I think we have the same lunch schedule because every time I try calling, they tell me you are out.
(Client)

Business Outreach Team

In FY 2018, the Business Outreach Team (BOT) has been developing a cooperative relationship with local DVR offices. The BOT has offered services such as trainings on labor market information, targeted hiring events and consults on job ready clients.

Members of the BOT have been reaching out to all LWD business partners in order to enhance business outreach and provide more effective, coordinated services to the business community.

BOT staff have been involved in a range of activities throughout the year including:

- Attending two Business Summits entitled Changing Perceptions of Hiring People with Disabilities. The first of these was held on March 2nd at the IBEW Local 269 Union Hall in Lawrenceville and the second Business Summit on Disability Awareness took place at Middlesex County Vocational Technical School in East Brunswick on April 25th. Both events were held in conjunction with The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- The BOT is currently working with Fedcap at three Amazon Sortation locations throughout New Jersey. The locations are in Avenel (Middlesex), Teterboro (Bergen), and Logan Township (Gloucester). DVR clients are recruited and referred from the local offices for part time employment ranging from 20-25 hours per week (4 hour shifts).
- BOT members have been attending Workforce Development Board and Disability Committee Meetings throughout the state. Team members have also been attending Talent Network TIPS meetings in the numerous industry sectors
- BOT team members continue to collaborate with National Employment Network. Initiatives in FY 2018, included working on the national acquisition portal (TAP) which is a database for resumes and job information for people with disabilities.

JENNIFER JOHNSON (NEPTUNE)

"I met with Carol to discuss how work is going. She is so happy. She is doing very well. She could not have found a more perfect job that's fits her life style. When Carol talks about what DVR and her counselor have done for her since she started with the agency she becomes emotional. She has come so far since she first met with her DVR counselor and she is truly in a great place now."

Job Coach

"Jennifer, I just wanted to go out of my way for you because you really changed my life around. Thank you so much. Have a great rest of your year."

Client

AALIYAH ROBINSON-PETERS (NEW BRUNSWICK)

This program allowed Brian to gain experience and obtain a position. Not sure if he'd have got here without it...thank you.

(Parent)

Regional Career Centers for People with Hearing Loss

Three regional centers, which opened in 2009 cover all 21 counties in New Jersey serving individuals who are culturally deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened or with cochlear implants. They are as follows:

- Northern Career Pathways (operated by Easterseals NJ in Maplewood)
- Career Development Center (operated by Bridges to Employment in Edison)
- Career Success Solutions (operated by Rowan College at Burlington County in Willingboro)

The purpose of the Regional Career Centers (RCC) for People with Hearing Loss grant is to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to consumers of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS).

Each center offers the following services:

- Job Placement Assistance that will offer help in finding job openings and securing job placement
- Job Coaching Assistance that will offer training on the job
- Assistive Technology Center houses various assistive technology devices for individuals with hearing loss on display and to be demonstrated by staff. This will provide awareness that may benefit the individual in the workplace.
- Pre-Employment Transition Services

**TONI SCOTT
(WESTAMPTON)**

Happy New Year Toni. Hope you're doing well. I just wanted to write and say THANK YOU very much for helping me get the hearing aids and accessories. I have been really enjoying them very much and it has made my life more enjoyable.

Thank you again for caring and making a difference in my life and my family's as well.

(Client)

**CHRISTINA
QUAY (TOMS
RIVER)**

I appreciate all the help and support you've given me so far...like I told you, my network of supportive people in my life is not that plentiful, so I really enjoy meeting & talking with you...I will be contacting you within the next few days.

(Client)

All staff are knowledgeable on the needs of people with hearing loss and are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL).

The contract year runs from 1/31/2018 - 2/1/2019. As of September 2018, the RCC's have collectively provided over 46 vocational assessments, provided Job Readiness Services to 66 individuals, provided 21 ATD demonstrations, provided Pre Employment Transition Services to 17 consumers, and secured employment for 43 DVRS consumers.

Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living (CIL's) are community-based, cross-disability, non-profit organizations that are designed and operated by people with disabilities. CILs are unique in that they operate according to a strict philosophy of consumer control, wherein people with all types of disabilities directly govern and staff the organization.

The CIL centers help their clients to lead fulfilling lives, make decisions that lead to self-determination and integrate into mainstream American society.

Each of New Jersey's CIL's for Independent Living provides the following five core services:

- Peer Support
- Transition Services
- Information and Referral
- Individual and Systems Advocacy
- Independent Living Skills Training

DVRS continues to be the designated state entity (DSE) for the centers for independent living and assigns a Planning Program Development Specialist (PPDS) as the official liaison for the program. DVRS collaborated with the CIL centers to increase their ability to provide services under a fee-for-service opportunity. DVRS also worked with them to develop opportunities for Pre-ETS services.

The CIL Centers and DVRS have worked collaboratively and partners in the following:

- Some CIL's centers were awarded Pre-ETS Grants to address issues in underserved schools.
- Conducted and completed Alliance Center for Independent Living Audit – MOCEANS Center for Independent Living Audit is scheduled for October, 2018.
- Worked in completing 704 Report.
- Participated in drafting SILC [Policy Manual].
- Will continue to monitor SPIL (State Plan for Independent Living)

**SHARON BURNETT
(CENTRAL OFFICE)**

The Neptune office had a very difficult situation attempting to get a college on our NJ Start system. This particular college had an identical tax id number as another college in New York. There were phone calls and emails between our staff and the colleges, and the issue just could not be resolved. The colleges would not issue new numbers and NJ Start also could not remedy this. The student was scheduled to start the following week, and a tuition invoice needed to be sent to secure her admittance. The student and her family were becoming very anxious. Then Sharon Burnett came to the rescue. She said she would not let this go, and would work on it. She contacted sources within NJ Start and arranged for them to correct the problem. The student's mother said she was hoping for a miracle, and it happened with Sharon's help!
Thank you!

Significant Issues

Appointments

The DVRS and the SRC continue to work with the Governor's Appointment office to provide all the paperwork necessary so appointments can be made on a timely basis. The SRC chair must maintain communication with the Governor's office on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the WIOA requirements for appointments. The SRC is hopeful that this relationship will continue with the new administration in 2018/2019.

Staffing

Due to a long standing state hiring freeze, agency staffing has been reduced too critical low levels. DVRS has advocated to the new administration to hire additional counseling staff, office managers/supervisors, and fill central office vacancies as soon as possible. The appointment of these positions is necessary due to the increased work requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). Furthermore, agency leadership positions remain vacant and must be filled to due compliance requirements under WIOA and the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Training

With the new rules and regulation promulgated by WIOA, there is increased need to re-train the agency staff in key WIOA concepts such as measureable skills gain, credential attainment, and pre-employment transition services. DVRS currently does not have a centralized training unit in the organization structure. Specialized training is conducted by the CRP/Program units for staff and vendors, but a dedicated training unit would help ensure agency policies and procedures are being followed agency wide.

**RAJ VENKATRAMAN
(TRENTON)**

Hello Raj,
Hope you are doing well
and enjoying what's left
of the summer.

I wanted to let you know
that I finally passed my
nclex-rn examination and
an overdue thank you is
in order for all your help
and support during this
long process.

I apologize for not
keeping you in the loop
with this process, but it
was very tough for me to
get through it and
difficult for me to have to
explain how much of a
toll it took in my life.

Anyway, I just wanted to
let you know I haven't
forgotten everything you
have done for me and

that I am very grateful
for counselors like
yourself that truly care
about their clients.

Once again, thank you.

Regards,
Client

**RENEE
CARATOZZOLO
(RANDOLPH)**

Thank you for having me
today at DVRS. Now I
know where to go when I
can't find a job. You
gave me a nice tour of the
building and met some
amazing counselors and
adults who work there.
Hopefully, I will be able
to come in to get job
assistance.

(Rocco – Student)

Planned Activities for FY 2019

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 specific topics identified by the SRC. Topics identified include:
 - Order of Selection;
 - Pre-employment transition services/family engagement;
 - Services to the individuals with Autism; and
 - Substance Use/Mental Health Disabilities.
- 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; and
- Keep abreast of the goals in the New Jersey combined state plan and support the outcomes identified in the new comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

Committees:

- Enhance and support the sub-committee structure itself;
- 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; and
 - Assist DVRS staff in completing the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

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

YIGAL FALK (TRENTON)

My son and I had a really great supported employment intake interview today with Yigal Falk. I was impressed by the way Yigal treated him, showing kindness and treating him with dignity and respect. Over the past three years, as our family has been on this journey, too often providers and others, while well-meaning, have talked down to him. Yigal acknowledged the fact that he graduated from Columbia and was very encouraging. I could see as the meeting progressed how he opened up, because Yigal made him feel comfortable. I feel very lucky that NJ provides this service and that we are working with Yigal.
(Parent)

JAMIE CHRZAN (NEW BRUNSWICK)

Thank you very much for representing DVRS at our first annual transition fair. We cannot thank you enough for sharing information about DVRS with our parents of students with special needs transitioning out of high school. Vocational training is an important life skill needed for independent living. We look forward to seeing you at our 2nd annual transition fair!!!
(Christina Basile & Erica Friedman – Monroe Twp. District)

Planned Activities for FY 2019 (cont.)**Communication:**

- Implement use of Go to Meeting and Go to Webinar software; and
- Utilize Share Point to share information between SRC meetings.

Educational Efforts:

- Continue leadership in providing training, support and access to the One-Stop systems regarding persons with disabilities and the workforce; and
- Develop educational information regarding the services provided to, successes and outcomes of the DVRS constituents, including legislative district break down; and send the information to New Jersey representatives.

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, including third-party cooperative agreements; and
- Provide support to the DVRS in applying for grants that enhance successful employment outcomes for persons with disabilities

Collaboration:

- Support the DVRS' effort to increase opportunities 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); and
- Partner with the DVRS in the development of new goals.

**KATIE
CZAJKOWSKI
(BRIDGETON)**

Hey Marva, hope you're doing well! I just wanted to take a moment to email you and let you know that one of your counselors have been doing a really good job! Katie is really great at getting back to us here at Moss. She is knowledgeable about her job and always provides us with useful and helpful information. When she requests information, it's clear and concise. She gives us all the information needed to complete a necessary step - which makes my job easier and a better experience for the client. It's not often that I would reach out to a supervisor to let them know that someone is exceeding their job responsibilities. But in this case, I really feel like I need to. We here at Moss, really enjoy working with Katie. So just wanted to let you know, you got a really good counselor! Have a great day!
(Heather – Moss Rehab)

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.

The SRC and the DVRS jointly developed and reviewed elements of the combined state plan. An assessment of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation delivery system has resulted in the following recommendations based on suggestions from the public forums held in FFY’17 in Ocean, Hudson, Salem, Somerset and Burlington counties.

The SRC recommendations for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 and their status updates are as follows:

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC appreciates the work completed to date that has aligned the agency with the regulations of the Workforce Opportunities Investment Act (WIOA). It is recommended that DVRS continue to work toward full compliance of the laws mandates as per the Rehabilitation Services Administration guidelines.

Agency Response:

The DVRS accepts the SRC recommendation to continue to work toward full compliance with the Workforce Opportunities Investment Act.

Status Update:

The DVRS has been successful in developing new grant programs that help the agency remain in compliance with the law.

MELANIE PERNA/JEFF DEITZ (CAMDEN):

There are not enough words to express my profound gratitude for the assistance provided to me by Melanie Perna related to helping me to secure a new wheelchair so I can continue my employment as the Pastor of St. Andrew The Apostle, Gibbsboro, NJ. The wheelchair arrived just a few days before Christmas, and could not have come at a better time, as my existing wheelchair officially died the day before I picked up the new wheelchair. I would have been unable to preside at the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses had it not been for all that you and Melanie have done for me. And wow...the new technology (eye to eye technology) that exists in this wheelchair allows me to actually interact with others at eye level, as well as preside at the altar. Studies have been done that show when people look down at the physically disabled, they also associate that they are developmentally disabled. What a world of difference this wheelchair has made. I wanted to take a moment to write and express my profound appreciation. Melanie did an outstanding job and through your guidance and direction, you have both allowed me to celebrate life to the fullest. Your works not only provide help to others, but also hope in a very special way. Thank you both a thousand times over.

(Client)

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC commends the DVRS for operating a robust Ticket to Work program that has resulted in substantial additional revenue for the agency. The SRC recommends continued expansion of the program to improve employment outcomes for beneficiaries of supplemental security income (SSI) and /or social security disability insurance(SSDI).

Agency Response:

DVRS thanks the SRC for the recommendation and plans to continue to expand the TTW program so more SSI/SSDI recipients can return to work.

Status Update:

DVRS was successful in increasing the agency cost reimbursements in FFY 2018. The additional funds will be used to enhance VR services and improve coordination of the DSE's independent living partners.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC appreciates the DVRS Business Outreach Team and their efforts to expand the business engagement model across the State of New Jersey. It is strongly recommended that VR staff continue to engage with the BOT so the relationship between employers and VR will continue to strengthen and competitive integrated employment opportunities will be further enhanced.

Agency Response:

DVRS agrees with the SRC recommendation. The BOT unit is available and ready to meet with local offices to discuss training on employer engagement and other business related topics.

Status Update:

The BOT unit has been actively working in local offices providing job development services, training, and coordination of interdepartmental disability services across the state.

SRC Recommendation:

The SRC recognizes that transition services under WIOA has expanded the population of students with disabilities who may receive pre-employment transition services while still in secondary school. The SRC recommends, as per WIOA, policies and procedures be developed to support increased services to students and youth.

Agency Response:

DVRS accepts the recommendation and is in the process developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI), Office of Special Education (OSE), and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). It is anticipated the MOU will be completed in FY 2019.

Status Update:

The DVRS is actively working with our partners to complete the finalization of the MOU.

**KATIE
CZAJKOWSKI
(BRIDGETON):**

It has been so long since I have last wrote to you. First of all, I would like you to know that I have graduated from the Intern Program at the Navy and I am in the process of becoming a Permanent hire employee. It is so nice to be a Full Time Employee. It took almost five years to become a Full Time Employee since I graduated from college. Right now, I am/was looking for ways to give back to the community, since so many people like you have helped me throughout my life. I hope your life is treating you good! Thank you once again for your help back in 2014! You helped make a difference in my life. One day, I hope to help an individual with a disability succeed like you did for me.
(Client)

**LAURIE SMITH
(HACKETTSTOWN)**

The hearing aids will help me to hear my patients at work a lot better. I will not have to ask people, 'what?' a thousand times a day in person and over the phone. I will be able to hear if the drill, suction, and sterilizer are running. Thank you so much for everything. I'm so grateful for you.
(Client)

Summary

During FFY'18, the Rehabilitation Council continues to work cohesively and productively, partially as a result of renewed emphasis on the tools at hand, utilizing an updated 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 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. 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.

**STEVEN SHEVLIN
(TRENTON)**

I am so sorry I have taken so long to acknowledge the wonderful new hearing aids you helped provide. As you know, being hearing impaired in a work environment is exhausting. The aids are doing exactly what they need to do. I need some adjustments to get them fine-tuned. The important part is they are exactly what I needed to function in the office setting. On the musical front, that is where I need some fine-tuning. When my husband Bob plays the clarinet, it sounds like an accordion. You can identify that it is necessary to be able to hear yourself when playing. You know personally intonation, volume, nuances between musicians that are so delicate demands you have to be able to hear. Steven this is a miracle to me. We could never have afforded or even been able to get hearing aids at our present financial condition. My deepest and sincerest thanks to you and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for making my life a hearing world again. Thank you, thank you, thank you so much.
(Client)

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LEILA MOLAIE (ELIZABETH)

Hi Leila, Happy, happy New Year 🎉. FYI for your future kids on what they can be and accomplish with your help...Sorry for the delay in response but I was waiting from Jeff's job bonus and raise for 2018. Here is what Jeff received in bonus and raise after 1 & 1/5 years on the job, 6K in bonus and 6K in raise. I'm so proud of him!!! I don't know if I told you or not, but in August (for his 25 birthday) he bought his dream car (Ford Mustang). By the time he was done buying the car he only had to borrow 8K from the bank in order to bring the car home. Needless to say, he took his bonus money he just received and just paid off his car loan...Thank you always. (Parent)

JILL SCHALL (TRENTON)

I don't know how you did it but thank you so much!!!!!! Yesterday Rena passed her Math Praxis - 1st try. She was so excited that she literally screamed on the call to let me know. She has been studying so hard during Winter break while her friends are enjoying this time off. Her next Praxis is on Social Studies and is on Friday. There is a lot of material that she did not learn in any of her courses. So she has been studying for that as well. This funding from DVRS makes all of it so worthwhile. I can't thank you enough. We are so grateful!! (Parent)

NEPTUNE (Monmouth)

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