

Delaware State Rehabilitation Council

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2020



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

February 15, 2021

The Honorable John Carney
Governor of Delaware
Dover Office
Tatnall Building
William Penn Street, 2nd Floor
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney:

Enclosed for your review is the 2020 Annual Report of the Delaware State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). During FY20, Karen DiNardo was the SRC Chair, Emanuel Jenkins - Vice Chair, and Monica Edgar - Past Chair. Our goal was to develop goals and priorities in collaboration with the DVR Agency.

During the second quarter of the FY20, the pandemic spread throughout our State and both the Council and the DVR agency operated in a virtual mode for the remainder of the fiscal year. The SRC continued to hold regular meetings as well as our annual recognition event to highlight employees with disabilities along with the businesses that hire and accommodate them.

The DVR agency, while unable to see clients in person, utilized a variety of platforms and communication tools to serve people. While our overall numbers served were reduced, DVR continued to provide career counseling, training opportunities, and job placement services.

In conclusion, as we continue to navigate our daily lives and the additional barriers we face, we remain committed to the mission and goal of employment for all individuals with disabilities who want to go to work. We intend to stay up to date by broadening our membership, partnering with other Boards and Councils, and working hard to advocate for people with disabilities. I would like to thank our partner, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, for helping the SRC through this transitional time and thank the members of the Council for their time, dedication, efforts, and passion.

Thank you for the opportunity to give back to our community through service on the State Rehabilitation Council.

With Warm Regards,

Karen DiNardo

Karen DiNardo, Chair
State Rehabilitation Council

Andrea Guest

Andrea Guest, Director
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

State Rehabilitation Council Committees

Executive Committee

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

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is responsible for recruitment of new SRC members to meet its representative requirements. SRC members represent people with disabilities, advocates and family members, employers, rehabilitation, and education professionals. The Chair of the Council serves as the Chair of the Membership Committee.

Policy, Procedure, and Performance Committee

The State Rehabilitation Council has several members who participate on the DVR Policy Committee which develops policy and procedures for DVR participant services. These SRC members are part of the Policy, Procedure, and Performance Committee. In addition to sharing information with the entire SRC such as the development of DVR policies and procedures, this committee brings the SRC perspective to the Policy Committee.

Government Relations Committee

The Government Relations Committee is responsible for maintaining awareness of issues and activities of the councils and committees around the state that address disability-related issues and monitoring legislative initiatives. The committee reports on noteworthy activities of other councils and the State legislature and facilitates the SRC's advocacy on issues of concern. The committee also coordinates the SRC participation in the DVR budgeting and funding process.

Participant Satisfaction Committee

The Participant Satisfaction Committee is responsible for reviewing the participant satisfaction process including the survey instrument used to obtain feedback from all participants. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the sub-committee was unable to implement the survey for 2020. The process will be reinstated for FY2021 to collect participant satisfaction data.

CSNA Committee

On a triennial basis, the DVR and the SRC are required to complete a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). The CSNA Committee takes an active role in determining the way the assessment will be conducted, designing the assessment questions, assisting in the implementation, and reviewing the results.

Limitations and Successes

In early 2020, the world was overwhelmed by the COVID-19 Pandemic. As with most businesses and office buildings, the Delaware Department of Labor (DOL) and all its divisions were instructed to close their doors to the public, while continuing to serve Delawareans via online services.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) counselors have always met with their participants in person. Providing DVR services online seemed like an insurmountable challenge. Of course, there are telephone calls, email, and postal mailing of pertinent documents, however, meeting face-to-face has remained the best way to maintain good counselor/participant relationships.

Due to concern for the health and wellbeing of all staff, DVR Director, Andrea Guest made the decision to offer her team the ability to work remotely. Laptops were obtained and Virtual Private Network (VPN) accounts were created for staff. As the DVR uses the online AWARE Case Management System, everyone was ready to work from home. The challenge then shifted to discovering ways to keep participants engaged while attempting to help them secure jobs as businesses continued to close under the Governor's orders.

What was first looked at has a major hurdle has become almost second nature to the staff, as they looked to the advice they regularly give to participants; *identify your barriers and form ideas to assist you with working around those barriers to go to work*. This is exactly what the DVR staff did.

Conference Call Line

When the doors were closed to the public, counselors began scheduling the DVR conference call line to host meetings between themselves, their participants, and the providers from whom the participants were receiving services. While face-to-face contact is best, the counselors came to realize that the conference calls are quite efficient as there is no travel involved and people may call in from any location. Once the pandemic eases and the DVR is able to open its doors once again, meeting in-person will resume, however, counselors will have continued use of the conference line for meetings when the need arises.

Temporary Additional Services during COVID-19

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DVR Contract Administration Unit implemented a flexible hourly payment mechanism to DVR vendors to keep them financially sound. This payment mechanism was added in addition to DVR's traditional milestone payment structure. Vendors were encouraged to create innovative ways to meet with clients, as most office locations and meeting facilities were closed by the Governor's Order, so face-to-face contact was not an option.

DVR vendors adapted to the new process by keeping Consumers engaged while in the job search phase during the COVID-19 crisis (e.g. Zoom, Skype, Time Management, Financial Literacy, Interview Practice, Curriculum Services, and Teleconference calls). For consumers who were placed in a job but were laid off or furloughed, vendors were encouraged create mechanisms of keeping these consumers engaged as well (e.g. Assistance with filing an Unemployment claim, Zoom, Time Management, Interview Practice and Teleconference calls).

DVR's contract renewals commence each federal fiscal year on October 1st. In normal times, the Contract Administrator requests that each DVR vendor submit an updated Scope of Work detailing any service delivery changes or staff changes for the upcoming contract year. Because of the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DVR Contract Administrator requested that all vendors submit a hybrid scope of work for the delivery of services to VR clients. The hybrid scope of work consists of face-to-face delivery training services or virtual training services. This new adaptation was necessary to keep all vendors flexible in providing services, depending on if offices are open for face-to-face contact or closed in which a virtual platform would be the norm.

Zoom Meetings

The use of the Zoom video conferencing platform has been extremely beneficial for staff at the DVR.

Usually held in a conference room, staff meetings are being conducted via Zoom. Though not in person, coworkers still have the chance to connect face-to-face. Various committees and councils, such as the SRC, are meeting via Zoom as well. With this platform, an individual is able to share their computer screen with all attendees in order to show a PowerPoint presentation, video, document; any file they need to share with meeting attendees.

Another feature, remote access, is an outstanding tool integrated into Zoom. A group of DVR staff met via Zoom multiple times to work on building a PowerPoint presentation together. When the lead had issues modifying a slide in the presentation, remote access was given to a coworker who was able to quickly manipulate the slide, and the group was able to continue working on their presentation with no time wasted. The DVR holds an annual Full-Team Training, which they expected to cancel due to the pandemic. Once they began using Zoom, they decided to hold the training virtually. It was a great success! All staff were able to attend, and the Director was able to secure two excellent national presenters. Staff were able to ask questions and share their thoughts just as if they were meeting in a training room together.

The DVR and the SRC realized that due to the success of the Full-Team Training, they'd be able to host the annual recognition awards virtually as well.



DVR & SRC Recognition Awards

On Monday, October 12, 2020, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council held their Annual Workplace Inclusion Recognition Awards event online for the first time, via Zoom.

Formerly held in December, it was decided a few years ago that the event would be moved to October in celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The event recognizes the contributions made by employers and employees who work to achieve the successful vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities.



The event began with words of welcome from DVR Director, Andrea Guest, followed by a brief welcome by the SRC Chairperson, Karen DiNardo. Ms. DiNardo thanked the many members and staff who contribute to the work of the SRC.

Next, we heard from the Keynote Speaker, Stephen Wooderson, CEO of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR). As 2020 was the 100th anniversary of Vocational Rehabilitation, Mr. Wooderson spoke about the history of the program.

Ms. Guest facilitated the presentation of the recognition awards which were presented to the following Outstanding Employees and Outstanding Businesses:

Outstanding Employees

- Carmella Patrone
- C.J. Posely
- Gabriel Grabauskas
- David Houston

Outstanding Businesses

- Crossover Janitorial Services
- Hirsch Industries
- Delaware Tech – Owens Campus

The award winners were presented to the audience by their nominators, who spoke about the reasons for their nominations. Even during the pandemic, the awardees continued to work towards the successful vocational rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities.

DVR & SRC Recognition Awardees

Each year employees and employers are nominated for awards in recognition of their commitment to workplace diversity, and the employment of people with disabilities.

Employee Awardees



Carmella Patrone

Carmella Patrone was nominated because her commitment to succeed has been remarkable and inspiring. In 2014, she came to VR following a lay-off from the company she had working for many years. Carmella faced a lot of difficulty in her attempts to find employment on her own. As a result of her unsuccessful job search, she had to apply for disability benefits to make ends meet while she continued to look for work. Learning about the “Ticket to work” program from Social Security, she contacted VR for assistance to return to work. Carmella has a degree in Business Administration as well as an Accounting Degree, recognizing that there had been changes in her industry since she originally graduated from college, she decided to return to school to update her skills and broaden her experience, in hopes of becoming more marketable.

With VR’s support she was able to return to college and upon graduating in 2017, she resumed her job search. Carmella used an executive head-hunting service that specialized in her industry, to improve her chances of finding a job, she expressed to me that she was willing to “take anything” just for the opportunity to get her foot in the door at a company where she could utilize her education and work experience. Carmella took a couple of contractor temp positions between 2018 and 2019, to update her work experience. September 2019 her head- hunter services was able to find her a full time and permanent placement. Carmella started a full-time position as senior accountant with TA instruments, she earns \$70,000.00 per year and her new job includes a complete benefits package.

Carmella was able to take advantage of the SSA work incentives and was able to successfully transition off her SSDI benefits and have her Medicare benefits suspended because she has full medical coverage on her job. Carmella’s success is a result of her determination, positive attitude and refusal to give up on herself, despite the numerous setbacks and challenges she faced.

Caleb “C.J.” Posely came to DVR as he was completing his AA degree at DTCC in electrical engineering, and DVR provided services including job placement services to obtain employment. Soon after completing his AA degree, CJ initiated his Bachelors’ Degree on his own, while seeking employment in his field. At that time his family was going through a rough time, CJ not only attended school full time, but he helped support his mother and sister with his earnings at his part time jobs at Acme and Walmart.



C.J. Posely

CJ always received rave reviews from his employers for his stellar work ethic and attitude. CJ's mother described her son as a fine young man who is very responsible. CJ graduated and continued to work while seeking permanent employment. In 2018, he became employed with Eagle Group in an entry level position in his field of study. He provided monthly positive reports that his job was going well and that he is learning a lot. He reported that his supervisor initiates some cross-training for him. Currently CJ's job title is "SpecFAB Project Quotations". CJ has always excelled and given his best in all he has done, he has always been very courteous and professional in all his emails and direct interactions, is a very motivated and hard worker with a stellar work ethic.

When I contacted CJ about this award recently via email, in his reply he provided this update on his job, "The HR Manager was just telling me the other day about how she's heard nothing but good things from other people around the office about me. I've also been given a lot more responsibility and am trusted with bigger and more important projects. In the time that I've been here I've excelled at my training, even to the point where I occasionally offer advice and guidance to others." I believe that CJ is a very intelligent, responsible and hardworking young man who will continue to excel in all he does and go quite far in his life.

VRC referred CJ to in-house Business Relations Specialist Dana Seaberg for job placement assistance in which she worked with CJ developing cover letters, his resume, and interviewing techniques. Dana also contacted employers regarding positions for CJ and provided follow up and feedback information. It was a true partnership. CJ was very motivated, hard-working and dedicated to the whole process and diligently focused to secure employment. He worked at Acme during the time he was completing his Bachelor's degree and was considered to be an outstanding employee. He also was very focused on taking care of his mother and sister. CJ is now working at Eagle Group utilizing his skills and education and doing extremely well. CJ Posley is a true example of perseverance and dedication and BRS was honored to work with him during his DVR journey to successful employment.



Gabriel Grabauskas

Gabriel Grabauskas made the informed choice to participate in the 2019-2020 Project Search vocational training program at the Christiana Hospital. Through the business-led transition program, Gabe was provided experiences to participate in complete workplace immersion training. The program offered classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant vocational training during a nine-month, non-paid internship.

Gabe's disability posed significant challenges, barriers, and limitations related to employment. The Project Search team came together to create a solid plan to address all of his support needs, and provided Gabe with strategies and the necessary tools to be able to self-monitor, regulate, and de-escalate negative behaviors in the workplace. Staff also taught Gabe specific coping mechanisms to apply within his internship sites. Gabe embraced all of these challenges head-on.

His teacher, Takashi Rhoulac, took Gabe under her wing. She saw his potential and recognized his growth, dedication to the program, and commitment to personal development. The supervisors that mentored Gabe

shared how impressed they were with his sanitizing skills, accuracy, and attention to detail. His hard work paid off when the staff awarded him “intern of the month.” During Gabe’s internship, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the Department of Education to close all school-related programming. Gabe went from a “full workplace immersion” to online remote learning, as students were not able to return to the vocational program for the remaining part of the school year. Gabe transitioned into job development and placement services facing a competitive labor market and limited employment opportunities due to the pandemic.

When Gabe started applying for jobs, he soon received an interview with The Home Depot. At the end of the interview, the hiring manager immediately offered Gabe a competitive part-time position. staff carved a position based on Gabe’s strengths and abilities. They pledged their willingness to foster open communication with Gabe’s support staff in order to achieve successful long term employment. Gabe is now working part time as a “Customer Service Associate” averaging 20 hours per week and making \$11.00 per hour, exceeding the Delaware minimum wage requirement.

The HR hiring manager at Home Depot has stated, "Gabe is very smart and intelligent. He's always willing to please. He's very conscientious and really wants to do a good job and It shows." Gabe’s job coach states, “Gabe has done such an amazing job. He picks up new tasks very quickly and strives to do his best. He follows directions and does well when given the opportunity and space to figure things out. I am incredibly proud of him. He's what Project SEARCH and hard work are all about.”

David Houston self-referred to DVR for employment services in February 2018 after being released from Sussex Correctional Institution in January 2018. He learned about DVR services through Christina Care and Connections. At the time of intake, David did not have his driver’s license and was on home confinement, only permitted out of home from 9am to 12 noon for 6 months. Since 2018, David has obtained his driver’s license, a vehicle or two and maintains car insurance on his vehicles.



David Houston

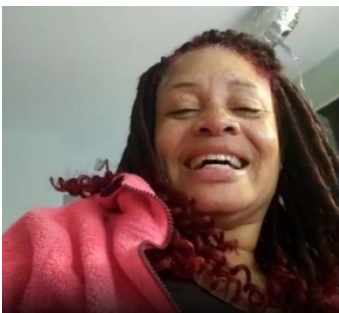
David moved to Delaware shortly after his HS graduation. In 1977 (at 19 years old), David became incarcerated. He spent 41 years of his 44-year sentence in a Delaware prison. While incarcerated, David worked as a barber, handyman, data entry clerk, and HIV/AIDS peer educator. David is currently on probation and will be for the remainder of his life. He keeps in contact with his probation officer on a weekly basis.

Due to his disabilities, it was recommended that David find sedentary employment with little to no bending or stooping. He was hesitant about services due to his criminal history, as he was unsure what help he could receive. David began meeting with his VR Counselor in April 2019 and discussions took place about VR services, his case, and what type of employment he was interested in. David had been providing taxi-like services for peers to and from their jobs and wanted to see if he could do that as a regular full-time job. That became his employment goal. It was quickly realized that due to David’s criminal history, he would not be able to obtain a “Z” endorsement through the DMV to work as a taxi driver.

David then decided to look for Grounds Maintenance Worker jobs, as he also cut grass for his neighbors as a side job. The plan was for David to find a company he could work for full-time. After not having much luck finding employment in the grounds maintenance field, David applied at DART Container, formerly Solo Cup, in Federalsburg, MD and was hired on full-time. After about two months he was ultimately let go in September 2019, though while David was employed at DART, he was promoted and had received a raise.

Losing the job at DART hit David hard as he had enjoyed going to work, meeting new people, earning a paycheck, paying his bills. Having that go away was disheartening, and he was concerned about talking to his probation officer about losing his job and what the consequences could be. However, David found a new goal to work on. His fourth employment goal became Highway Maintenance. David completed flagger training/certification in March 2020 through First State Flagging. He became employed at Access Labor Services in Dover, DE on 6/15/2020 working full-time at \$15 an hour. He reached 90 days successfully employed on 9/13/2020. David loves the job, the people he works with, and has no plans to do anything else anytime soon!

Employer Awardees



Nicole Felton

Crossover Janitorial Services is a minority owned company that was started in 2008 by Nicole and Eric Felton to provide commercial cleaning to Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Crossover Janitorial Services thoroughly screens all of their employees and provides all necessary trainings. One of their initiatives is to hire people with disabilities to empower them and create quality career opportunities.

The owners of Crossover Janitorial Services have been collaborating with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Relations Specialists from the inception of their company, and consistently reach out to them to find quality candidates. To accommodate each employee's learning style and needs, Crossover Janitorial Services conducts 1:1 individualized hands-on training and also provides laminated instruction cards when needed for visual supports. Crossover Janitorial Services is committed to hiring a diverse workforce and I am honored to nominate them as 2020 Employer of the Year.

Hirsch Industries in Dover is a manufacturer and provider of storage products for commercial and residential customers. Their product line offers a full range of file cabinets including commercial grade vertical, lateral, and pedestal files, and small office home office (SOHO) non-commercial grade vertical and lateral file cabinets.

In 1999, the company took on the name Hirsh Industries as the primary product lines expanded to include commercial grade filing and commercial / industrial grade shelving items, along with a broader assortment of small office/home office file cabinets. Hirsh has over 300 employees at their location in Dover and is committed to hiring and maintaining a diverse workforce along with offering a barrier free employment process for those individuals that require an accommodation during this time. They are very supportive of their employees, especially those with disabilities and have provided modified work schedules, assistive technology equipment



Cheryl Allison and Cory Casson

and additional work site training. The Human Resources managers are very receptive to the Business Relations Specialist and will provide the necessary accommodations for those applicants that may require one during the hiring process. They are recruiting on a regular basis and held a job fair in August and ensured all COVID protocols are in place. The Human Resources Managers contacts Business Relations Specialist for candidates and BRS looks forward to the growing and continuing partnership with Hirsh.



Carol Bunting

Delaware Tech – Owens Campus - The Delaware General Assembly created Delaware Technical Community College in 1966. The first Delaware Tech campus opened its doors in Sussex County in September of 1967. In 1995, the name was changed to the “Owens Campus” in honor of its first campus director, Jack F. Owens. I have developed a working relationship with Carol Bunting (Campus Human Resources Specialist) and Ceinwen Chavez (Facilities Sanitation Supervisor) that spans 4 years. In the last year Carol has reached out to me when Delaware Technical Community College was in need to fill various job openings. Within that this last year Delaware Technical Community College has hired eight people that are working with DVR.

Carol has always made clients of DVR feel comfortable throughout the interviewing process. If Carol is seeing a client is struggling to answer an interview question, she would step in with rewording the question for the client to understand on how to answer the question that is being asked of then. Carol will also go out of her way with helping clients with filling out new hire paperwork.

Ceinwen has created a very inclusive working environment on the campus. She has always maintained an atmosphere of acceptance and works to ensure that all employees are seen and treated equally. Hiring employees with disabilities has proven no different. Regardless of an employee’s strengths and weaknesses, Ceinwen has always worked with her team to ensure everyone is successful, thinking outside the box when needed to see her employees prosper. If Ceinwen is seeing an employee that is struggling to complete a work assignment or not understanding. She will work alongside the person to help them understand what is being asked of the person.

Future Awardees

As more individuals with disabilities become employed with the assistance of Vocational Rehabilitation services, we will see diversity, inclusion, and equity continue to grow within the workforce. We look forward to awarding individuals and businesses at the 2021 Annual Workplace Inclusion Recognition Awards event.

Appreciation

The State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation extend our thanks and appreciation to the following individuals who identified our 2020 employee and employer awardees:

- Belinda Criddell
- Jennifer Pugh
- Denise Burke
- Joshua Miller
- Mary Wyllie
- Beth Holston
- Dana Seaberg

Honorable Mentions

In addition to our award winners, other employees and employers were nominated. Honorable mentions for both categories are listed below.

Employees

Rochelle was referred to DVR through high school. she attended Caesar Rodney high school with a vocational goal of attending college to obtain a degree as a registered nurse. Rochelle attended Wesley College fall of 2010 and was accepted in the Wesley College nursing program one year later. She remained in contact with her counselor, received counseling and guidance, tuition, books, and fee assistance as she worked on completing her nursing degree. Rochelle completed her nursing degree in 12/2019 and sat for her nursing boards, which she passed. She completed her internship at Christiana Hospital and was ultimately hired at the end of her program.

Adam came to the DVR diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. He had many assessments through Service source and worked with Katrina Bradley. DVR provided SE services to Adam as well, to help him successfully maintain his employment. ACME Markets of Pike Creek hired Adam, and they committed to provided him ongoing natural supports on the job. With the assistance of his support team including his manager, job coach, family, and VR Counselor and after many brainstorming meetings about ways to help Adam overcome some obstacles to help maintain this employment, I am happy to report that he is successfully employed and has maintained his employment since January of 2019.

Gretchen was referred to DVR as a Transition student. She graduated in May of 2014 with a HS diploma, with an interest in pursuing a four-year degree in the medical field. Gretchen planned to attend Hampton University in Virginia, but was accepted into the Howard University, where she completed a degree in Cyber Security with supports from DVR offering tuition assistance, living expenses, counseling and guidance as well as follow along supports via phone calls, emails, and letters to assist in putting accommodations in place. Gretchen maintained the college and DVR required GPA. She graduated in good standing in 2019. Gretchen successfully completed an internship at Accenture and was subsequently hired by the company, working in her field. She was transferred to Atlanta, GA to work for Accenture Georgia division. Gretchen is currently working for Accenture in Cyber Security, completing computer systems applications. Her starting salary was above \$70,000.

Je'Nae came to DVR in March of 2015 for assistance with hearing aids and returning to college. She was working as an Accountant Representative at Dover Downs, but she was having difficulty interacting with her co-workers and supervisor due to her hearing impairment. Je'Nae lost her hearing when she was young due to an illness. DVR provided her with hearing aids after a financial statement was completed showing Je'Nae was below the income criteria for services. Je'Nae then decided to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Finance. She completed her degree, with the financial assistance of DVR, in 2019. After graduation, Je'Nae started working for Citicorp Services of Delaware, then started having trouble again with her hearing aids. According to the audiologist, an upgrade was required. Je'Nae again requested DVR financial assistance. She had to pay \$946 towards the cost of this rehabilitation technology as her income was above the financial criteria for DVR total assistance. DVR did assist with the remainder of the cost. Ms. Williams then obtained new employment with JP Morgan Chase in early 2020; she is currently working as a Financial Analyst earning \$32.69 an hour or approximately \$68,000 annually.

Employers

Express Employment Professionals deserves to be recognized by DVR because of the countless opportunities, efforts, and support given to consumers referred by DVR. Express has placed people with disabilities that face various barriers to employment such as criminal backgrounds, lack of education, mental health concerns, and lack of work experience. The Express team members take the time to get to know consumers by evaluating their strengths & weaknesses before placing them into employment. Their willingness to explain job responsibilities and give options based on the individual and their abilities is commendable. Another great quality about Express is their willingness to give people with disabilities second chances. A few times consumers have been terminated from their job, but Express has been open to reevaluating issues, at times giving the employee a second chance.

Big Lots works openly and collaboratively, leaning on the power of new ideas and fresh perspectives to make their workplace better. The company has locations throughout Delaware. Big Lots is very committed to a diverse workforce and they offer a barrier-free employment process as well. They are very supportive of their employees, especially those with disabilities. They are about creating a deep sense of belonging where they value an employee's ideas and inherent value to create a culture of inclusion. They provide accommodations if needed, including a modified work schedule and a plan of action in the workplace in the case of an emergency medical situation. Big Lots offers yearly training for their staff. They match new employees with mentors in their department for a smooth learning process. They strongly believe in the benefits of employing people with disabilities, and have employed DVR clients in various retail positions such as furniture associates, stock associates, cashiers, as well as in management positions within their company.

Lowes Home Improvement is the second largest home improvement store chain in the world. DVR Business Relations Specialists have developed a working relationship with Lowes that spans over four years. We have been able to place clients with disabilities at multiple Lowes locations. Their staff at all locations have always been willing to work with us and our clients. Some of these positions have been seasonal due to the nature of Lowes business model, but they have allowed our clients to apply for other positions within the stores and stay on with the company. We have been very fortunate to have a partnership with such a large company that promotes diversity in their workforce. On numerous occasions, they have contacted DVR when looking to fill positions, and we have been able to accommodate them, further fulfilling our mission of employment for our clients. If a client does not seem to be a good fit for the original position hired, the Lowes managers have always been willing to move them to another department in the store to find a better fit. This commitment from Lowes further demonstrates their ability to accommodate employees with disabilities and see them prosper and thrive as valuable members of the team.

The Kraft Heinz Company is a major employer in Dover, employing over 500 people, and has played a pivotal role in Kent County's employment and economy. Products produced at the Dover site include Jell-O Gelatin & Pudding, Sure-Jell, Baker's Coconut, Knox Gelatin, Stove Top stuffing mix, Kool-Aid, Country Time, Crystal Light, and Shake 'n Bake. In September 2014 Kraft celebrated 50 years in Delaware, getting its start when General Foods selected Dover as the site for a new plant that at the time of the 1963 announcement was the company's largest capital investment. It planned on employing 1,300 people. When it went into operation in 1964, the Dover plant was General Food's largest in terms of products produced. General Foods then consolidated with Kraft in 1995. The Kraft Heinz Company is very committed to hiring and maintaining a diverse workforce and offers a barrier free employment process for those individuals that require an accommodation during this time. They are very supportive of their employees, especially those with disabilities and have provided modified work schedules, assistive technology equipment or aides, training materials and interpreting services.

Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

2020 Performance Report

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|--|-------------|-------|
| Successful Rehabilitations: | 674 | |
| Most Significant Disabilities | 311 (46%) | } 96% |
| Significant Disabilities | 336 (50%) | |
| Transition Youth Rehabilitated | 223 | |
| Total Participants Served: | 5,135 | |
| Clients with Most Significant Disabilities | 2,290 (45%) | } 93% |
| Clients with Significant Disabilities | 2,485 (48%) | |
| New Applicants in FY 2020 | 1,251 | |
| Determined Eligible | 1,246 | |
| Acceptance Rate | 99.6% | |
| New Transition Students | 348 | |
| Transition Students/Youth Served | 1808 | |
| Average Hourly Wage for FY 2020 closures | | |
| All closures | \$12.71 | |
| Transition | \$12.01 | |
| Supported Employment | \$10.39 | |
| Adults (not TR or SE) | \$13.37 | |
| Individuals in Delayed Status at the end of FY 2020 | 280 | |



DVR Office Locations



New Castle County

Wilmington

P: 302-761-8275

F: 302-761-4829

Newark

P: 302-368-6980

F: 302-368-6988

Middletown

P: 302-696-3180

F: 302-696-3181

Kent County

Dover

P: 302-739-5478

F: 302-739-6874

Sussex County

Georgetown

P: 302-856-5730

F: 302-856-5486