

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the Arkansas State Capitol building. The building is a large, white, neoclassical structure with a prominent central dome topped with a golden finial. It features a wide portico with many columns. In front of the building is a large, well-maintained green lawn. To the left, there are some trees and a flagpole with the American flag. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text is overlaid on this image.

Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council

2020 Annual Report

**In partnership with
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services,
Division of Workforce Services,
Department of Commerce.**

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A Message from the Chair

November 12, 2020

Greetings:

On behalf of my fellow members of the Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), please accept this as our FY2020 Annual Report. We hope you find this information informative as it highlights the work of this Council and the successes of our partner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS).

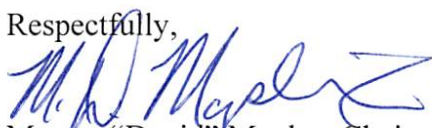
2020 will always be remembered because of COVID-19. A year where social distancing, wearing a mask, hand washing, and, for a lot of us, working remotely is our new norm. COVID-19 has required us to learn different ways to interact with each other in our social and business environments. This impact is being felt worldwide right now, and I fully expect it to last a good while into the future. As part of this process, we hope the needs of individuals with disabilities are always at the forefront.

What a year! We celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of the public vocational rehabilitation program, the seventy-fifth anniversary of Disability Employment Awareness Month, and the thirtieth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our celebration of these significant events was not as we had hoped because of COVID-19; however, we are incredibly thankful to ARS for their 100 Years, 100 Stories series.

In our state, the SRC and ARS are true partners with a common goal of ensuring that Arkansans with disabilities who are interested in achieving competitive integrated employment receive quality vocational rehabilitation services in a friendly and professional environment. This year the SRC and ARS successfully completed the vocational rehabilitation portion of Arkansas' Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state plan. The goals and priorities outlined in the plan to carry out the vocational rehabilitation program in Arkansas were jointly agreed upon by the SRC and ARS. The Council also appreciates ARS's support as we undertake the challenge of exploring the benefits of combining ARS and the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) and the resulting need to combine the SRC and the DSB Board. We undertake this endeavor only seeking to improve vocational rehabilitation services for all Arkansans with disabilities.

As SRC Chair, I look forward to another successful year working with my fellow Council members and ARS leadership.

Respectfully,



Murray "David" Maples, Chair
Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council

Greetings from Commissioner



Michael Preston
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Charisse Childers, Ph.D.
DIRECTOR,
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

Joseph Baxter
Commissioner
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

December 2, 2020

Greetings,

Along with Chairman David Maples, it is my pleasure to provide the 2020 Annual Report of the State of Arkansas Rehabilitation Council. The input of the State Rehabilitation Council is much more than a federal requirement; it is essential for the assurance that the work of ARS remains strategically focused on successful vocational outcomes for individuals served by this agency. This input allows us to consider all stakeholders' perspectives when prioritizing the most effective and efficient use of available resources. Despite the challenges we have faced for most of 2020, I am very proud that ARS has still pushed forward with the invaluable work it does. Some of the highlights of this past year include:

- Successfully completing and submitting the VR portion of the WIOA State Plan, including goals and priorities developed in partnership with the SRC.
- Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the public VR program, the 75th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and the 30th anniversary of the ADA. In a year that doesn't allow large gatherings, we were able to celebrate these historical milestones with a digital media campaign that helped spotlight the amazing work and success stories we have had since the Arkansas Legislature enacted a Vocational Rehabilitation Service in 1923.
- Our coordinated agency response in the provision of VR services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Central Office and all 18 field offices remained open and following CDC guidelines. By discovering and embracing new technology, we were able to keep providing clients with services while maintaining both the client and the employee's safety.
- The continued and successful conversion of the Arkansas Career Development Center (ACDC) to a nonresidential facility. Though COVID-19 provided many obstacles to this conversion, the ACDC staff has found many successful ways to work around the pandemic to train students for successful careers.

These are just a few of the outstanding successes that ARS continues to strive for every day. I look forward to the coming new year, and the possibilities we have to help even more Arkansans with disabilities thrive and succeed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JB", written over a white background.

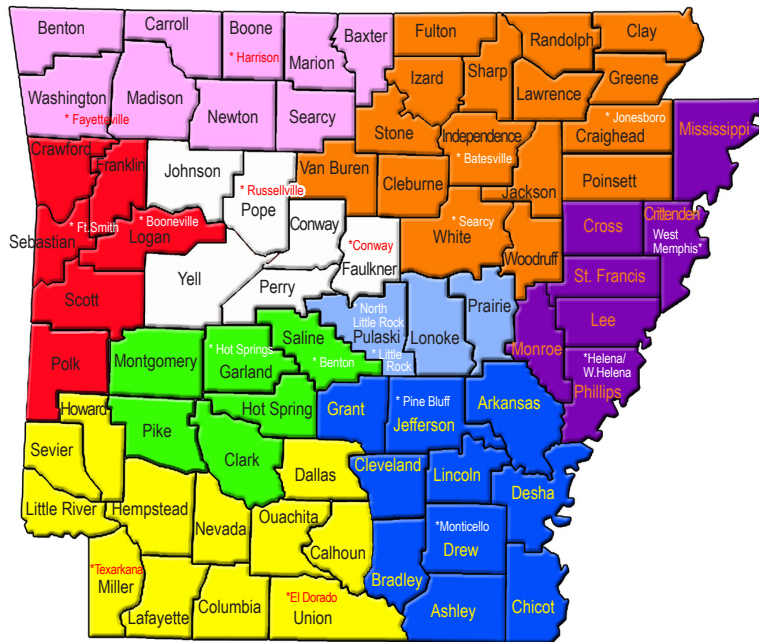
Joseph Baxter, Commissioner
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

Arkansas Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
1 Commerce Way, Suite 206 • Little Rock, AR 72202

ARCareerEd.org

Equal opportunity employer/ program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

ARS Field Services



Region 1

Amy Jones, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Fayetteville: 479-582-1286

Harrison: 870-741-7153



Region 2

Kimberly Clayborn, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Jonesboro: 870-972-0025

Batesville: 870-793-4153

Searcy: 501-268-4542



Region 3

Everett Adamson, Rehabilitation Area Manager

West Memphis: 870-735-4725

Helena: 870-338-2753



Region 4

Dana Byrum, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Fort Smith: 479-755-3300

Booneville: 479-675-3835



Region 5

Andrea Gilliam, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Russellville: 479-890-5751

Conway: 501-730-9725



Region 6

Kimberley Baker, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Hot Springs: 501-623-4479

Benton: 501-317-1390



Region 7

Robin Hunt, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Little Rock: 501-686-2800

North Little Rock: 501-833-1490



Region 8

Kensel Green, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Texarkana: 870-773-2807

El Dorado: 870-862-5451



Region 9

Sterling Hughes, Rehabilitation Area Manager

Pine Bluff: 870-534-2404

Monticello: 870-367-9669

Field Services Leadership

Carl Daughtery, Chief of Field Services

Dr. Deandrea Bass-Carrigan, Deputy Chief of Field Services

Gaye Jones-Washington, Deputy of Field Operations

Kristen Sutterfield, Rehabilitation Program Manager

Field Offices: Counties Served

Batesville: Independence, Cleburne, Van Buren, Stone, Izard, Jackson, Sharp, White, Fulton

Benton: Saline

Booneville: Logan, Franklin, Polk, Scott

Conway: Conway, Faulkner, Perry

El Dorado: Ouachita, Calhoun, Dallas, Union, Columbia

Fayetteville: Benton, Washington, Madison

Fort Smith: Crawford, Sebastian

Harrison: Baxter, Boone, Marion, Newton, Searcy, Carroll

Helena: Lee, Phillips, Monroe

Hot Springs: Clark, Hot Spring, Montgomery, Garland, Pike

Jonesboro: Woodruff, Clay, Craighead, Greene, Lawrence, Poinsett, Randolph

Little Rock: Pulaski [south]

Monticello: Ashley, Desha, Bradley, Lincoln, Chicot, Drew

North Little Rock: Pulaski [north], Lonoke, Prairie

Pine Bluff: Jefferson, Cleveland, Grant, Arkansas

Russellville: Johnson, Yell, Pope

Searcy: White, Woodruff

Texarkana: Howard, Lafayette, Nevada, Hempstead, Miller, Sevier, Little River

West Memphis: St. Francis, Crittenden, Cross, Mississippi

State Rehabilitation Council Membership

David Maples
Chair
Bauxite

John Taylor
Co-Chair
Vilonia

Addie Edwards
Camden

Kesha Pilot
Little Rock

Tom Masseau
Maumelle

Kimberly Clayborn
Jonesboro

Robert Fagan
Little Rock

Craig Reinhardt
Little Rock

Kelly Sharp
Farmington

Wesley Eddington
Jonesboro

Christopher Paslay
Brookland

Frances Johnson
Bryant

Keith Vire
Fayetteville

Matt Sowell
Vilonia

Joseph Baxter
ARS Commissioner
(Ex-Officio)

The Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a citizens' advisory council, appointed by the Governor, to provide guidance to the state's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. Its members help shape policy, engage in strategic planning, and provide guidance to promote increased employment for individuals with disabilities. Members report annually to the Governor and the U.S. Department of Education on the status of the VR program. The SRC spearheads customer satisfaction surveys, participates in the preparation and review of the comprehensive needs assessment, and co-hosts public hearings and forums. The council includes individuals with disabilities, community rehabilitation program employees, vocational rehabilitation counselors, advocates, and representatives of the business community.

Goals and Priorities

As required by the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act** (WIOA), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) submitted its portion of the Arkansas combined State Plan in FY2020. Within that State Plan are specific goals and priorities for ARS that were developed in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council to address both WIOA requirements and ARS's ability to better serve its customers.

Our goals and priorities are as follows:

Goal 1: ARS will meet performance accountability measures as outlined in WIOA.

Priorities:

- ARS will monitor established performance accountability measures.
- ARS will provide career counseling to 14(c) program participants to meet Section 511 requirements.
- ARS will strengthen data verification requirements.

Goal 2: ARS provide pre-employment transition and transition services as outlined in WIOA.

Priorities:

- ARS will expand and improve Pre-ETS.
- ARS will provide Pre-ETS and ensure students with employment and training goals are moved into Vocational Rehabilitation prior to the second semester of the senior year of high school.
- ARS will expand and improve Pre-ETS utilizing the resources of the Arkansas Career Development Center (ACDC). The new model focuses resources to serve students with disabilities to prepare and guide them toward achieving competitive integrated employment.
- ARS will increase the number of Transition students that enter employment by having students work-ready upon graduation from high school or postsecondary training.

Goal 3: ARS will create effective partnerships to advance employment for Arkansans with disabilities.

Goals and Priorities

Priorities:

- ARS will focus on public and private sector employers and increase business and industry awareness of ARS's services.
- ARS will develop and strengthen partnerships with business, workforce development partners, economic development agencies, and community organizations to meet the needs of existing and new business customers.
- ARS will increase services provided to public and private sector employers by leveraging Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) programs to assist employers in keeping the employees with disabilities on the job.

Goal 4: ARS will increase effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

Priorities:

- ARS will determine effective methods to serve the underserved/unserved populations.
- ARS will strengthen relationships with WIOA partners and business and industry.
- ARS will improve service delivery to job seekers and businesses by consistently providing services that meet individual needs.
- Staff will receive comprehensive training to improve service delivery.
- ARS will ensure clients have access to assistive technology services by evaluating the need for assistive technology throughout the rehabilitation process, and by making the proper referrals when assistive technology is appropriate.

Goal 5: ARS will increase the utilization of Community Rehabilitation and Supported Employment providers to achieve employment outcomes.

Priorities:

- ARS will increase the effectiveness of current and new external Employment/Supported Employment providers.
- ARS will expand the availability of community employment providers and partner services that meet the needs of Arkansans with disabilities, including those requiring supported employment.
- ARS transformed the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) to a new service delivery model, ACDC. This model focuses as a hub for training and services to support vocational rehabilitation consumers and/or students with disabilities to successfully reach the milestones of their individual plans for employment.

Responsibilities of the Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council

- Reviews, analyzes, and advises Arkansas Rehabilitation Services regarding the performance of its responsibilities under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act as it relates to program eligibility (including order of selection) and the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided;
- In partnership with the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services helps develop the Arkansas State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program;
- Submits an annual report to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) commissioner and Governor that highlights vocational rehabilitation services goals and achievements and make the report available to the public;
- Helps coordinate working relationships between Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, the State Independent Living Council (SILC) and centers for independent living;
- Coordinates activities with other councils to avoid duplication of effort and help increase the number of individuals served;
- Performs other functions consistent with the Title I of the Rehabilitation Act as the Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate; and
- To the extent feasible, reviews and analyzes Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' vocational rehabilitation program effectiveness including an assessment of consumer satisfaction with rehabilitation services provided. An example of the current form used to gauge consumer satisfaction, and the mean results for FY 2018 follow.

Meeting Dates

FY 2020 Meeting Dates

December 19, 2019
March 19, 2020
June 18, 2020
August 19, 2020
September 17, 2020

Proposed FY 2021 Meeting Dates

October 8, 2020
December 17, 2020
March 18, 2021
June 17, 2021
September 16, 2021

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

Consumer Satisfaction

We are always trying to improve our services by listening to our consumers and getting their opinions on how well we are doing. To protect the respondents' identity, an **external evaluator** will log the responses. Your ratings and those of other consumers will be grouped together so that the sources of the ratings remain strictly confidential.

Given your experiences with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services delivery system, would you please rate them on the following: **Please circle only one number for each aspect.**

Aspects		Low					High	
		1	2	3	4	5		
1.	Counselor's efforts to involve you in making decisions about your rehabilitation program.	1	2	3	4	5		
2.	Counselor's efforts to listen to your ideas and suggestions about the job you would like to have.	1	2	3	4	5		
3.	Counselor's efforts to involve you in making decisions about the services you need.	1	2	3	4	5		
4.	Counselor's efforts to involve you in choosing service providers.	1	2	3	4	5		
5.	Your satisfaction with the services you received.	1	2	3	4	5		
6.	The speed with which the services got started.	1	2	3	4	5		
7.	Your satisfaction with your interaction with the counselor.	1	2	3	4	5		
8.	Your satisfaction with your interaction with service providers other than VR.	1	2	3	4	5		
9.	Your satisfaction as to how sufficient these services were in helping you get or keep a job.	1	2	3	4	5		
10.	Counselor's / VR efforts to help you find a job.	1	2	3	4	5		
11.	Counselor's efforts to keep in touch with you after your case was closed to make sure you did not need more services.	1	2	3	4	5		
12.	Counselor's / VR ability to help you in general.	1	2	3	4	5		
13.	Are you using accommodations or equipment? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, rate the counselor's efforts in helping you get these.	1	2	3	4	5		
14.	Are you currently working? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If you are working, rate your satisfaction with your job.	1	2	3	4	5		

FY 2020 Survey Results

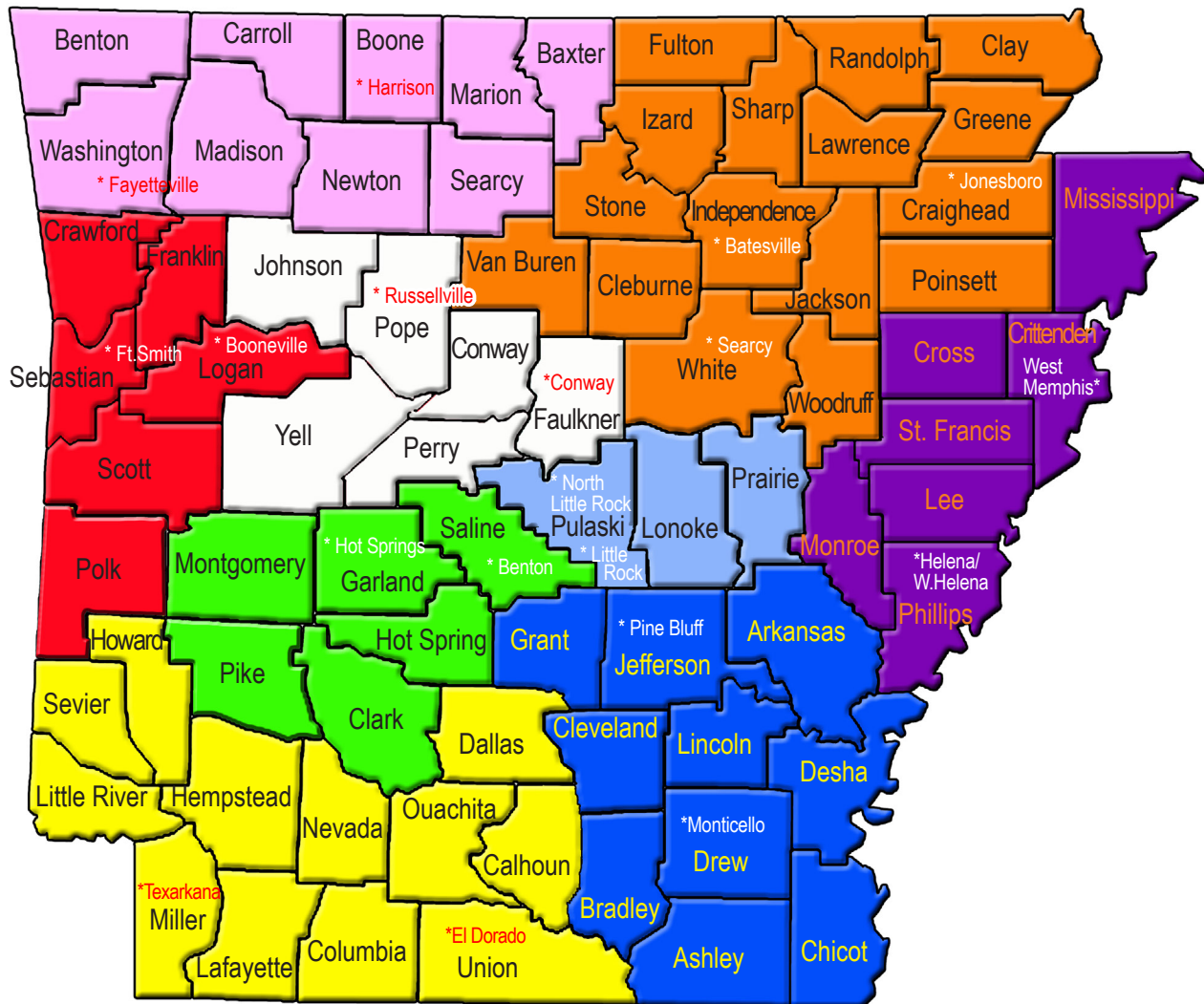
Consumer Satisfaction

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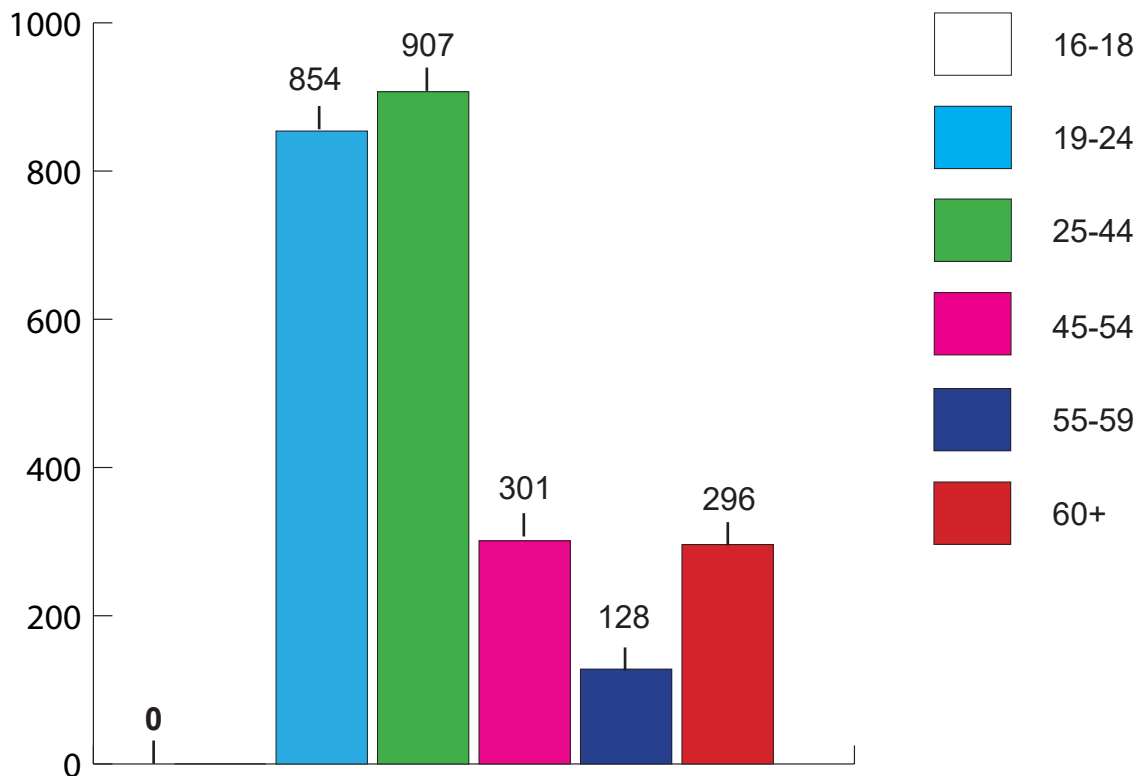
Aspects	Results Average
1. Counselor's efforts to involve you in making decisions about your rehabilitation program.	4.63
2. Counselor's efforts to listen to your ideas and suggestions about the job you would like to have.	4.61
3. Counselor's efforts to involve you in making decisions about the services you need.	4.74
4. Counselor's efforts to involve you in choosing service providers.	4.66
5. Your satisfaction with the services you received.	4.77
6. The speed with which the services got started.	4.58
7. Your satisfaction with your interaction with the counselor.	4.71
8. Your satisfaction with your interaction with service providers other than VR.	4.42
9. Your satisfaction as to how sufficient these services were in helping you get or keep a job.	4.53
10. Counselor's / VR efforts to help you find a job.	4.19
11. Counselor's efforts to keep in touch with you after your case was closed to make sure you did not need more services.	4.51
12. Counselor's / VR ability to help you in general.	4.65
13. Are you using accommodations or equipment?	Yes=20
If yes, rate the counselor's efforts in helping you get these.	4.50
14. Are you currently working?	Yes=37
If you are working, rate your satisfaction with your job.	4.41

Successful Closures by Region

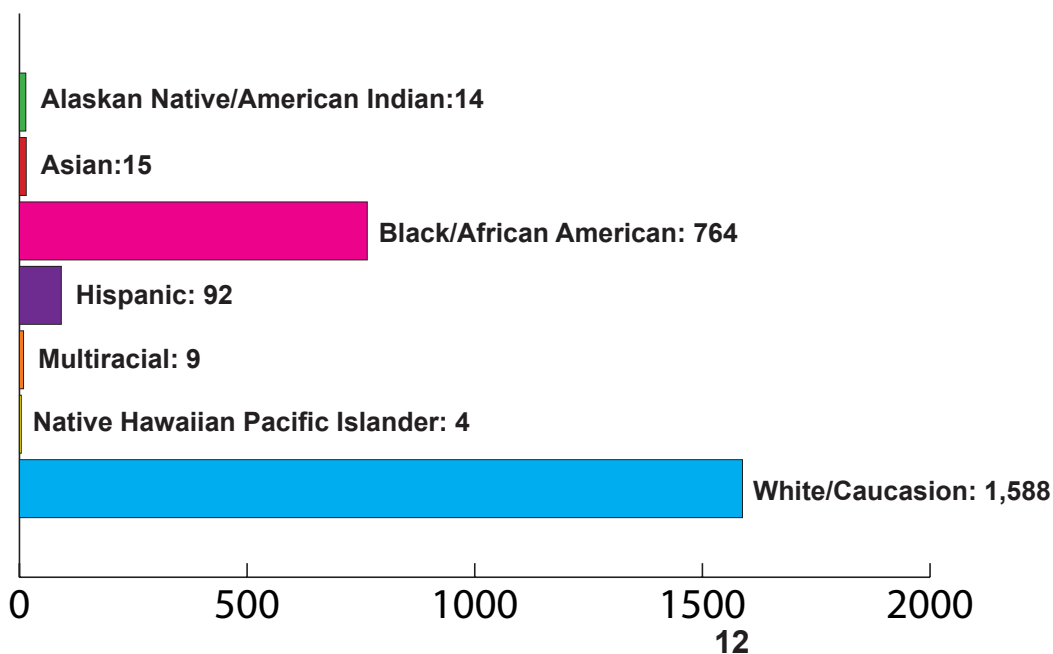


 Region 1 457	 Region 4 309	 Region 7 383
 Region 2 256	 Region 5 133	 Region 8 350
 Region 3 110	 Region 6 199	 Region 9 289

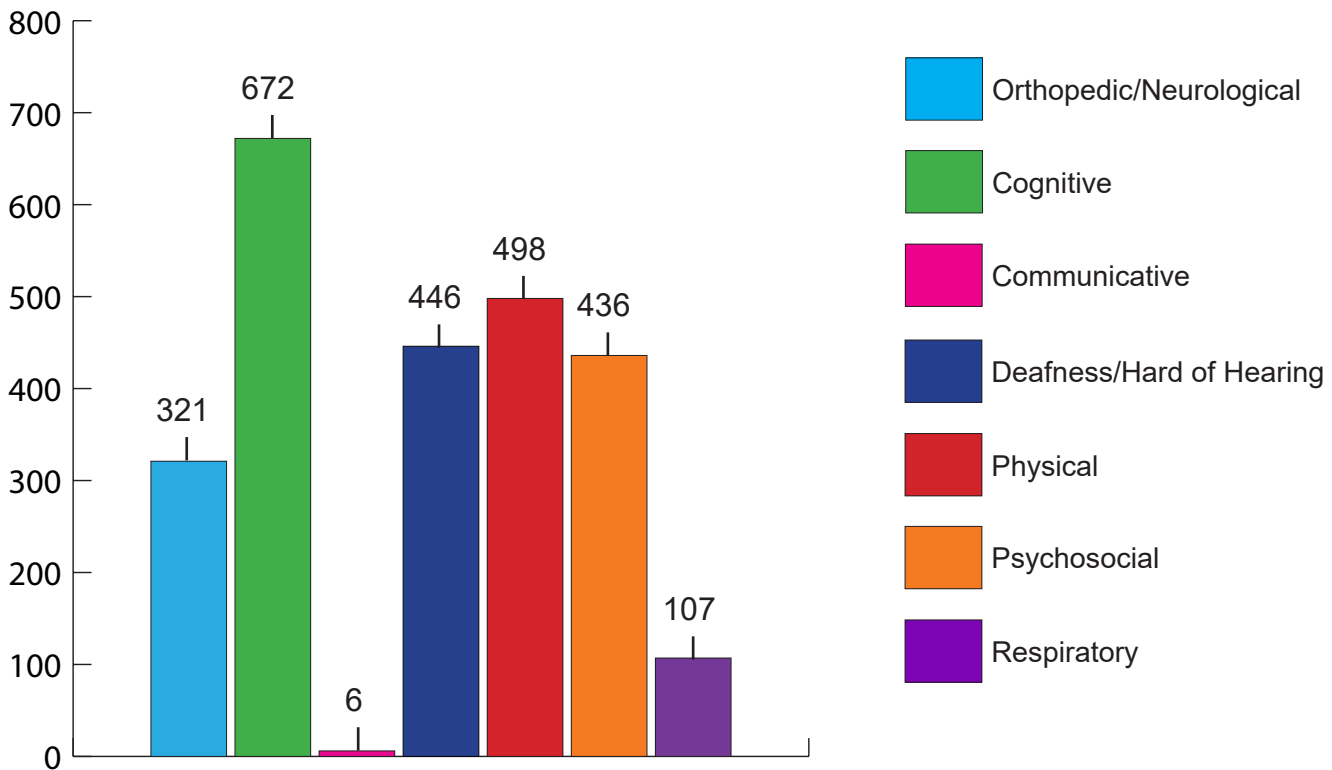
Age Range of Successful Closures



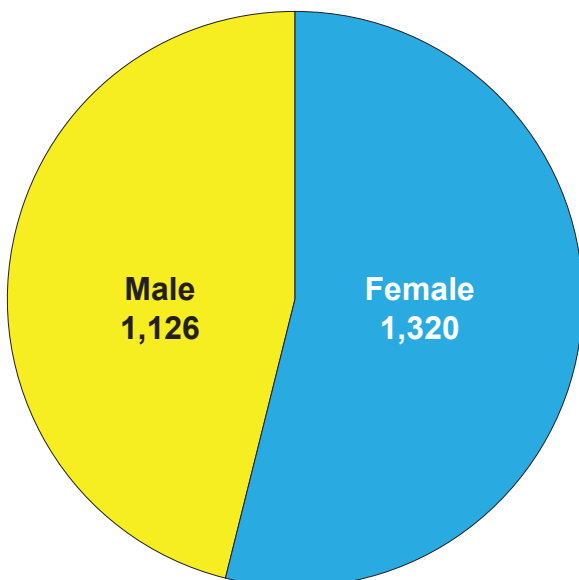
Race and Ethnicity



Primary Disability



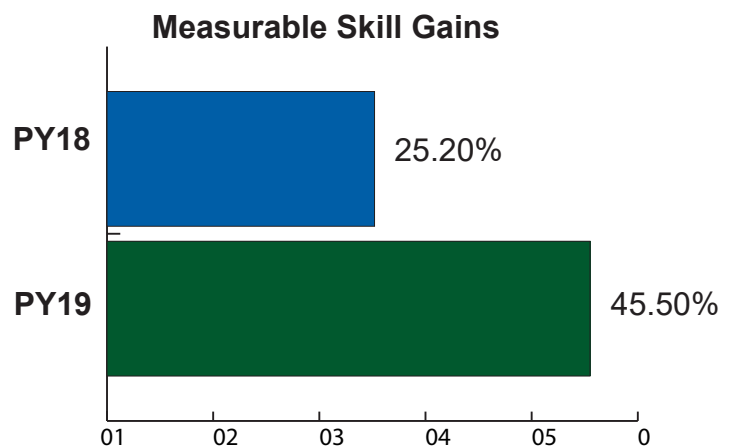
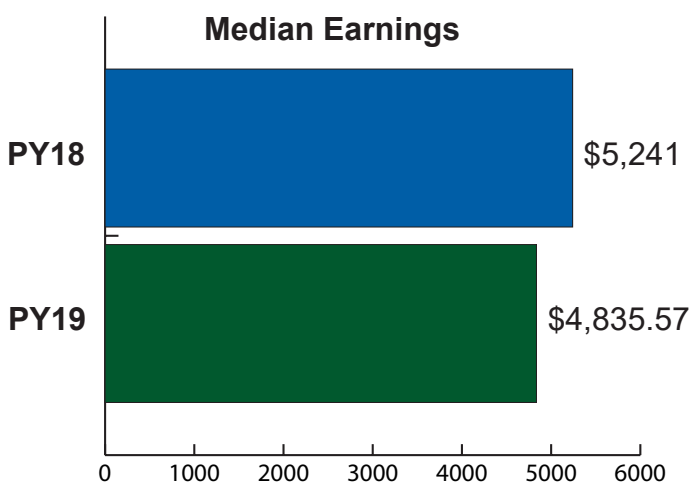
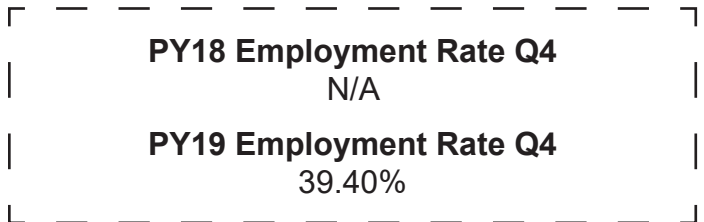
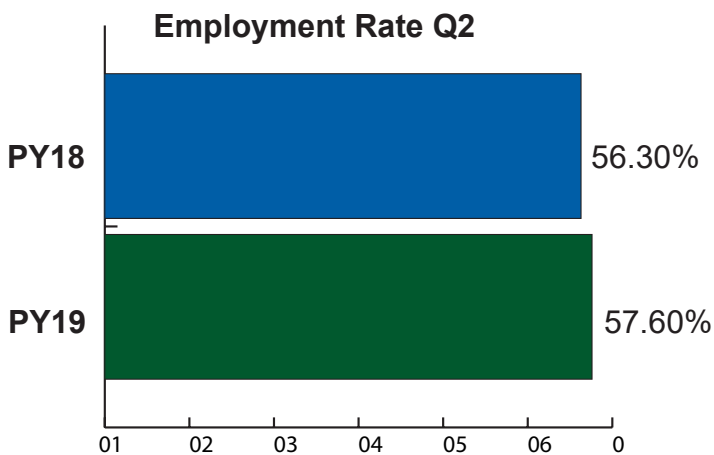
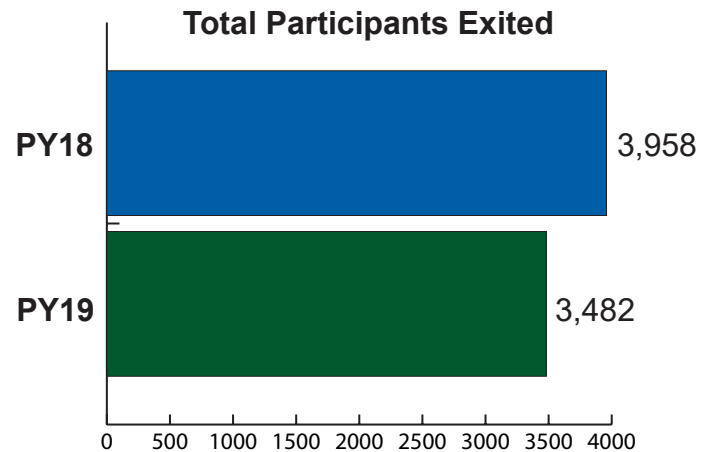
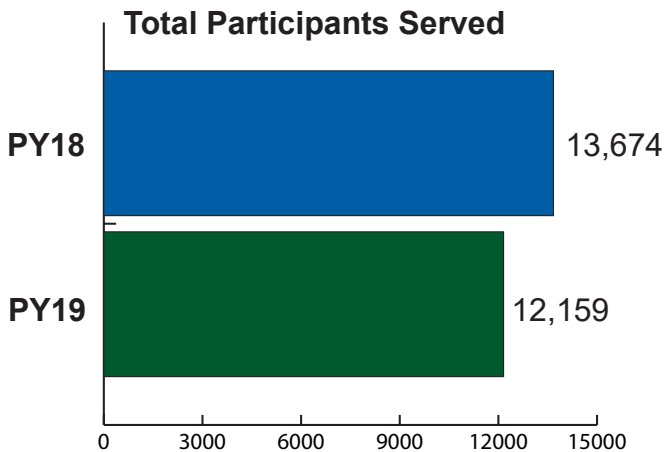
Successful Closures by Gender



Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Groups of Successful Closures

SOC Group	Number	Median Hourly Earnings
Management	110	\$14.00
Business & Financial	87	\$12.24
Computer & Mathematical	30	\$13.76
Architecture & Engineering	40	\$13.12
Life, Physical & Social Science	29	\$13.76
Legal	5	\$11.25
Community & Social Service	69	\$14.33
Education, Training & Library	152	\$11.50
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	52	\$13.97
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Support	190	\$17.50
Healthcare Support	168	\$10.45
Protective Service Occupations	43	\$12.50
Food Preparation, Serving & Related	206	\$9.00
Building & Grounds Cleaning/Maintenance	90	\$9.29
Personal Care Service	193	\$10.00
Sales & Related	173	\$9.95
Office & Administrative Support	338	\$10.98
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	23	\$12.00
Construction & Extraction	36	\$12.00
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	91	\$13.00
Production	174	\$10.50
Transportation & Material Moving	182	\$11.00
Military	5	\$13.13

Annual Report on Performance



***PY19 (as submitted 10/01/2020)**
PY18 (as submitted 10/01/2019)

VR Affiliated Programs

The Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) was a comprehensive rehabilitation center. Beginning in late May 2019, ACTI began transitioning to a new model to provide training and services to people with disabilities. This is focused on the following areas:

- Career and Technical Education
- Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship
- Pre-Employment Career Development and Transition Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation Support Services

ACTI leadership worked with ARS communications and stakeholders across the state to brand the new model and market to internal and external customers. The branding included the following:

- New Name: **Arkansas Career Development Center**
- New Focus: Innovation-Education-Occupation
- New Logo



Highlights from FFY2020

- ACDC Career and Tech Education developed industry specific, teacher led, on-line Exploration and Mentoring Programs for Pre-Employment Transition Services. The program includes WIOA standards and provides measurable skill gain through pre and post-tests. The first class began on 9/27/20 with 8 participants.
- ACDC negotiated an Agreement with Hot Springs Hotel for deep discounted rates for students enrolling for ACDC Programs through Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. Our first student has been scheduled to lodge at this hotel for culinary arts training.
- Initiated new virtual Security Class approved by Ar. State Police
- Initiated new virtual Driver's Ed permit class
- Continue to partner with OWLS, Project Search, TEP, Juvenile facilities, Easter Seals
- Initiated new relationships with Security businesses as resources for internships, insurance companies to promote student discounts for completing Driver's Ed.
- Staff trained as OSHA Trainers, CPR instructors, Forklift instructors, CLT, and CPT instructors.
- Developed the College Access and Support Services Program.
 - Assessing the educational and academic needs and providing services and programs to help support students in achieving their goals
 - Assisting ARS students with the transition from high school to college
 - Negotiating Financial Aid and Pell Grant Applications
 - Promoting individual student success through a bridge class prior to first-year coursework to provide a solid academic foundation
 - Advising and academic support services
 - Encouraging collegiality among ARS students through learning communities and small group workshops that promote active participation and a close working relationship with counselors and program staff
 - Programming and initiatives that increase retention and completion rates by ensuring students have access to educational opportunities regardless of economic or educational disadvantages
 - Work-Based learning experiences, on the job training and work study employment

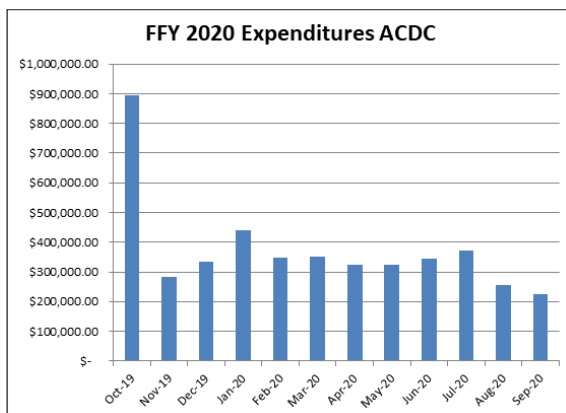
Arkansas Career Development Center

Career and Technical Education

Training Area	Total Enrolled FFY2020	Number of Successful Completers	Number of Non-Completers
Auto Collision Technology	5	5	0
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	3	2	1
Construction Technology	8	8	0
Culinary Arts	4	4	0
Customer Service and Retail	2	1	1
Welding	5	4	1
Total	27	24	3

Certificates and Credentials Attained

Type of Certificate or Credential	Number Attained
NCCER-Core	1
NCCER-Electrical	1
NCCER-Arc Welding	1
ServSafe Allergen	4
ServSafe Alcohol	3
ServSafe Manager	1
Total	11



ACDC Expenditures were just under \$4.5M. This is a \$6M reduction from FFY2019. It should be noted ACDC staff moved off main campus on July 2020.

Arkansas Career Development Center

Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship

Program	Enrolled	Completed
CNA Van Buren-Pre	9	7
CNA Fayetteville HS-Pre	10	Still in training
AAPI Grant-Pre	3	3
AAPI Grant-Registered App.	1	Still in training
AREA Grant-Pre	2	2
AREA Grant-Registered App.	38	Still in training
Total	53	12

Pre-Employment Career Development and Transition Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services

Service Provided	Number Enrolled	Number Completed
CTE Career Exploration and Mentoring	8	8
CTE School to Work	2	2
TEP OSHA	15	15
TEP ServSafe	7	7
TEP Pro. Guest Services	7	7
Total	39	39

Career Training Services

Services Provided	Number Enrolled	Number Completed
OSHA General Industry	245	245
ServSafe Food Handler	224	224
CPR	115	115
Professional Guest Services	43	43
Total	627	627

Vocational Rehabilitation Support Services

Career Counseling and Information Referral Program

- 47 Community Rehabilitation Centers served
- 430 Individuals served

Driver's Education

- Driver's Permit: 18
- Driver's License: 6
- Enrolled but not tested: 5

Business Engagement

The ARS **Business Engagement** team is a vital workforce partner focused on preparing a job-ready, career bound workforce to meet the needs of Arkansas employers across the state. Through our ongoing partnerships built on a foundation of trust and attention to delivering customized business solutions Business Engagement continues to expand services offered with a focus on meeting the needs of our customers. During FY 2020 eleven Business Engagement Representatives delivered 930 services to Arkansas businesses either through long-term partnerships or “real-time” interactions resulting in valued added solutions to meet employment and disability related needs. Due added solutions to meet their employment and disability related needs.

Leading the list for products and services sought after by business in partnership with ARS were:

- Employer outreach, hiring, employee retention, staff training and accommodations
- A variety of training services on diversity inclusion
- Development of strategies for disability-related solutions



Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott speaks to ARS Staff and Business Leaders.

Highlights

- Business Engagement Staff collaborated with Field Staff hosting numerous Job Fairs at Regional Offices consisting of Employers and Job seekers. This practice has increased understanding and cooperation regarding employer needs, as well as enhanced collaboration within our agency.
- Hosted the Human Resource Management Conference which included 100 HR Managers from across the state who participated in a half-day education and information seminar on Creating a Disability-Inclusive Workplace.



Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Staff and Business Leaders collaborate during National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Pictured L-R: Rick Anderson, ICAN Program Manager; Gretchen Hunt, Business Engagement Representative; Rodney Chandler, Director of Business Engagement ; Jon Taylor, GM Marshalls; Clara Taylor, Business Engagement Representative; and Alan Sims, General Manager of the Arlington Resort Hotel and Spa of Hot Springs.

Project SEARCH®

Project SEARCH® Arkansas sites are developed in partnership with ACCESS Group, Inc., Friendship Community Cares, Inc., Lifestyles, Inc., Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), Schools and other stakeholders. Ten local businesses volunteer to provide 9 months of training to ARS clients. The training is provided in and by the business. A significant number of other businesses serve on the Business Advisory Council (BAC), some sites have more than 20 businesses on their BAC. Employment outcomes range from 70 to 100%. All 10 host business partners remain committed to Project SEARCH®.

Project SEARCH® Sites

Project SEARCH® Arkansas sites are developed in partnership with ACCESS Group, Inc., Friendship Community Cares, Inc., Lifestyles, Inc., Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), Schools and other stakeholders.

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) – Little Rock (an adult model developed in 2013): 50% of their first-year graduates remain employed working full-time with benefits. A review of available information would indicate that one of the UAMS 2014 graduates is the only Project SEARCH® graduate that has achieved the title of Manager among all sites across the U.S. and the 8 other countries.

Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH) – Little Rock (an adult model developed in 2015)

CHI St. Vincent – Hot Springs (developed in 2016 –formerly a high school model, has transitioned to 100% adult model)

Ouachita County Medical Center (OCMC) – Camden (an adult model developed Fall 2017)

St. Bernards Regional Medical Center (SBRMC) – Jonesboro (an adult model developed Fall 2017)

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB) – Pine Bluff (an adult model developed Fall 2018): UAPB is only the 2nd Historically Black College & University (HBCU) to serve as a Project SEARCH® host business partner in the country.

Mercy Hospital Fort Smith (an adult model developed Fall 2018)

Saint Mary’s Regional Medical Center – Russellville (an adult model developed Fall 2017)

Washington Regional Medical Center – Fayetteville (transitioned to 100% adult model developed fall 2011)

Embassy Suites – Rogers Project SEARCH® Autism Enhancement (PSAE) site developed in 2019 – transitioned to a blended model (high school and adult)

Access and Accommodations

Access and Accommodations (A&A) consists of assessment, assistive technology (AT), and work-related programs that provide direct support to vocational rehabilitation clients, counselors, and employers to improve and facilitate competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities or act as a resource with regards assessment and diagnosis, assistive technology or accommodations. It also houses the Community Service Programs (CSP's) that provide varying services regarding assistive technology to Arkansans across the state. The COVID-19 pandemic has effected the way we provide our services greatly. From providing services virtually, wearing PPE, and varying the setting and number of individuals we provide services to, but our staff has taken these challenges in stride and have continued to provide services to our clients with the utmost professionalism and effectiveness.

Assistive Technology at Work

The **Assistive Technology at Work (AT@Work)** provides direct support to vocational rehabilitation clients by providing AT assessments and consultation services. During the last federal fiscal year, AT@Work staff provided these services to 285 individuals. These individuals required services in the areas of students requiring accommodations for school, clients actively seeking employment, and those seeking workplace accommodations to remain at work through the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) program. The occupational therapists within AT@Work have provided 23 AROAD (Arkansas Rehabilitation Occupational Abilities Determination) assessments this reporting period. These assessments are specifically designed to aide counselors and clients in the determination or viability of a vocational goal on a functional basis. A&A and VR staff also regularly utilize services of our Community Services Programs (CSP).

Stay at Work/Return to Work

The **Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW)** program is designed to assist the employee and employer to either keep an existing employee on the job or successfully return an employee back to work as quickly and effectively as possible. Last fiscal year SAW/RTW evaluators assisted 72 individuals in these efforts, 24 of those being located within state government, and the rest coming from private sector business. The SAW/RTW program assisted 35 different employers with SAW/RTW efforts for employees with disabilities with most of these referrals concerning job retention and the provision of workplace accommodations. Access and Accommodations has most recently initiated the client coordination piece of the SAW/RTW program where a case coordinator will work with the employer, employee, and other stakeholders to coordinate the SAW/RTW process with the goal of getting the individual to remain at work or return to work as quickly as it is medically feasible. This program was initiated July 2019 and since that time we have entered into memorandums of understanding (MOU's) with the City of Little Rock, the Arkansas state Public Employee Claims Division (PECD) to provide SAW/RTW services for state employees with work related injury or illness with permanent partial or permanent total disability status, and the University of Arkansas system. These efforts have resulted in 9 26 closures this past reporting period.

Access and Accommodations

Community Service Programs (CSP)

Community Service Programs (CSP) are non-VR funded programs that often benefit and support clients and their families when VR is unable to provide services or direct financial assistance. Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) allows a client to try out a piece of assistive technology prior to purchase and its equipment reutilization program can be a no-cost solution for needed equipment. ICAN has saved Arkansans \$1,504,844.88 this year through their services where this money would have been charged to Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, or the individual themselves. This past year ICAN has served 19 ARS clients in various aspects of providing assistive technology services such as AT loans and donations. ICAN also supports VR through their relationship with the AT@Work and SAW/RTW programs where they allow ARS evaluators to utilize ICAN equipment during their client evaluations prior to making their recommendations. The Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) is utilized to address a client's telecommunication needs at home or work. This past year TAP served 79 ARS clients providing these individuals with the technology they need to increase their independence with distance communications. The Alternative Financing Program (AFP) can be another funding source for assistive technology not purchased by ARS. The AFP has worked hard over the past year with their new board in place. One highlight with this new board is the implementation of safeguards that will prevent any extended pauses in providing this critical service to individuals with disabilities across our state.

Learning and Evaluation Center

Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC) provides direct service to ARS clients through individual psychological/neuropsychological evaluations. LEC evaluations generally require one to two days, are conducted by licensed psychology professionals, followed by a detailed written report and individual feedback session involving the counselor, the consumer, and other family members if indicated. The purpose of the evaluation is to assist in the diagnosis of disabilities that may be affecting the consumer's educational progress, to identify strengths that may be used to mitigate disabilities, and to suggest accommodations when those may be helpful. Evaluations may also be focused on identifying strengths and weaknesses in areas more related to abilities to perform in the workplace. Neuropsychological evaluations for consumers who may have suffered from some form of traumatic brain injury are conducted to help determine the consumer's recovery process and readiness for job training, job placement, or further education. During this reporting period staff performed 98 psychological and 47 neuropsychological evaluations to agency clients.

Transition Services

In March, we all had our life's changed. In the midst of the announcement, schools would switch to an online teaching method for the remainder of the school year. The Pre-ETS team sprang into action and took this challenge as an opportunity to stay involved with our students and to encourage them to demonstrate what they had learned in their transitions classes; all while staying on track to complete their semester of Work-Based Learning. The ARS Pre-ETS Advisory Committee consisting of Rachel Lee, Kim Clark, Jennifer Ragsdale, Darlene Owens, and Shelia Y. Johnson, Keondra Hampton, and Christina Clausen came together to brainstorm different ways to keep our students involved and engaged. One of the ideas we considered was to have students create and submit an online career portfolio grew even further into the idea of The ARS Virtual Career Completion (VCC). With a lot of hard work, time and dedication, the ARS Pre-ETS team had a plan and a timeline to start the career competition on April 6.

Students were given the opportunity to submit an entry that would display their future in their own way. To allow for maximum student participation, submissions to the ARS Virtual Career Competition were accepted in the form of an essay, original art, video or podcast. We requested each student showcase a career they were interested in, identify the skills needed to be successful in that career, and identify their career path to reach this goal. ARS encouraged creativity and allowed students to use any available resources while still encouraging social distancing.

The final date for the VCC submissions was May 17. ARS had received 66 total presentations to be judged. While each student was awarded a stipend for the time and work they invested into their submission to the career competition. ARS awarded first through fifth place winners out of each regional ARS office. Our first-place winners were Kristen Robinson, Hannah Rowlett, Grace Breland, Ashton Lewis, William Cartwright, Jonathan Mendoza, Jurneai K Jackson, Cassidi Marie Callicott, and Jaylen McClendon. To view some of the great submissions, please visit ARCareerEd.org/services/arkansas-rehabilitation-services/field-services/transition-services

ARS was pleased with the great turn out and was amazed by the work each student had dedicated to their submission. ARS is excited to announce that we will be hosting our second annual ARS Career Competition with the help of UACURRENTS to students this upcoming spring semester.

Transition Services

Working for Independence Now (WIN!) & Opportunities for Work-Based Learning (OWL)

In addition to the Career Competition, Pre-ETS has another new program to get schools and students the opportunity to complete Work-Based Learning in association with their pre-ETS services. The **Working for Independence Now (WIN!)** program has had 13 schools sign up during its pilot year. Through the WIN! program, schools assign a staff member to be a Worksite Coordinator for their Pre-ETS students. The Worksite Coordinator works with the Transitions Team to locate, set up, and maintain a worksite for the student. The program also offers the opportunity for schools to request funding to set up student-led enterprises.

Even with Covid having a drastic effect on our students and Pre-ETS programming, we came back to the school year with a great start! ARS now has contracted services established in 145 schools, and all schools have an assigned Pre-ETS counselor to provide services in their school. At the end of the Pilot Program, all 32 of the Current OWL schools will be transitioned over to this model.

The number of students and hours they worked through OWL programs are listed below:

Quarter	Final Total
Number of Students	1,484
Total in PAID WBL	941
Total Unpaid	732
Total Number of WBL Hours	40,976.6
WBL On-Campus	20,226.05
WBL Off-Campus	13,111.5
WBL Student Led-Enterprises	7,299.05
Number On-Campus	809
Number Off-Campus	284
Number Student-Led Enterprises	1,055
OSHA	87
Customer Service	31
ServSafe	89
Reported Direct Employment	56

ARS Pre-ETS has allow provided benefits planning to 397 students in the 2019-2020 school year and 56 students were hired directly to their OWL worksites upon completing Work Based Learning.

Transition Services

Transition Employment Program (TEP)

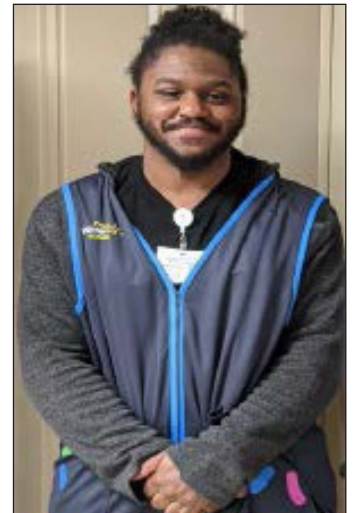
Transition Employment Program (TEP) is a comprehensive pre-employment training service designed to prepare 11th-grade students with disabilities for future employment. TEP meets all mandated cores of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): Job Exploration, Work-Based Learning, Workplace Readiness, Post-Secondary Counseling, and Instruction on Self-Advocacy.

TEP was created in 2010 and developed, in partnership with ACTI in 2014. Fourteen high school students with disabilities participated in the TEP pilot in 2014. TEP has grown from 14 students from 7 high schools to 70 students from 57 high schools in 2019. TEP 2020 was scheduled to be held at the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts (ASMSA) in Hot Springs – canceled due to COVID 19. Sixty-one students had been approved to participate, upon cancellation, the Transition Services team partnered with the ACDC Talent Development staff to provide virtual trainings: OSHA 10, ServSafe, and Professional Guest Services. Several students had no access to the internet or computers; their teachers, an ARS Regional Manager, Counselor and Administrative staff, and the IT department joined forces to ensure the access and training needed to increase participation. The Transition Services team also provided post-secondary counseling to the students and connected them and their parents to other essential resources.

Success Stories

Anthony Walker, Project SEARCH®

Anthony Walker is a 2020 graduate of OCMC Project SEARCH®, Camden. At first, Anthony was very shy and timid, but through his journey with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Project SEARCH®, he has flourished into the man he is today. Anthony was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder. His ultimate goal has been to overcome his diagnosis and become a productive member of society. During his training with Project SEARCH®, Anthony was not only able to gain competitive employment, but he also received his learners permit to drive! When asked how he felt about everything, Anthony stated he “feels really proud of himself, and that he has achieved more than he expected.” His current goals are now to attain his driver’s license and work towards living on his own. I asked Anthony what advice he has for anyone interested in ARS or Project SEARCH®; he said, “Whatever you want to do, don’t listen to anyone because Project SEARCH® can make your dreams come true.”



Success Stories

Ruby Rawls, Region 5, Field Services

Ruby Rawls, 86 years old, from Russellville, has been a client of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services since June 2019. She developed a hearing loss in both of her ears a few years ago. Due to this, Ruby has had trouble understanding and hearing people at work and at home. Ruby came to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services to obtain assistive devices like hearing aids to maintain her employment. Ruby is a real estate broker, and she has been in the real estate business for 39 years. Ruby worked with ARS to be able to obtain hearing aids for both of her ears. She received her hearing aids in September, and she reported after 30 days of wear that they were working great, and they have been excellent in both her work and personal life. Thanks to ARS, Ruby can sell her clients their dream homes and is truly enjoying her work and independence now. Ruby is an excellent example of how dreams can become a reality with the right assistance!



Sarah Murphy, Region 5, Field Services

Sarah Murphy of Conway became a client of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services in March of 2014. Ms. Murphy was diagnosed with Scoliosis and received a spinal fusion surgery. She came to ARS with a dream of becoming an elementary school teacher. ARS was able to provide her with financial assistance to attend Central Baptist College upon her high school graduation. Ms. Murphy proved to be dedicated to achieving her vocational goal by achieving a 4.0 in her first year of college. She graduated from Central Baptist College in December of 2018 with a degree in Elementary Education. Ms. Murphy is now employed by the Vilonia School District as a third-grade teacher. Ms. Murphy's case with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services was successfully closed in February 2020. Ms. Murphy is thriving as a third-grade teacher in the Vilonia School District. She loves her job as a teacher and appreciates the assistance and support she received from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services while achieving her goal. Ms. Murphy's dedication to her vocational goal is an inspiration to others pursuing vocational goals.



Success Stories

Tonya Mays, Region 7, Field Services

Tonya Mays applied for services in July 2019 after being laid off from her job as a store clerk. Ms. Mays requested assistance from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services to attend MedLinc to become a Certified Nursing Assistant and Phlebotomy Technician. Her Individual Plan for Employment was developed in September 2019, and she began classes in October 2019. Ms. Mays mastered her course work and was praised by her MedLinc instructor. In an email from Rebecca Lincoln, she referred to Ms. Mays as; “Precious with an infectious smile. She is growing into an amazing caregiver. I would take ten more, just like her!” Ms. Mays completed both Certified Nursing Assistant and Phlebotomy training by December 2019 and passed her state nursing assistance board exam. After receiving her CNA certification, Ms. Mays was offered a position at Good Shepherd Rehabilitation and Nursing Center as a Certified Nursing Assistant. She is awaiting the opportunity to sit for her Phlebotomy board amid Covid-19. Ms. Mays is delighted in her current role as a full-time Certified Nursing Assistant and thanks ARS for her assistance in achieving her employment goal. She feels this job is just the beginning of many doors that will open for her. She has met so many people and is confident she will continue success in employment and life. Ms. Mays was asked her thoughts about the service received. She stated, “My self-esteem has improved; “I am proud of myself because I didn’t think I could do it.” As for her goals moving forward, Ms. Mays plans to continue working full-time as a CNA and find part-time employment as a Phlebotomist. When asked if she would refer others to ARS, she said with a smile, “Gladly!”



Carol McDearmon, Access and Accommodations

ARS Client Carol McDearmon reached out to Access and Accommodations when she realized the arthritic pain in her hand was threatening to interfere with her job productivity. A right-hand amputee, Carol, who is Program Operations Manager/Reemployment Services with the Department of Workforce Services, was visited by Occupational Therapist (OT) Melinda Davis and given the opportunity to try suggestions such as a ‘rolling mouse,’ Dragon software, and recommended changes to her keyboarding posture and document placement. Assistive technology allowed Carol to work more efficiently by eliminating the pain of repetitive keyboard motions. While working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic, OT Davis equipped Carol with an adapter to manage the multiple ports her computer required for her to continue to work from home. Carol’s SAWRTW case was successfully closed in May, and she says that her accommodations have enabled her to maintain her current employment. “You all have changed my life,” she said!



Success Stories

Aubrey Copeland, Project SEARCH®

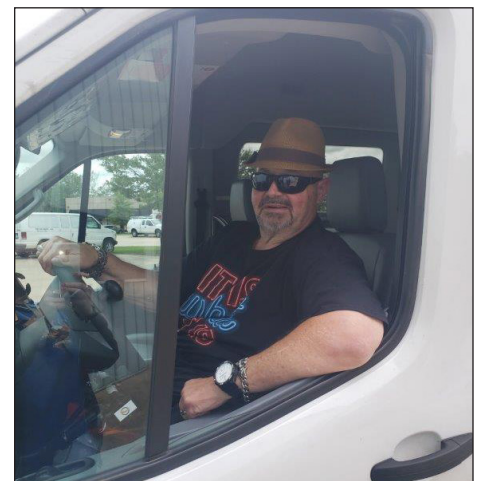
“You can’t always get what you want.” It seems like that’s the oldest cliché in the book, yet up until recently, that adage was a pretty good summary of how my life has been. I was 31-years-old, still living with my parents, and unable to hold down a job. I knew something was keeping me from reaching my full potential, but I didn’t know what it was. Finally, after getting let go from a job for “asking the same questions every day,” I decided I’d had enough. So, I applied to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and something magical happened. Very slowly, my life started getting better. As a first step, they diagnosed my problem: Inattentive ADHD with an anxiety disorder. They then recommended a worktraining program called Project I SEARCH®. While it may sound like a simple program designed to help people with disabilities find work, it has meant so much more than that to me. I have a mild



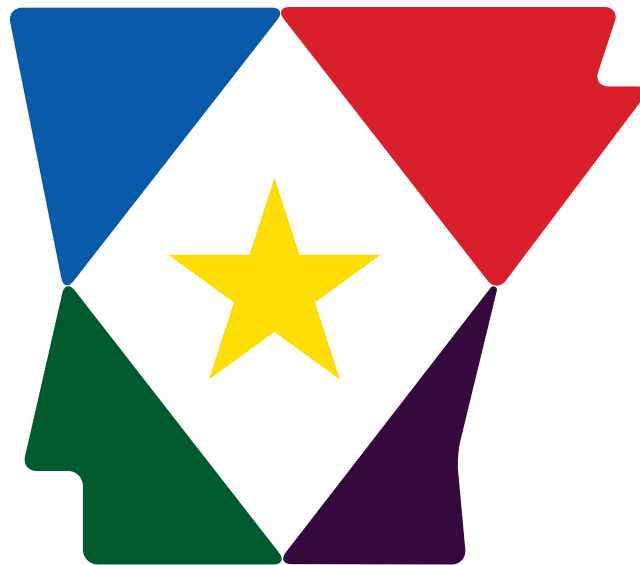
disability that makes keeping a job more difficult, but thanks to the training that Project SEARCH® provided, I’ve acquired job skills that I’ll have for the rest of my life. Fast forward a few months, the same person who was fired is now working at Walmart and is well on his way to reaching the probation period for the first time. I’ve now got consistent hours (working 40 hours a week every week), I’m getting close to being able to move out on my own, and I’ve even put a down payment on a car in my name. If you or someone you care about is disabled and needs job skills to make you more employable, I cannot suggest Project I SEARCH® enough. It is a great program, run by even better people, and you’ve got their support every step of the way.

Vince Glasser, Access and Accommodations

Vince Glasser came to ARS after having his right leg amputated below the knee due to diabetes complications. He was employed as a driver for a nonprofit agency and was off on extended medical leave. Vince needed to have his vehicle modified and his drivers’ license certified for the modification in order to return to work. He was also concerned that his employer would not modify his work vehicle. ARS paid for his driver’s evaluation and training. They also assessed and paid for the vehicle modification on his personal vehicle. His counselor explained the ADA to him and encouraged him to advocate for himself with his employer, which resulted in his work vehicle being modified. Vince successfully returned to his job as a shuttle driver in less than four months after meeting with his counselor for the first time.



Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
is under the
Division of Workforce Services
within the
Department of Commerce



Arkansas Division of
Workforce Services
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