



**WORKFORCE
SERVICES**
REHABILITATION

2021 Utah State **Rehabilitation Council Report** JANUARY 2022



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UTAH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
1595 WEST 500 SOUTH • SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84104
JANUARY 2022



MISSION

The mission of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), in partnership with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and in collaboration with disability groups, is to ensure quality vocational rehabilitation services for eligible individuals as they make informed choices to achieve employment.

We accomplish this mission by reviewing programs, analyzing service delivery processes and advising on policies and procedures.



REHABILITATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- Eliza Detherage, Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP), Chair
- Brian Lahti, Consumer, Vice Chair
- Selena Harris, Consumer, Secretary
- Glenn Fitzpatrick, Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP), Past Chair
- Rob Ferris, Business, Industry and Labor, Member-at-Large

MEMBERS:

- Alisha Byron, Business, Industry and Labor
- Mitch Moyers, DSDHH Representative
- Eliza Stauffer, Consumer
- James Harvey, Business, Industry and Labor
- Lavinia Gripentrog, Special Education
- Bianca Gonzalez, Client Assistance Program
- Amy Hurst, Utah Parent Center
- Velma Spencer, Title 121, Navajo Nation
- Jenni Thompson, DSBVI Representative
- Austin Oseguera, UCAT Representative
- Sandy Terry, Department of Workforce Services
- Cheri Lachenmeier, VR Counselor Representative
- Bryn Peterson, DSPD
- Andrea Pitts, Consumer



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR



I AM HONORED TO HAVE SERVED as Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council during the past year. I wish to convey my deepest thanks to the members of the Council and the dedicated staff of the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation for their hard work.

As was the case at the end of the 2019-2020 Council Year, this year has been one of entirely virtual council and executive committee meetings. Despite the inherent challenges of the Zoom format, the council managed to participate in a wide variety of discussions, training, updates and opportunities to network with one another and community partners.

We look forward to the upcoming year and even greater employment outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities as the State Rehabilitation Council continues its important work.

Respectfully,

Eliza Detherage
Chair, State Rehabilitation Council 2020-2021



MESSAGE FROM THE USOR DIRECTOR



I AM PLEASED TO PRESENT to you the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) 2021 Annual Report. The work represented in the following pages is the result of continued services extended to the clients served by our professional and dedicated team of employees in the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR), community rehabilitation providers, employers, and SRC members.

USOR celebrated 100 years of service to individuals with disabilities in Utah during 2021! I am including a historical timeline of a few key dates and events that either shaped the VR program nationwide or directly impacted the USOR!

- 1920: Smith-Fess Act (also known as the Civilian Vocational Rehabilitation Act) established the VR program in the United States
- 1921: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Utah established
- 1958: Creation of Disability Determination Services (DDS)
- 1963: Division of Services for the Visually Handicapped reorganized
- 1969: Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities established
- 1973: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 passed into law
- 1988: The Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) created
- 1990: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is passed
- 1992: The Robert G. Sanderson Community Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing opens
- 1996: The Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT) joins USOR
- 1999: A new center for the blind and visually impaired opens
- 2001: Work Incentives Planning Services (UWIPS) begin
- 2005: The Business Relations Unit created to support businesses in hiring individuals with disabilities
- 2016: USOR joins the Department of Workforce Services (DWS)
- 2021: USOR Celebrates its 100th Anniversary

Several notable accomplishments this past year include: 1) Vocational Rehabilitation expanded access to transition services for students to ensure they receive the skills and experiences necessary to enter the workforce. This included adapting curriculum and programs for virtual learning environments due to the pandemic. New targeted services were developed for students who are blind, low vision, Deaf, hard of hearing and Deafblind. 2) The Division of Services of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing held multiple COVID-19 vaccination clinics for their communities. 3) The Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired saw major challenges in its Business Enterprise Program (BEP) related to the pandemic, as blind business owners had significant losses as federal, state and local government offices moved to virtual services and telework. We were able to use funding to reimburse vendors for replacing expired products and also help avoid additional vending closures. 4) Disability Determination Services continued to reduce the backlog of claims resulting from closed medical offices and the discontinuation of in-person hearings that happened during the height of the pandemic.

Respectfully,

Sarah Brenna
USOR Director

Introduction



THE UTAH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

The Utah State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a body of citizens appointed by the Executive Director of the Department of Workforce Services under the authority of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The council is composed of consumers, professionals, employers, labor representatives, family and parent advocates, and service providers who promote public awareness, support of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program and advocate for individuals with disabilities. The majority of council membership consists of individuals with disabilities, many of whom have been involved as participants in the vocational rehabilitation process. Members of the SRC have been chosen for their interest in, specialized knowledge of and expertise with serving the disabled community. The term of office for selected SRC members is three years.

The council provides direct communication from consumers, rehabilitation professionals, business, industry, labor, service providers and other individuals interested in improving the services provided by the VR program. Collectively, this group reviews, analyzes and advises the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) regarding the VR program.

Over the years, the SRC has established strong community relationships among people with disabilities, local businesses, private and public agencies, service providers, community organizations and advocacy groups to promote the objectives of the organization. The SRC continues to be an active partner with the VR program to ensure the provision of quality services to eligible consumers. SRC members provide critical support to USOR and to individuals with disabilities served by the agency by communicating with legislators on both the state and national level. They promote legislation and funding requests that continue the specialized services provided by USOR.

Council members participate in various functions of the VR program. These include attending USOR state-wide meetings, Golden Key employment recognition awards ceremonies, town meetings, focus groups and the Utah Rehabilitation Association annual conference.

The council has contributed to and continues to be involved in the development and implementation of USOR's strategic plan and the WIOA Unified State Plan. It has also identified areas of strength within USOR, acknowledged the best practices of the agency and recommended improvements to the VR program. Council members and USOR staff members agree that through appropriate communication and partnerships, vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities in Utah will continue to improve.



PURPOSE: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) are outlined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 1998, and include the following:

- Review, analyze and advise the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) regarding the performance of its responsibilities, particularly those related to eligibility (including Order of Selection); the extent, scope and effectiveness of services provided; and the functions of the state rehabilitation agency that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes.
- In partnership with USOR, develop, agree to and evaluate the effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program.
- Advise USOR regarding activities authorized to be carried out and assist in the preparation of the WIOA Unified State Plan, amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments and evaluations.
- Conduct a review and an analysis of the effectiveness of VR services and consumer satisfaction.
- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Department of Workforce Services and the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on the status of VR in the state and make the report available to the public.
- Coordinate the work of the Council with the activities of other disability-related councils within the state.
- Establish working relationships between the VR program, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Special Education Advisory Panel established under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the State Developmental Disabilities Council and the State Workforce Services Council.
- Perform additional functions that the SRC determines are appropriate and comparable to other functions performed by the Council.

The SRC, in partnership with the USOR VR program, is committed to helping the people of Utah who qualify for services to obtain better jobs with a living wage, health care benefits and better career opportunities, and to become as independent as possible. The council believes that individuals with disabilities should be full and active partners in the VR process. Members of the SRC seek to work cooperatively with USOR to ensure that the activities of the VR program are carried out in a manner that is respectful of an individual's dignity and recognizes an individual's right to make informed choices.



2020-2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

INTERPRETER ETIQUETTE PRESENTATION:

In January 2021 Certified Trainer/Interpreter Clay Anderson with the DHH program made an informative presentation to the council on Interpreter Etiquette. Anderson reviewed his 21 years of interpreter experience (including with the state of Utah and the Council). His most recent experience has included interpreting for the state's pandemic response with colleague Trenton Marsh. They have interpreted for Governor Spencer Cox, the Utah Department of Health, and other entities for daily media briefings since early 2020. Anderson spoke about a recent lawsuit at the White House (now resolved) involving a lack of interpreter services for press conferences/daily briefings. Anderson then discussed helpful etiquette tips when working with deaf individuals, including speaking directly to them; making eye contact and avoiding references to the interpreter. There are notable differences between being born deaf and late onset due to illness or aging, as well as the terms Deaf, Hard of Hearing and/or Hearing Impaired. Anderson reminded the council that an interpreter's goal is to correctly transmit intended information to a deaf client. He discussed treating interpreters like they are on a job, and used the example of a service animal to illustrate when it would be appropriate to converse with the interpreter before or after the client interaction. Another example includes a presentation where the interpreter's job is focused on by a participant instead of the presenter who deserves the recognition. Anderson shared the difficult, vulnerable experiences with interpretation for sensitive populations. He then discussed the deaf certification training programs at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) and Utah Valley University (UVU), including the written and performance exam requirements for both the novice and professional certifications in Utah. He then provided a "day in the life" example of an interpreter, and both the challenges and rewards associated with his profession.

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND BUSINESS RELATIONS PRESENTATION:

In February 2021, Leah Lobato, Director of the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, presented on both the committee's work and that of the Business Relations program. She discussed the composition of the committee, including individuals with disabilities; state and federal partners; business and industry; and the media. She addressed the Mentoring Day events, the yearly Golden Key Awards recognition, and the nomination process. Lobato discussed that October is Disability Awareness Month; the Disability: IN Utah network, and an upcoming Flash Mentoring event for individuals with disabilities 16 and older, including a virtual meeting with a partner business. Lobato then gave a brief update of the Choose to Work (CTW) program.

VR 101: OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM (CRP)

SERVICES PRESENTATION: In February 2021, Amber Marsh, Employment Director at North Eastern Services (NES), a local CRP, made a presentation on services available to clients in the VR program. NES has 13 locations statewide and almost 40 years of experience in Utah. Through a team-oriented, customized approach, and employment-first focus, NES provides work strategy assessments; job development; job coaching; and job placement services to increase successful closures. Marsh described each of these services in detail, and the challenges faced during the current pandemic, including access, consistency of services, and needed support. Other areas of interest included benefits planning; paid and natural supports; and changes in client motivation or behavior (including independence, understanding behavior supports, and understanding triggers or restrictions). Marsh reported changes that are being

implemented across partner programs, including person-centered services, earlier focus on real and/or potential client barriers, and employer collaboration.

UTAH POST SCHOOL OUTCOMES 2020

SURVEY PRESENTATION: At the February 2021 meeting, Lavinia Gripentrog, Transition Specialist with the Utah State Board of Education (USB E), presented on the results of the Utah Post School Outcomes 2020 Survey. Youth with disabilities who exited school with an IEP are surveyed by phone one year after high school or post high. The survey addresses higher education, competitive employment, post-secondary education, earnings, and other outcomes. Gripentrog reported that the Covid-19 pandemic had significant impact on the mixed survey findings.

UTAH DIVISION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH (DSAMH) PRESENTATION:

In March 2021, Sharon Cook, Supported Employment and Recovery & Resiliency Peer Support Administrator, Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH), provided an overview of her Division's goals, including prevention and early Intervention; suicide prevention; recovery promotion; improved services for children and adolescents; and health systems integration. Cook reported on the efforts of the DSAMH Supported Employment (SE)/Individual Placement and Support (IPS) partnership including USOR research and data, and the referral process between agencies. This collaboration can lead to a smooth process for clients: increased communication between agencies and common clients; improved client recovery and independence; and competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

VR 101: SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PRESENTATION:

In March 2021, Sierra Montuori, VR Counselor with the Salt Lake VR District, presented on the topic of substance abuse disorders and vocational rehabilitation. She first defined substance abuse disorder under the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the high prevalence among VR client (between 22-50%).

Oftentimes alcohol and/or drug abuse is a co-occurring disorder with mental illness, and employment can be a factor in successful recovery. Montuori discussed the services provided by VR, including restoration; career planning; vocational training or education; maintenance services; transportation; supported job-based training; supported employment; individual job placement and support; and workplace accommodations. She also discussed examples of community partnerships (e.g. Department of Corrections, Volunteers of America, and other mental health and/or recovery organizations). Montuori reviewed VR counselor considerations in service delivery, including relapse prevention; the overlap with corrections and legal history; underlying secondary mental health concerns; access to holistic treatment; and sociocultural factors.

UTAH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY COUNCIL (UDDC) PRESENTATION:

In April 2021, Libby Oseguera, Executive Director of the UDDC provided a historical orientation to the UDDC, including being funded thru federal dollars and authorized under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance & Bill of Rights Act of 2000. The purpose of the council is to ensure that individuals and families have access to services and supports, and participate actively in their communities. Health and wellness, employment, and leadership and advocacy are part of effective advocacy under State Plan goals. Oseguera advised SRC members on how to get involved with the UDDC (www.utahddcouncil.org).

SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY PRE-ETS PROGRAM PRESENTATION:

At the April 2021 meeting, Susan Hunter and Carmen Aldridge with Southern Utah University (SUU) presented on their Pre-Ets program through the SUU Disability Resource Center. The presenters discussed the four service options available to students with disabilities: 1) peer mentoring on a weekly basis; 2) a two credit Specialized Career Preparedness course that offers students study strategies, time management tips, instruction in soft skills, resume assistance, mock interviews and job searches; 3) a summer

semester internship in a chosen career field, with the option to apply for regular internship with the employer; and 4) monthly educational workshops, including topics such as communication and self-advocacy; diversity and community resources; professional development; mental health wellness; budgeting, and disability awareness. The presenters then had three mentees from the program share their success stories as peer mentors.

WORKABILITY INTERNSHIPS

PRESENTATION: In May 2021, Jolene Wyler, Director of the Utah Work Incentive Planning Services (UWIPS), a program under Utah VR, reported on the past five Workability Interns and their successes (including two that secured full-time employment with the state). Other interns are employed in the private sector. Wyler discussed the current interns at the Judy Ann Buffmire building in Salt Lake and the support services being provided by our division to increase successful work outcomes. She then provided an update on the UWIPS program and adaptations to service provision during the COVID-19 pandemic. These include changes to the intake process, increased communication with clients and a new UWIPS technician and referral process facilitation. She informed council members of a five-year grant with Social Security that was in process. Note: This grant has since been awarded to USOR. Lexi Arroyo, a current Workability Intern, spoke to the council about the services she received in terms of communication skills, dealing with the public and computer competencies. She plans to work for the state of Utah and possibly become a VR counselor.

ABLE ACCOUNTS PRESENTATION: In May 2021, the council was educated on the ABLE account option coming to Utah. Tom Hatch and Eric Ochman with the ABLE Accounts of Ohio, presented both on the successes of their Ohio program, and provided a broad overview of the ABLE process itself. The ABLE Act of 2014 created savings and investment accounts for persons with disabilities. The presenters reiterated to the council that ABLE accounts do not affect eligibility for regular benefits programs (SSI

and Medicaid). Ohio launched their program in 2016. The presenters reviewed the saving benefits, the financial independence, and specific tax benefits of the ABLE account, as well as eligibility requirements for the program (e.g. disability occurred prior to age 24; eligible for SSI or SSDI due to disability). Free and quick enrollment; funding a personal ABLE account; investment options; free withdrawals; considerations for SSI are some of the features of these accounts. The presenters discussed what happens if an account holder dies; the protections, limitations and deductions impacting Medicaid; the monthly maintenance fees for an ABLE account, and Special Needs Trust options were included in the presentation. The unique ABLE account benefits in Ohio included: 1) broader spending power (i.e. housing and food); 2) a state tax deduction for ABLE contributions; 3) no federal or state income tax on personal earnings; and 4) the accounts can be established, administered, and owned by the individual with a disability. ABLE account information from Ohio can be found at www.stableaccount.com

Note: At the September 2021 meeting Jolene Wyler gave an update on ABLE. The new ableut.com website is up and running with significant resources and forms available for clients to participate in this new savings program.

DISABILITY LAW CENTER PRESENTATION: In August 2021, Maya Anderson, a staff attorney with the Disability Law Center (DLC) provided an overview of the services offered by their program. She first discussed the mission and vision of the DLC in providing free legal and advocacy services to persons with disabilities in Utah, and provided some historical background for the establishment of the DLC nationwide. The services are intended to be short term in nature, and include the following: 1) abuse and neglect prevention for those with disabilities; 2) access and rights (i.e. public places, transportation, services, voting and fair housing); 3) community integration (protecting the right to live and receive supports in the least restrictive and most integrated settings); 4) education (free

public education provision as well as special education and related services); 5) employment (prevention of employment discrimination and advocacy for clients of the VR program); 6) the promotion, lobbying, and tracking of public policy; and 7) representative payee audits. Anderson included information on what is not provided through the DLD (i.e. family law matters, wills, trusts, malpractice suits, and bankruptcy). Their contact information: www.disabilitylawcenter.org

CHOOSE TO WORK (CTW) PRESENTATION:

At the August 2021 meeting, USOR Business Relations Supervisors Jake Marino and Josh Rodeback discussed CTW services targeted for VR clients looking for competitive, integrated employment. These services, including job development and placement, are designed to be provided at the end of a client's VR plan. Services include: job search preparation and development; connecting with business partners; assessment of knowledge, skills, and abilities; job leads, and follow-up services. There is a strong emphasis on immediate and increased client engagement, short-term intensive service provision; and targeted job outcomes within 60 days. The presenters emphasized that partnering and collaboration with the VR counselor and client will improve successful program outcomes (i.e. clients placed into employment within 45 days).

PRE-ETS INSTRUCTORS OVERVIEW

PRESENTATION: In September, 2021 Aimee Langone, Transition and Supported Employment Coordinator; Maria Baldwin (Pre-Employment Transition Services Program Specialist); and Pre-ETS Instructor Stacy Thomson (Northern Utah VR district), reported on the advent of the Pre-Instructor position created in 2019 to assist with Pre-ETS implementation as mandated by the WIOA. Utah now has 11 positions statewide. Allowable Pre-ETS job duties include workshop and training provisions; travel to meet with students and/or employers; assisting VR counselors with work-based learning opportunities; and attending Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 meetings. The presenters shared that Pre-ETS instructors can attend district staff and team meetings, the annual

VR state meeting, and participate in other state and national trainings. The role of the Pre-ETS instructor was presented, to include informing, preparing, outreach and collaboration, as well as the creation of strong partnerships with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and CRP's for Pre-ETS and transition services. They then shared a few success stories: 1) a post high student with a significant learning disability that now works in auto maintenance at a car dealership; 2) a 16-year-old girl with severe social anxiety and autism who is now employed at a gymnastics facility for children; and 3) an autistic freshman at Utah State University, majoring in biology, and employed at a local zoo providing customer animal encounters.

ADA WEBSITE CONTENT PRESENTATION:

In September 2021, council member and private attorney, Brian Lahti, presented on concerns over current ADA website content. He discussed the compatibility of current website and availability and why compliance to ADA does not always occur (i.e. Microsoft is accessible, while other search engines are not). When the ADA was enacted, the Internet was not what it is presently. Lahti described how large providers such as Amazon, Netflix, eBay, and Hulu do not need to comply with the ADA law and regulations as stand-alone websites. There are 12 specific categories of places that offer public accommodations, and all appear to be physical locations. He shared that some states (e.g. California) have added ADA provisions into their state law, (including damages or fines per violation), while other states do not hold employers or corporations to the same standards. In addition, large corporations want to be accessible to employees (per the ADAA), but are not sure what regulations to follow.

ATTACHMENT 4.2 (C)

Attachment 4.2 (C): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), Response of the Designated State Unit and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations.

In addition to the review, analysis and recommendations covered above, the SRC made recommendations to the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) portion of the WIOA Unified State Plan, and as required by section 101 (a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014.

The following is a summary of SRC recommendations made from October 2020 to September 2021, and USOR's responses and actions taken regarding these recommendations:

SRC RECOMMENDATION 1:

At the October 2020 meeting, a survey was discussed for council input on the types of provider and/or DWS program presentations the council would like for the coming year. Topics with the greatest interest could then be reviewed, staff identified, and/or programs contacted and scheduled for future council meetings. Administrative liaison staff were tasked with getting this survey forwarded to council members for discussion at the November meeting.

USOR RESPONSE 1:

At the November 2020 meeting, Assistant Director Aaron Thompson reviewed the survey results for upcoming council meetings. Partner program presentations requested included the Disability Law Center; Utah Developmental Disability Council; the Utah Parent Center; Division of Services for Persons with Disabilities (DSPD); Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH), and community

rehabilitation programs. USOR internal program requests included: Business Relations and Choose to Work; Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH); Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (BVI) and Ticket to Work. General topics of interest were: Employment First; WIOA; VR 101 topics; Interpreter Services; Client Success Stories; Credentialing; Interpreter Services; and VR Fee-for Service Rate Structure, among others.

Several of these requested presentations (community partner and VR program-specific) were included in the next several Council meetings.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 2:

At the April 2021 meeting, Assistant Director Thompson gave a brief overview of the ABLE account, a tax advantage savings account for people with disabilities. Council members requested that a more comprehensive presentation be made on the ABLE roll-out in Utah and its impact on clients of the VR and other partner programs.

USOR RESPONSE 2:

At the May 2021 meeting, an ABLE accounts presentation was made by the Ohio STABLE program (included in the 2020-21 Year in Review section), and council members were able to ask a series of questions regarding the roll-out of the program in Utah. At the September 2021 meeting, UWIPS director Jolene Wyler gave an update on the ableut.com website, the available resources and rack cards, and that ABLE was open for applications.



COMMITTEES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SRC committees included the Nominating and Interviewing Committee. A summary report for this committee follows:

NOMINATING AND INTERVIEWING COMMITTEES

Resignations and the expiration of terms for a few members created openings on the council. A few members chose to be nominated to serve a second term. Several vacancies were filled with required members as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act. The 121 Native American program for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe SRC member position remained vacant. The representative for the Navajo Nation continued to attend the council meetings by phone. The RSA regulations require membership of at least one (1) Tribal VR program in Utah.

The Nominating and Interviewing Committee was formed to solicit nominations, review the qualifications of nominees, conduct interviews and present the names of the individuals to the council for consideration. Names were submitted to the Executive Director of DWS for approval in accordance with internal policies. Highly qualified and committed individuals were appointed to the council. They bring commitment and unique expertise to the SRC.

COUNCIL OF STATE ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MEETINGS

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the past three Council of State Administrator's in VR (CSAVR) meetings have been held virtually.

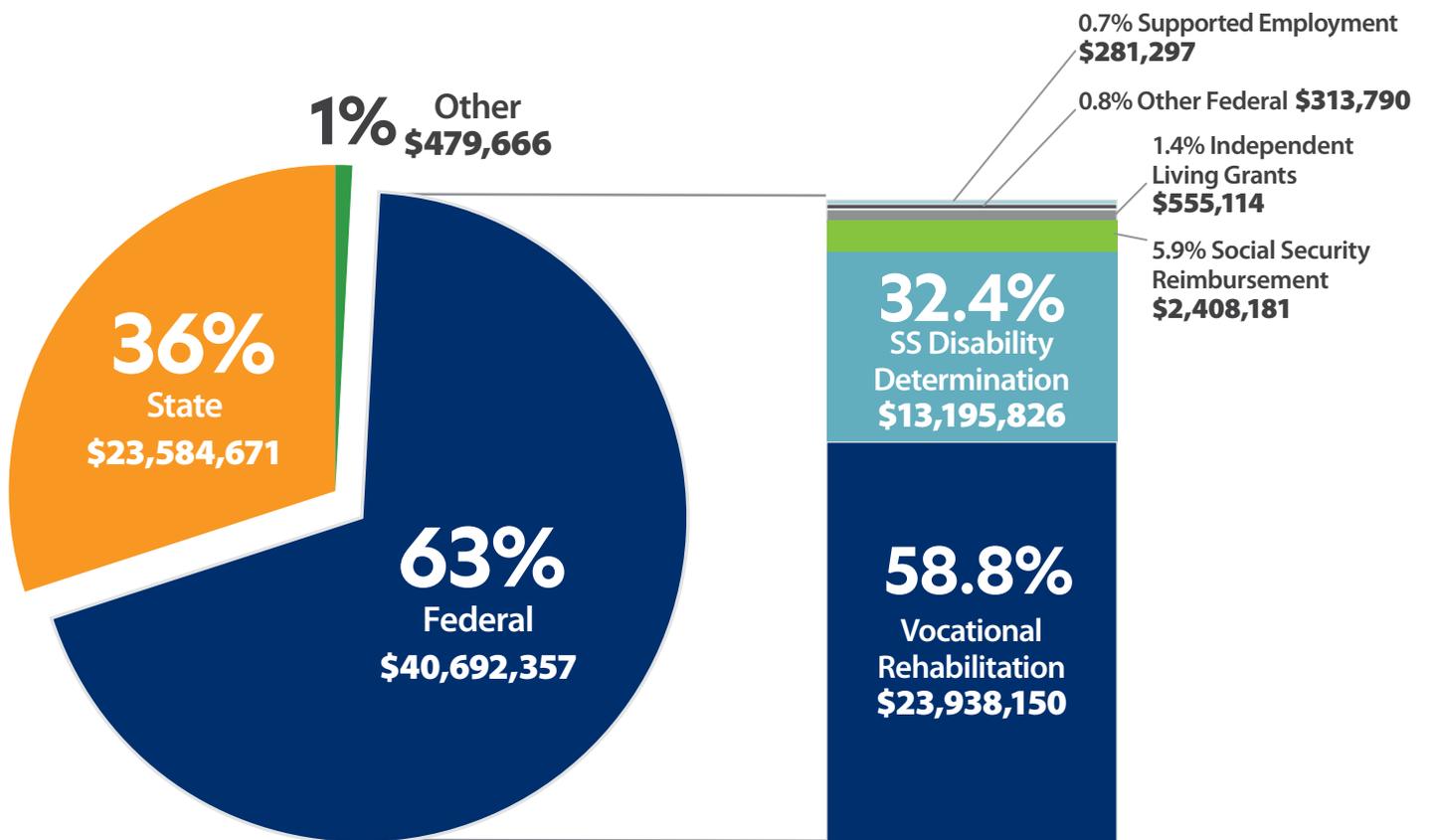


USOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION 2021 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **1,821** individuals with disabilities were successfully employed
- **16,114** individuals with disabilities received services
- **447** public assistance recipients successfully gained employment
- **373** Social Security Disability recipients successfully gained employment
- **237** individuals successfully gained employment through Supported Employment Services
- **42%** of individuals served were transition-age youth with disabilities
- **51%** of clients in educational training programs obtained a measurable skill gain
- **30** days on average to complete an eligibility determination for services
- **73** days on average to develop an individualized plan for employment
- **501** Benefits Summaries and Analysis were presented to social security recipients by the Utah Work Incentives Planning Services team
- **543** individual services were provided by the Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT)
- **407** employers accessed training, resources and hiring support from Business Relations



USOR SFY 2021 FUNDING



SUCCESS STORIES



Jesse McCamish



OCCUPATION:
Maintenance and Repair
Specialist (Handyman)

VR COUNSELORS:
Mallory McKnight, Northern Utah
District



VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Individualized plan for employment
- Disability treatment
- Community resources and service coordination
- Tools and equipment for self-employment

Jesse applied to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in the closing months of 2019. He was seeking help finding employment after a term of incarceration. Additionally, Jesse is a single father of three children and needed a new opportunity to increase his income and better provide for his family. From the beginning of his journey with Vocational Rehabilitation, his goal was to launch and operate his own handyman business.

Through support and guidance from VR, Jesse was able to stabilize his disability and connect to community resources to help support himself and his family. Next, with support from his VR Counselor, Mallory McKnight, and the Box Elder Small Business Development Center, Jesse started working on developing a self-employment plan.

After some trial and error, and additional exploration, Jesse developed a plan that laid the roadmap for success. With the help of VR, Jesse obtained the

necessary tools to start his handyman business. VR also helped Jesse acquire a trailer to haul his tools to the different job sites. Independently, Jesse found a general contractor that hires him for a variety of projects. Jesse has done framing, tile work, flooring, and has the ability to do just about whatever the contractor hires him to do.

Seven months later, Jesse's VR case was closed when he started to meet his income goals. Jesse's next step on his career journey is to get his general contractor's license. Jesse is well on his way to supporting his family and building a successful business thanks to the support that the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided.



Marsha Bird



OCCUPATION: Cashier

VR COUNSELORS:

Marjorie Gill, Ogden District



VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational Guidance and Counseling
- Disability Treatment
- Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- UWIPS Benefits Counseling
- Job Development and Placement
- On-The-Job Training
- Clothing and Transportation

When Marsha applied for VR assistance she had limited work experience and reported wanting to find employment outside of the fast food industry. Marsha also did not have disability treatment support which was greatly impacting her daily functioning and creating barriers to her employment goals. Through VR counseling and guidance, she was able to connect to a medical provider and began medication management, which stabilized her barriers.

In exploring employment interests, Marsha and her VR Counselor, Marjorie Gill, discussed her love for the Dollar Tree discount store and comfort level in this environment. She participated in a Work Strategy Assessment with Reliant Services and through liaison collaboration, her job coach, Judy Nye was able to create an on-the-job training experience. Marsha also received support from UWIPS benefits planner Farrah Edwards

to review wage and benefit information to help her make informed decisions about her employment goals.

Marsha was very anxious about reconnecting to employment after several years of not working and many attempts at VR. However, this time she was encouraged and supported by her VR counselor and job coach throughout the process. She received clothing and transportation support and began her on-the-job training experience with the Dollar Tree. At completion of the temporary work experience, she was hired permanently in December of 2020 and reports that it has always been her dream to support others in this way. Marsha is very friendly and enjoys interacting with others and she has been able to create a positive natural support system through her employment. She reports having a supportive employer, feeling proud of her accomplishments and having increased self-worth and value.



Carmen Torres



OCCUPATION:
Front Desk Receptionist

VR COUNSELOR NAME:

Consuelo Alires

Benefits Specialist: Kenna Arcury, UWIPS



VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational counseling/ guidance
- Individualized plan for employment
- Disability treatment
- Benefits counseling with UWIPS
- Job development and placement with Choose to Work
- Computer skills training
- Work Ability Internship

Carmen was referred to the UWIPS Program in October 2020 and began working with Kenna Arcury for benefits counseling. At that time Carmen was working in a production facility, which was physically challenging for her due to her disability. Kenna continually helped Carmen understand how earnings would impact her benefits, and assisted her in reporting her earnings to Social Security.

Carmen expressed concern about her ability to maintain work in this type of employment, and Kenna talked to her about different options for future employment. Kenna suggested that Carmen apply for Vocational Rehabilitation assistance. Carmen was able to work with a VR counselor, Consuelo Alires, to explore career options and obtain training to improve her computer skills.

Carmen was able to gain confidence and skills needed to take the next step towards success. Carmen worked with a Work Ability Internship at the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation. This internship opportunity for people with disabilities

helped Carmen develop her office and computer skills, while providing a pathway for state employment. During her internship, Carmen connected with a Choose to Work Employment Specialist, Cheryl Thomas, who coordinated with her counselor and benefits specialist to help Carmen apply for a permanent position with the Department of Workforce Services as a receptionist. Carmen's customer service skills and positive attitude greatly helped her obtain this job. Carmen shared her final thoughts on her internship experience:

"I only brought with me to this internship my customer service skills and production experience to learn the required office skills needed to help me find a better job. I had no idea I was going to learn so much! My desire for a better future, the help from everyone provided me with the right tools to find the right job... I managed to learn more than what I expected through all the support I received. I am excited for the great new job opportunity; and to be working at the DWS Opportunities like this are not available every day. I am so grateful and blessed to be part of it."

FY 2021-2022 MEETING SCHEDULE



LAST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

October 27, 2021 (canceled)

November 17, 2021 (3rd week)

December (No Meeting)

January 26, 2022

February 23, 2022

March 30, 2022

April 27, 2022

May 25, 2022

June 29, 2022

July (No Meeting)

August 31, 2022

September 28, 2022

Note: All times subject to change due to meeting in-person or on Zoom.

Meeting location:

Judy Ann Buffmire Rehabilitation Service Center Conference Room
1595 West 500 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84104

For more information:

801-887-9505 or 866-435-7414 (toll-free)

jobs.utah.gov/usor/src



**WORKFORCE
SERVICES**
REHABILITATION



usor.utah.gov

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation
A Division of the Department of Workforce Services
1595 West 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84104

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids (accommodations) and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling 801-526-9240. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impairments may call Relay Utah by dialing 711. Spanish Relay Utah: 1-888-346-3162.