

**SOUTH DAKOTA  
STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

**BOARD OF  
VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION  
  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF ACTIVITIES  
FOR FISCAL YEAR  
2014**

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

December 31, 2014

Governor Dennis Daugaard  
State Capitol Building  
500 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Governor Daugaard:

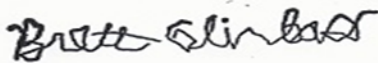
On behalf of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (South Dakota's State Rehabilitation Council), we are pleased to provide you with a copy of our annual report. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, specifies that a report be submitted to you and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on an annual basis.

The Board is a key partner with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) in the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program. The activities in this report reflect a wide range of services designed to assist individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment which has had a tremendous impact on the lives of South Dakotans with disabilities.

The activities identified on the following pages support your Employment Works Initiatives recommendations aimed at making significant advancements in employing people with disabilities. DRS provided services that helped 862 individuals with disabilities accomplish their employment goals in careers of their choice. In addition, 393 students with disabilities had a paid work experience prior to finishing high school.

The Board and Division will continue to work to provide services to citizens with disabilities seeking employment, and utilize the recommendations of the Employment Works Initiative as guiding principles in efforts to increase the employment rate for South Dakotans with disabilities.

Respectfully,



Brett Glirbas, Chairperson

Cc: Board Members  
Janet LaBreck, RSA Commissioner  
Chris Pope, RSA Liaison

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

December 31, 2014

RSA Commissioner Janet LaBreck  
Potomac Center Plaza  
550 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Commissioner LaBreck:

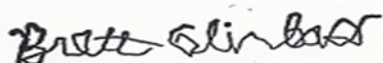
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The Board is a key partner with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) in the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program. The activities in this report reflect a wide range of services designed to assist individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment which has had a tremendous impact on the lives of South Dakotans with disabilities.

The Board continually evaluates the effectiveness of the DRS Vocational Rehabilitation Program, and is pleased to report that the DRS provided services that assisted 862 individuals with disabilities accomplish their employment goals in careers of their choice. In addition, 393 students with disabilities had a paid work experience prior to finishing high school.

The Board and Division will continue to work to provide services to citizens with disabilities seeking employment, and are committed to increasing the employment rate of South Dakotans with disabilities.

Respectfully,



Brett Glirbas, Chairperson

Cc: Board Members  
Chris Pope, RSA Liaison

# SOUTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **State Rehabilitation Council** is established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Act) and 34 CFR 361.16-361.17 of its implementing regulations.

The State Rehabilitation Council, known in South Dakota as the **Board of Vocational Rehabilitation** (BVR or Board), provides guidance to and works in partnership with the general vocational rehabilitation agency in South Dakota - **Division of Rehabilitation Services**.

The **Board of Vocational Rehabilitation** plays a significant role in ensuring that the vocational rehabilitation program operates effectively and remains responsive to the needs of those served.

The **Board of Vocational Rehabilitation** works in partnership with the **Division of Rehabilitation Services** to develop policies, plan activities, evaluate program effectiveness and carry out other functions related to the vocational rehabilitation program.

The working relationship between the **Board of Vocational Rehabilitation** and the **Division of Rehabilitation Services** is a partnership focused on ensuring that individuals with disabilities receive appropriate, timely, and effective vocational rehabilitation services leading to successful employment for those receiving services.

State of South Dakota		Dennis Daugaard, Governor
Department of Human Services		Gloria Pearson, Secretary
Division of Rehabilitation Services		Eric Weiss, Director
Board of Vocational Rehabilitation		Brett Glirbas, Chairperson

# BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MEMBERSHIP

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The State Rehabilitation Council - Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (Board) - is appointed by the Governor to assist the Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) to develop and evaluate vocational rehabilitation services for South Dakotans with disabilities.

The Board's fifteen members are a cross-section of South Dakotans who have a stake in vocational rehabilitation services. They are selected based on personal qualifications and the composition needs of the Board. Members serve three year terms.

The Board works jointly with the Division to annually develop and review vocational rehabilitation goals and priorities. In addition, the Board contributes to the study of consumer satisfaction and customer service needs.

Brett Glirbas  
Sioux Falls  
Chairperson

Patty Kuglitsch  
Sioux Falls  
Vice Chairperson

Darla McGuire  
Ethan  
Member-At-Large

Melissa Flor  
Pierre

Colleen Moran  
Hartford

Jolleen Laverdure  
Lower Brule

Chad Maxon  
Rapid City

Carol Kirchgesler  
Aberdeen

Tim Neyhart  
Pierre

Leo Hallan  
Yankton

Eric Weiss  
Pierre

Matt Cain  
Sioux Falls

Lisa Sanderson  
Sioux Falls

Kim Hoberg  
Aberdeen

Kendra Gottsleben  
Sioux Falls

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Staff:  
Faith Korkow  
Colette Wagoner

# ABOUT THE BOARD

## Meetings

All regular and special meetings are announced in advance, open and accessible to the public. The Board also holds public hearings and forums as they deem necessary. All meetings are called by the Chairperson, in cooperation with Division and Board staff, as stipulated in the bylaws.

## Committees

Three standing committees assist the Board in completing its work. Conference calls, video conferencing, email and face-to-face meetings are utilized to conduct business. Their work is reported out at each quarterly Board meeting for consideration and action. Following is a brief description of the three standing committees.

Executive Committee: This committee may act on behalf of the Board to perform necessary business matters between regular meetings, provided their actions receive concurrence of the full Board. They bring recommendations to the full Board on a variety of activities, e.g., annual report, state plan, staff support agreement, meeting agendas.

Consumer Services Committee: This committee works on activities related to the consumer satisfaction survey, Division goals and strategies, systems change priorities, policy recommendations, and public meeting topics.

Public Awareness Committee: This committee coordinates the National Disability Employment Awareness Month activities and the annual Governor's Awards ceremony.

## Meetings

December 5-6,  
2013  
Oacoma

April 30,  
2014  
Dakota Digital  
Network

June 24-25,  
2014  
Pierre

September 11-12,  
2014  
Pierre

# BOARD ACTIVITIES

## **State Plan / Public Meetings / Public Input**

The State Plan is a critical document. It describes how the Division of Rehabilitation Services will provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals with disabilities. Each year, the State Plan is updated and submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) for review and approval, and the receipt of federal funding is dependent upon its approval.

The State Plan sets the course of how to best serve South Dakotans with disabilities in achieving their employment goals through the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The State Plan is a “plan in progress,” evaluated on an ongoing basis, and it outlines how the agency will serve individuals with disabilities. Together, the Board and the Division develop and review vocational rehabilitation goals and priorities on an annual basis.

This process includes gathering, reviewing and analyzing a variety of information from various sources, e.g., meetings with consumers and family members; dialogue with other boards, councils and associations; and activities with employers and human resource managers. When possible, Board meetings are scheduled to coincide with other groups in an effort to provide an opportunity to learn from one another and identify ways to enhance collaboration. This and other information is considered when reviewing and updating the Division’s State Plan, along with data and performance indicators based upon consumers served throughout the year.

For several years, chairpersons of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Statewide Independent Living Council have met periodically to identify ways they might collaborate to best meet the vocational rehabilitation and independent living needs of South Dakotans with disabilities. Each includes reports from the other groups as standing agenda items at their regular meetings. They also do a joint solicitation for nominations for board/council vacancies, a joint review committee for the Governor’s Awards and National Disability Employment Awareness Month activities.

## BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED...

*As a part of the Board's commitment to hear from consumers and stakeholders statewide, Board meetings are moved around the state. Participants are invited to provide input through the 'public comment' period of each meeting, or during additional time set aside to meet with a specific group. These times provide the Board with the opportunity to hear about what is working well, what could be improved, and brainstorm ideas of how individuals with disabilities across the state can be better served through vocational rehabilitation services.*

### **December 2013 Meeting**

A joint meeting was held for the Boards of Vocational Rehabilitation and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired in December 2013. This meeting began with a new member orientation. The orientation included: History of the Rehabilitation Act, Vocational Principles and Policies, and the Role of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The orientation also included review of the organizational structure of Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Human Services, Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Developmental Disabilities and SD Developmental Center; and the working relationship between the Divisions, other state agencies and other organizations. The Executive Director of South Dakota Advocacy Services (South Dakota's protection and advocacy organization) provided an overview of the organization's history, component programs, mission, and services including the Client Assistance Program.

The joint meeting agenda included topics on collaboration and partnership, as well as time for introductions, which included where they were from, what board they serve on, in what capacity they serve, and what caused them to want to serve on their respective board. Division staff, Board staff, and the Department of Human Services Secretary introduced themselves as well.



# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **Office of Special Education Report**

Board members received an overview of the Office of Special Education Program's Indicator 14 survey results. Indicator 14 requires states to report the percentage of youth who are no longer in secondary school, who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were 1) enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school; 2) enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school; or 3) enrolled in higher education or some other post-secondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

The "2012 South Dakota Statewide School District Post High School Outcomes Survey Report of 2010-2011 Exiters with Disabilities" was also highlighted. Survey results were organized around adult living, participation in higher education, other post secondary education or training, and competitive employment and other employment. Trend data for South Dakota shows that 75-80% of students fall in one of the three categories noted above. The data also reflects that students participating in Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave, Project Skills, or self-advocacy training, are more likely to attend post-secondary education or to be employed.

## **Governor's Task Force "Employment Works"**

The boards were apprised of Governor Dennis Daugaard's Employment Works Initiative, which was announced in the spring of 2013 along with the creation of a task force in July 2013. The Task Force was led by the Department of Human Services to solicit suggestions for increasing the employment of South Dakotans with disabilities. It brought private and public sectors together, with representation of people with disabilities, family members, business community, state government, legislators, service providers and nonprofit stakeholders. Five priorities were identified: 1) find and support businesses to employ people with disabilities; 2) connect businesses to employees with disabilities; 3) eliminate disincentives to employment for people with disabilities; 4) develop flexible systems and promote promising practices; and 5) educate the public, providers, employers, and people with disabilities. At the time of this meeting, related goals and strategies were being developed.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment**

The two Boards and Divisions - Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and Rehabilitation Services - receive assistance from the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Region 8 and Robert Jahner to conduct the South Dakota Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA).

Mr. Jahner briefed members about the process and product, including the “What and Why” of a CSNA. The CSNA is a foundation of both divisions, and conducting the assessment and analyzing the results will lead to changes in the State Plans by extending, modifying and/or adding new goals. An executive team comprised of the two Division Directors, Division staff and the two board chairpersons determine the scope of the assessment. The information gathered will attempt to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs of people with disabilities in the state. After the information has been compiled, Robert will work with both divisions, staff and board committees to develop goals, objectives and strategies to be included in the revised State Plan.

## **State Workforce Development Council**

Bill Molseed, Department of Labor and Regulation Staff and Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired member, provided this overview. He explained there are Workforce Investment Boards in various communities across the state, but only one State Workforce Development Council (Council). The Council oversees the implementation of the workforce training programs in South Dakota funded by Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Council is representative of business, labor, and education interests in the state, and its primary duties are to advise the Governor on workforce issues and to ensure employment related services are made available to all South Dakotans. He addressed the Disability Employment Initiative grant working with youth with disabilities. Over three years the percentage of youth supported through this grant participating in work incentive programs increased from 2% to 15%.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

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## **American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Programs**

Lyle Cook, Program Director of Oun'iyekiyapi Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe), provided an overview of the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. He highlighted differences between state agencies and tribal programs, e.g., competing for funding every five years; limited funding; each Tribal program defines their service boundary for eligibility requirements along with other areas that impact services including culture, language and tribal work environment. Lyle explained that each program recognizes "Opiciya" - Traditional Way of Life including: belief/spirituality; humility; wisdom; generosity; fortitude; bravery; and care and compassion. Okolakiciye Owasocunpi is the tribal work environment, which recognizes the spoken language (Lakota, Dakota and Nakota), traditional ceremonies and tribal supports. The four South Dakota programs were identified as well as contact information for each.

## **Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Update**

The Board is expected to coordinate activities with other councils, including the Statewide Independent Living Council. Over the years, the Board has included a SILC update as a standing agenda item. During this meeting, it was explained that the SILC was taking on a different focus, as it was in the process of updating its State Plan goals and objectives. New committees were formed and working on different areas to include: consumer services, housing, public awareness and assistive technology. The three Centers for Independent Living in South Dakota were noted as well as the territory each serves.

## **Review and Action on Strategic Planning Funding Applications**

The Board makes funds available to assist organizations to: promote vocational rehabilitation opportunities for individuals with disabilities; assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment; and to develop and implement innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Applications reviewed and approved during this meeting were Governor's Awards; renewal of the Board's Coalition membership; and support of the Dare to Dream and Lighting the Way Conferences.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

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## **Survey of Parents of Children with Hearing Loss**

At the request of the Governor's Office, a survey was conducted to assess the needs of children with hearing loss. The survey was developed in March of 2012 and conducted that summer. It was a collaborative effort between the Board of Regents, SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, SD School for the Deaf and the Department of Human Services (DHS). During the Director's report, Eric Weiss shared that DHS was reviewing the results and determining how to best affect change in the area of providing services to children with hearing loss. It was noted that the other entities involved in the survey were also acting upon the survey findings and recommendations.

## **Federal Fiscal Year 2013 Year End Report**

Every year at this time the Board receives an update/overview of year-end data. This includes client data, closed cases and client appeals. Other information shared included number of SSA recipients served by the state of South Dakota compared to national averages, employment outcomes and the use of VR funds. The year-end data provides a broader picture of the vocational rehabilitation delivery system. Members learned about additional items, e.g., source of referrals, largest age group served, primary impairment of eligible individuals, trends in successful closures, closed cases, benefit specialist services, education level of individuals who were successful closures.

## **National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)**

The Board had conversation regarding its expectations of these events, prior to disseminating the Request for Proposals to conduct the 2014 NDEAM activities. Conversation points included: events should emphasize employment issues; there is a greater need for employer involvement; greater efforts targeted to obtain the involvement of smaller employers; and better marketing to employers, businesses and HR managers. It was also determined that following the conclusion of the events, a meeting should be held to hear from the community planners directly. This will be an opportunity for all involved to hear about one another's events, what is needed, who was involved; and what worked well in each community.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

**April 2014 Meeting**  
**(Due to blizzard, rescheduled from 3/31/2014 - 4/1/2014)**

## **Strategic Planning Funding Applications/Awards**

The Board reviewed funding recommendations made by the Executive Committee. They included Independent Living Choices (ILC) seeking funds to expand summer transition classes to different communities; financial support of the 2014 NDEAM events; and a request from the Division and Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired to co-host an event in Mission in April - a public listening session or disability summit - with the Statewide Independent Living Council. All these requests were approved by the full Board.

## **Division Director's Report**

Items within this standing agenda item at each meeting fluctuate depending upon the time of year. They have included: budget update, State Plan submission, status of Board appointments, training initiatives and legislative items. This past legislative session, the Governor's Office introduced a bill to update language regarding current and developing technology after hearing from individuals from the deaf community. The original bill was crafted in 1989 to provide Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS) and devices for those with hearing and speech impairments. During the 2014 Legislative Session, HB1166 was amended, passed and signed by the Governor, impacting the Telecommunications Assistive Devices and Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Programs as well as creating a Hearing Aid Assistance Program for children under the age of 19. Several board members were invited to participate on the workgroup involved with drafting administrative rule changes resulting from this legislation.

An update was provided on the Employment Works Initiative. One result is the creation of a business specialist position within the Division of Rehabilitation Services. This position will provide support and technical assistance to employers across the state. Another result has been the Division disseminating a Request for Proposal, for a business led organization to provide technical assistance to employers.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **State Plan Submission**

March is typically when the Division presents required annual updates to the State Plan. Board members received draft copies of these items to review and provide comments. In addition, the Consumer Services Committee met March 17 and reviewed the attachments requiring updates. At the full board meeting, the committee reported their edits and recommendations. Members were provided an opportunity to provide further input. The documents were also posted on the Division's website for public comment.

## **Disability Summit in Eagle Butte**

It was shared under the SILC Report that the Statewide Independent Living Council and two divisions were hosting a Disability Summit in May, 2014. The Board was invited to participate in this gathering. The Board realized the importance of having connections to various programs and people to host a successful event, and they approved participation and financial support for transportation and meeting room costs. Transportation was offered through Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Transit.

## **Labor Market Information Center**

The Division received communication from the Labor Market Information Center, which provides an annual economic analysis report. A more comprehensive report was going to be conducted, and they were seeking feedback from Board members. The Division was asked to complete a survey asking for feedback on what type of information the Department/Division would be seeking. A member inquired about entry data, wages and longevity and if this would be gathered. The Division Director asked fellow Board members to forward ideas to him, he will pass them along.

## **Governor's SD WINS Cabinet hosting Workforce Summit Meetings**

The Division Director's Report included an overview of the Workforce Summit Meetings. They will be held in six communities across the state during April, May and June. The summits will provide an opportunity to learn about SD WINS programs, analyze recent workforce demographics and trends, and discuss strategies for the future. Local business, community and education leaders are being targeted to attend as well as other members of the public.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

It was shared that a DDN meeting held in January had nine community sites and 52 attendees representing various groups, e.g., Divisions of Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Developmental Disabilities; Centers for Independent Living; Community Support Providers; Mental Health Centers; Goodwill Industries; SD Advocacy Services; Family Support 360; SHRM representatives; private providers; and employers.

The Boards and Statewide Independent Living Council have been providing financial support to these events since 1997. Time was utilized to hear from each community about what has been tried, what has/hasn't worked, who has been involved and recommendations for future events. Community representatives spoke to things learned over the years and made a number of suggestions. This meeting provided participants with an opportunity to hear from one another and to pose questions. Attendees heard that each community is unique and has individualized strengths, knowledge and experience to share with others.

## **Promise Grant**

South Dakota is part of a consortium of six states to receive a federal initiative "Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income" (PROMISE) grant to design and implement interventions for youth, ages 14-16, who receive SSI and their families. The goal is to identify interventions to impact youth's education and employment, and reduce a household's dependence on public benefits. SD's Promise Grant is named ASPIRE - Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment.

Some of South Dakota's goals and objectives under the Promise Grant are: enrolling 120 youth and families in the project by September 2015; developing and implementing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Departments of Human Services and Social Services in support of project activities; developing a variety of training materials. The Board will receive regular updates on the ASPIRE Project status and outcomes.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## June 2014 Meeting

### Changing Consumer Needs

Carmen Thies, VR staff from Huron, was introduced to the Board. She explained that a quarter of her caseload involves diverse minorities, and a majority of the individuals are Karen refugees. These individuals are indigenous to the Thailand/Burma regions of Southeast Asia. Huron is one location where a large number of Karen refugees have re-settled along with people with other nationalities. Huron is the second most diverse town in South Dakota, Sioux Falls being the first.

It was explained that Lutheran Social Services is the primary support system for these refugees. Cultural differences were presented which make it very difficult in working with and finding employment for the Karen people, e.g., not knowing their birth date, no social security number, little knowledge of banking, limited concept of time, which day to go to work, and taking medications. A large number of refugees are working in the turkey plant outside of Huron or beef jerky plant in Alpena.

Their culture's view of disability was also discussed, indicating that Karen people don't focus on the disability. The majority of Karen individuals VR is working with are individuals with physical disabilities. The importance of all providers working together was highlighted in an already language challenged environment.

### Employment Works Initiative

The Division created a business specialist position and has conducted the first round of interviews as they seek the most qualified person to fill this position. The State of South Dakota desires to be a model employer of people with disabilities, and discussions involving the Departments of Human Services, Labor and Regulation and Bureau of Human Resources are ongoing on how to influence the hiring of individuals with disabilities. Under the recommendation of developing flexible systems and promoting promising practices, the Division is embarking on adapting "Person Centered Thinking" training for vocational rehabilitation staff. The Division has also issued a RFP seeking a professional marketing group to develop a strategy to reflect the availability of the untapped workforce of individuals with disabilities to address workforce shortages.



# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Update**

During the SILC update, the member who is the SILC representative shared that he will term off the SILC and is resigning his position on the Board. He shared that he had spoken to the other Tribal VR program directors to determine their interest and capacity to serve on these federally mandated boards/councils. Following this meeting, he will forward letters to the Governor's office with names of individuals and the programs they serve for consideration and appointment to his position on both entities.

## **State and Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Collaborations**

The Division held a meeting in April that brought together staff of the state vocational rehabilitation programs and the four tribal VR programs. Dialogue included independent living services on the reservations, case services and processes, assistive technology, and promotion of disability awareness events. Since the meeting there have been follow-up conference calls and other meetings. A member of the Board, who is also the Cheyenne River Tribal VR Program Director, shared that this was a big step for all programs involved, and he stressed the importance of coming together and working together.

Another meeting will be held later in the year in Rapid City. The Board is planning to host their December quarterly meeting in conjunction with this meeting. Time will be spent becoming better acquainted and having dialogue on transition services for Native American youth with disabilities living off and on the reservations.

## **State Plan Submission**

Division staff updated members on the status of State Plan document and related attachments. Since the last Board meeting, the Consumer Services Committee met again on May 8th for further review of the items, which were re-drafted and finalized based upon the completion of the Statewide Needs Assessment. The State Plan will be submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration for review and approval at the end of June.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **Election of Officers**

The election of officers was held during the June meeting. Election results filled the offices of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Member-At-Large. In addition, the Board bid farewell to five members, four members were terming off, and one member was resigning. Members were encouraged to think of others who would be interested in serving on this Board, with the opportunity to influence change within the vocational rehabilitation service delivery system.

## **September 2014 Meeting**

### **New Applicant Training Modules/Summer Youth Transition Program**

Board members learned of these new resources created and utilized by VR staff. Applicant training modules include: What to Expect from VR; Overview of VR; Eligibility Determination Process; and the Consumer's Role in the VR Process. Person Centered Thinking tools created for individuals eligible for VR services include: developing self-awareness, likes/dislikes, identifying goals, relationships, and health/safety. Community specific resources developed to assist with other issues include information on food pantry, churches, addiction/mental health, taxes, housing.

Information was also shared about the summer group experience created for transition age youth. These experiences include an outline of vocational rehabilitation services and the VR process, touches on interview skills, preparing for post secondary education and explores summer work options.

### **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

Division staff provided an update on the signing of WIOA into law, which replaces the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Information was shared that outlined the details of final bill and the areas impacted. Regulations will need to be finalized and as they are, the Board will be involved as work is done to revise and develop policies and procedures needed as a result of this reauthorization.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## **Activities of Daily Living Services (ADLS) Program**

Board members requested information on the ADLS Program, as they seek to learn more about Medicaid Waivers that provide services to individuals with quadriplegia so they can remain in their own home, or return home from a nursing home or hospital. Members heard about changes made a few years ago to the program to better serve individuals who were employed, and allowing family members to be paid to provide attendant services. Discussion included possible ways to improve the program: 1) raising attendant pay; 2) recruit student nurses as attendants and develop a mechanism to utilize hours to fulfill clinical hour requirements; and 3) revisit the waiver design and see if it is still what individuals requesting services seek in terms of the level of self-direction.

## **Training Initiatives and Fall Conference**

The Division reported that it contracted with a trainer to provide motivational interview training to staff to improve and further develop counselor's skills. It was noted that the Department, as an overall agency, is utilizing Person Centered Thinking (PCT), and the Division is also contracting with a trainer to develop PCT tools specific to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. Several VR staff have been identified to become PCT coaches to continue training efforts.

The Fall Conference is a collaborative effort involving a variety of agencies providing presentations in the areas of vocational rehabilitation services, community employment and transition services for youth with disabilities. The theme "Putting the Pieces Together" included the topics of: surviving transitions; engagement and collaboration; employer negotiations; employer first/building a culture that expects success; developing on the job success; and ethics. This is one of many conferences that the Board encourages its members to attend, to learn about what is happening statewide and to hear about the needs of individuals with disabilities.

## **Miscellaneous Items**

### **Appointments**

Annually, the Board consults with the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and Statewide Independent Living Council about the need to solicit nominations statewide for their respective board/council. Nominations were sought for vacancies during March/April, forwarded to the Governor for his consideration and action, and the Governor made appointments and/or reappointments to the Boards of Vocational Rehabilitation and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Statewide Independent Living Council in July.

# BOARD ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## Miscellaneous Items - Continued:

### **Employment Initiatives**

The Board and Division realize the importance of linkages with the business community and employers. Different projects and reports were provided at meetings to keep members informed. Initiatives reported on included: Project Skills, Employer Resource Network, Project SEARCH, and Business Resource Network. These types of initiatives have expanded over the past year to include updates on the Employment Works Initiative and related activities, e.g., Business Specialist; Talent Acquisition Portal; Project Skills and employment opportunities within state government; increasing number of benefit specialists; and marketing initiative. The Board acknowledges that work in this area needs to continue to address employer needs, labor force issues and training needs - all which have an impact on improving employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

### **Governor's Awards Ceremony**

The Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Statewide Independent Living Council and Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as the Department of Human Services, hosted the Governor's Awards ceremony. This annual event recognizes the efforts of individuals, employers, and organizations for their contributions to the employment of persons with disabilities in South Dakota. The event was held at the Capitol Rotunda on October 20th, and Governor Daugaard presented 6 awards to recipients from across the state.

### **Board Staff Support**

The Division of Rehabilitation Services, through an agreement with the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, provides staff support to the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council. This is a vendor agreement for the procurement of goods and services, effective June 2014 through May 2015. Staff activities are directed by the Chairs of the Board and SILC, and staff provided reports of their activities at their respective meetings as requested.

# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

**The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program is a comprehensive program designed to assist individuals with significant disabilities in making career decisions and reaching their employment goals.**

## Who We Serve

- The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program served 4,790 South Dakotans with disabilities.
- There were 2,037 new applicants this last year.
- The average age of the applicant was 35.6 years of age.
- 38% of eligible VR participants had two or more serious functional limitations.
- 36% of Vocational Rehabilitation's participants were transition age (16 to 24 years of age at application).
- 31% of Vocational Rehabilitation's participants reported a serious mental illness as their primary disability.
- 39% of VR participants received either Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

## Vocational Rehabilitation's Outcomes

- 862 Vocational Rehabilitation participants obtained employment.
- Of those obtaining employment, 244 (28.3%) utilized formal supports with an average wage of \$8.45/hr.
- The average hourly wage of individuals employed was \$10.02 after receiving vocational rehabilitation services.
- Upon completion of the VR program, participants will be working an average of 28.3 hours per week.
- Participants successful with their employment will generate \$12,695,122 combined annual earnings.

## Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance



### Lee

Lee grew up on the family farm. And growing up on the farm is where he learned about farming and how to fix old things. This is where he discovered that he liked to work with his hands!

Lee attended Florence High School and was on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) because of ADHD and learning disabilities. The IEP also addressed areas of self direction, interpersonal skills and communication.

Growing up on the farm, Lee's interests fell in the areas of electrical work, mechanics and truck driving. Lee participated in the Project Skills program working at Hurkes Implement in Watertown during high school, which provided him with a variety of work experiences.

Lee met with vocational rehabilitation services in high school which assisted him with the Project Skills opportunity. Through guidance and counseling he decided that he wanted to attend Mitchell Technical Institute (MTI). Vocational Rehabilitation Services assisted with tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and assistive technology. Lee worked with DakotaLink staff to determine what assistive technology would be appropriate for him. He utilized a digital recorder, learned how to utilize Dragon Naturally Speaking and Math Advantage.

He obtained an associate's degree in Small Engine Repair from MTI. Following this, he attended Lake Area Technical Institute and took a class to assist him in obtaining a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

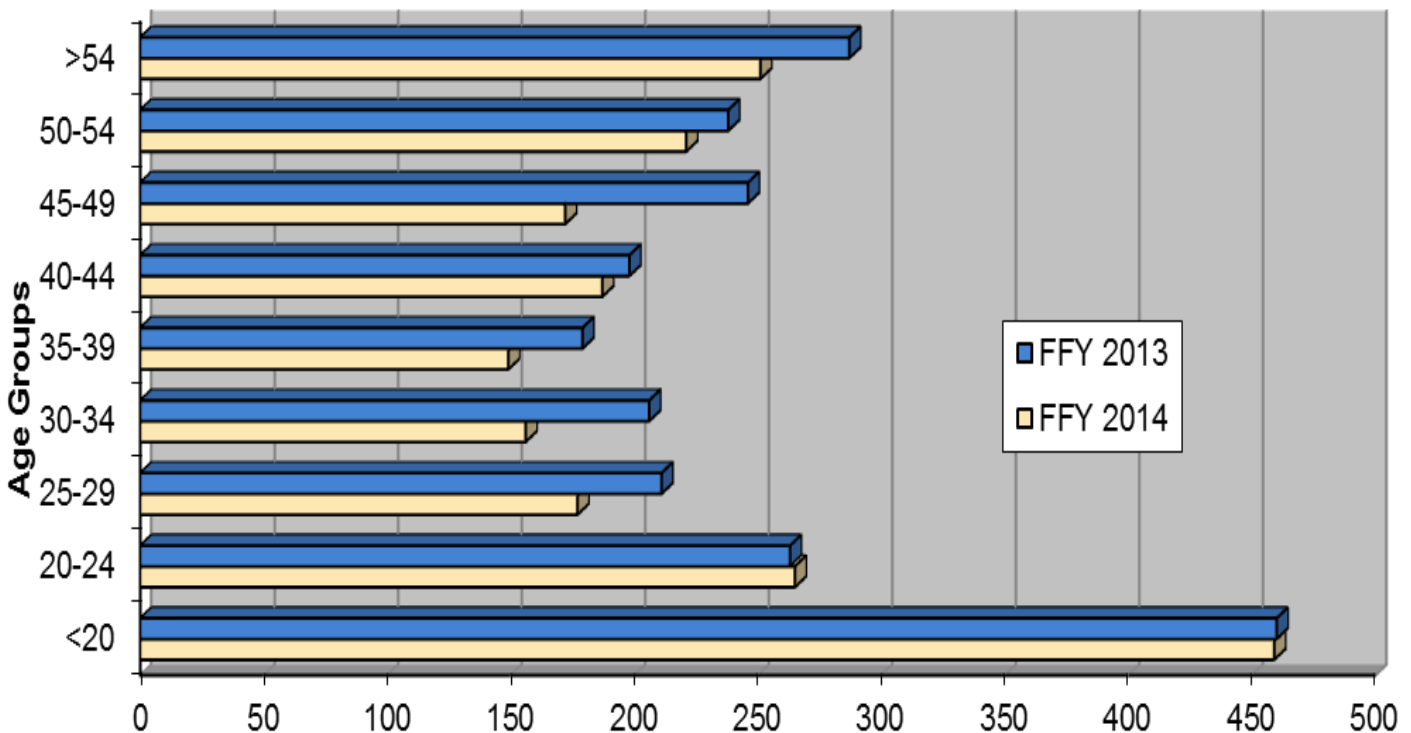
Lee is a full time employee with Dependable Sanitation and works 40+ hours a week. He also receives a full health insurance package. At the young age of 23, Lee is working full time and earning benefits.

# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

The Division had a total of 2,037 individuals apply for vocational rehabilitation services in fiscal year 2014. The following chart depicts the number of applicants served per age group.

## Number of Applicants Per Age Group

Federal Fiscal Year 2014 - October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014

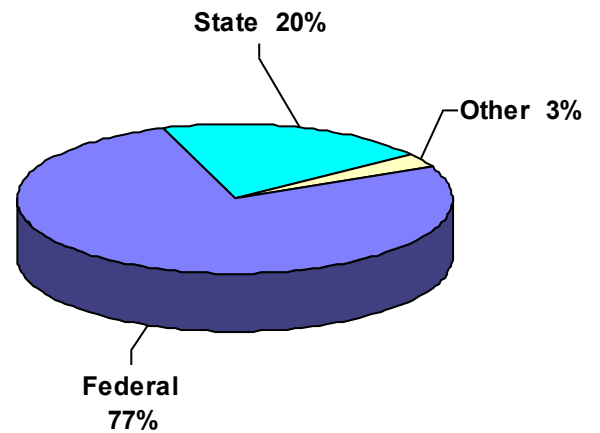


# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

## Vocational Rehabilitation Services Serving a Diverse Population

Caucasian	78%
American Indian	15%
African American	3%
Hispanic or Latino	3%
Asian	1%
Pacific/Hawaiian	<1%

## Vocational Rehabilitation Funding Sources in 2014



In fiscal year 2014, the average annual income of consumers rehabilitated was \$14,727.52.

Prior to rehabilitation, the average income was \$2,535.27.

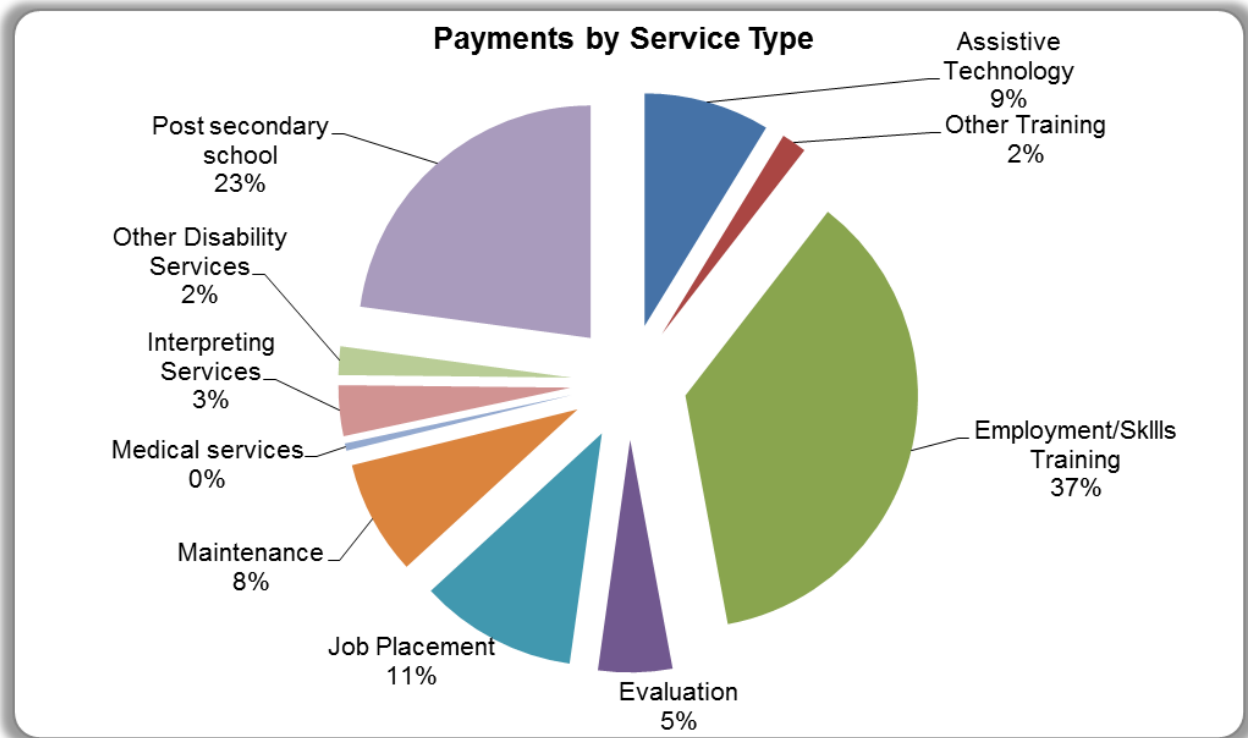
## Vocational Rehabilitation Participants Receiving SSI/SSDI at Application

SSI	SSDI	SSI & SSDI	Total	Percent of Total VR Applicants
259	319	116	694	34%



# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

## Vocational Rehabilitation Expenditures

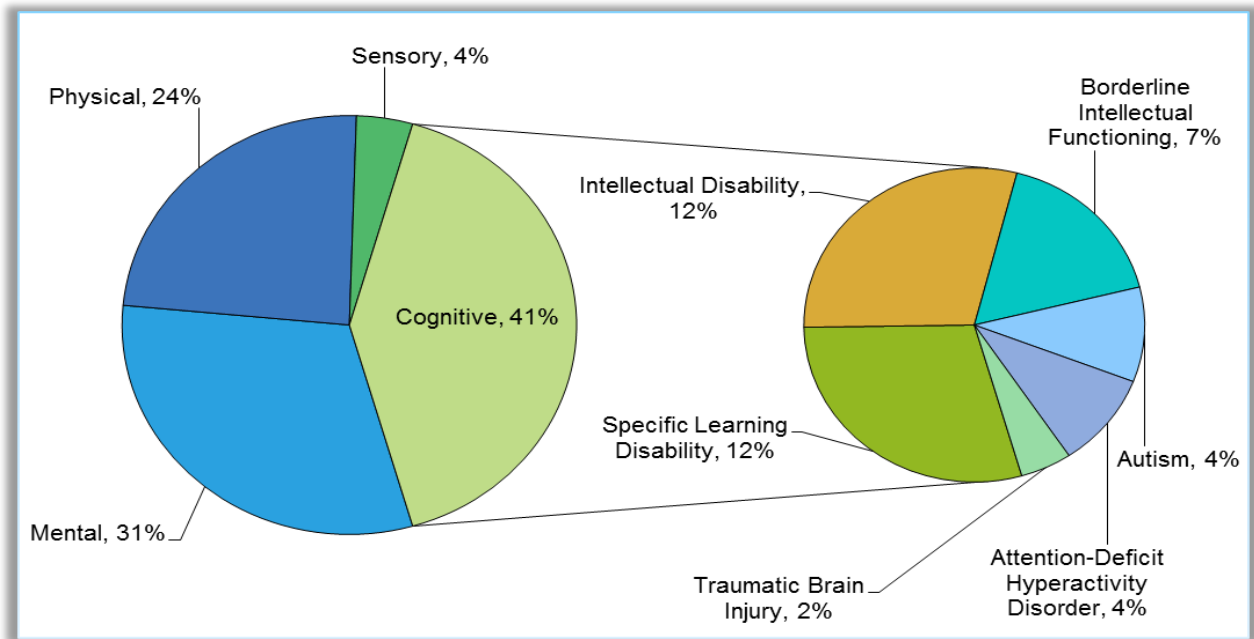


## Fiscal Year 2014 Performance Outcomes

Performance Description	At Application	At Closure	Percent of Improvement
Increase in individuals obtaining medical insurance through employment	33	132	300%
Increase in individuals where wages are primary source of support	100	643	543%
Increase of weekly wages	\$48.76	\$283.22	481%

# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

## Primary Impairment for Eligible Consumers



## Referral Sources of Applicants

Referral Source	Percentage
Self	24%
Post & Secondary Education	19%
Mental Health Center	13%
Other	13%
Friends/Family	9%
Department of Labor	9%
Community Rehabilitation Programs	6%
Medical Agencies	3%
Intellectual & Developmental Disability Providers	2%
SSA	1%
Welfare	1%
Corrections	1%
Centers for Independent Living	<1%

## Project Skills

Many students with significant disabilities do not have an opportunity to gain paid employment experience while in high school. This is an important learning, maturing and socializing experience. Although willing, most employers cannot afford the supports these students frequently require on their first job.

The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) fund a program entitled "Project Skills" to address this need.

Project Skills is a cooperative arrangement between VR Agencies and local school systems. The State VR Agencies fund the wages, worker's compensation and FICA while the schools provide job development, job coaching and follow-along services for the student at the job site. A total of 393 students participated in the program this past year.

# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

## Jarid

Jarid grew up helping his uncle on the farm. He had no work history through the middle school years, however that all changed when he reached high school.

Jarid has ADHD and pervasive development disorder which impacts his interpersonal skills and interactions in social situations.

Jarid's functional limitations were also impacted in the areas of time management and organizational skills. Jarid participated in Project Skills in high school and while in the program, he worked at Hometown Tire where he changed and rotated tires, changed oil, and completed detailing work.

Next was Project SEARCH, a business led transition program for students with disabilities. The program provides students who want to work a chance to develop transferrable job skills with the goal of working in a competitive environment. Individualized job development and placement occurs based on the student's experiences, strengths and skills. Students receive supports with accommodations, adaptations and on-the-job training. Jarid had three job rotations through Project SEARCH including dining room attendant, deep cleaning crew member, and dishwasher.

Jarid received vocational counseling and guidance, job coaching, employment/follow along services, and job placement services through the Division of Rehabilitation Services. These services were coordinated through Career Advantage, a community support provider in Brookings.

Jarid enjoys activities which allow him to be physical and move around, which successfully landed him a position working at Aramark Dining Services. Some of his duties include deep cleaning of equipment, janitorial cleaning and occasional food preparation. He works over 25 hours a week and earns \$9.00 an hour. Jarid lives independently in an apartment with minimal supports and enjoys spending time outdoors, going for walks, meeting with friends, or just having friendly conversation. Jarid also enjoys spending time with family that live close by.



# Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance

## Other Services

In addition to vocational rehabilitation services, consumers receive other types of assistance. The following reflects a broad array of entities that the Division works with to fulfill the consumer's employment goals.

Programs	Number of Clients
Social Services	316
Mental Health Centers	274
Supported Employment	243
Department of Labor	236
Drug/Alcohol Treatment	76
Probation/Parole	60
Honorably Discharged Veterans	41
Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Section 304	27
Work Force Investment Act	14
Other VR Agencies	12
Independent Living Center	8
Projects with Industry	1

## Public Input...

Ways to let the Board and Division know your thoughts.

You can call:

- Voice/TTY: 605.945.2207
- Toll Free: 800.210.0143

You can fax:

- 605.945.2242

You can write:

- Chairperson, Board of Vocational Rehabilitation;  
221 S Central Ave., Ste 34A,  
Pierre, South Dakota, 57501

You can attend a meeting:

All Board meetings are open to the public. Copies of the meeting agendas can be obtained by calling:

- 605.945.2207 (Voice or TTY)
- 800.210.0143

You can become a member:

If you are interested in becoming a member of the State Rehabilitation Council, an application can be obtained by calling:

- 605.945.2207 (Voice or TTY)