

2013 annual report



Arizona Governor's State Rehabilitation Council

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Annual Report 2013

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Mission

and Responsibilities of the Council

*The Governor's State
Rehabilitation Council mission
encompasses the Council's
vision, operating principles,
and goals.*

Mission

Serving all citizens of Arizona, the mission of the Arizona Governors State Rehabilitation Council is to advise, evaluate and partner with the public vocational rehabilitation program in support of improving access to employment and promoting a diverse workforce statewide.

Vision

The Arizona Governor's State Rehabilitation Council envisions a statewide workforce that values disability and diversity, and is committed to full participation of its citizens.

Operating Principles

- Serve as an ally to the public vocational rehabilitation program in structuring and conducting business in ways that reflect the social, political, historical and economic experiences of disability.
- Collaborate with state and other non-government agencies to promote meaningful and sustainable employment for everyone.
- Foster a broad definition of diversity that honors and appreciates disability alongside race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religion as an integral part of human experience.
- Promote disability discourse, awareness and involvement; honor disability culture and pride.

Goals

- Advise the Vocational Rehabilitation Program in the development, implementation, evaluation and review of innovative rehabilitation services and programs.

- Support the development of public policy that improves opportunity for full participation for all citizens in the economic life of Arizona.
- Engage business and industry statewide in the creation of inclusive environments guided by the principles of universal design.
- Increase access and employment opportunities for people with disabilities through collaboration with outside agencies, councils and community partners.
- Strengthen the Vocational Rehabilitation Program through collaboration on the development of human resource infrastructure.

The Governor's State Rehabilitation Council functions, as defined in the Title I, Part A, Section 105 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, are as follows:

Review, analyze and advise the Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) regarding the performance of its responsibilities, particularly those related to eligibility (including order of selection); the extent and scope and effectiveness of services provided; and the functions performed by State agencies that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.

Partner with RSA to develop, review and agree to State goals and priorities in accordance with the VR State Plan. The Council and RSA evaluate the effectiveness of the VR program and submit reports of progress to the RSA Commissioner.

Advise RSA on activities authorized to be carried out under the Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan. Assist in the preparation of the VR State Plan, and Amendments to the plan, applications, reports, Needs Assessments, and evaluations.

Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of Vocational Rehabilitation services and consumer satisfaction regarding functions performed, VR services provided, and employment outcomes achieved.

Prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Governor and the Federal U.S. Department of Education Commissioner of RSA on the status of Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated with the State of Arizona.

Coordinate activities with other disability related Councils with the State of Arizona.

Establish working relationships between RSA, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Arizona Centers for Independent Living.

Perform other functions consistent with VR services deemed appropriate by the Council.

A Note from the SRC Chair

*SRC Chair Chuck Tiller reflects
on Council activities
during the year*

It has been an honor and a true privilege to

serve as Chairman of the Arizona Governor's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). I have had the unique opportunity to serve on the SRC for the past three years, and to chair the Council for the last year. During my time on the Council, I have



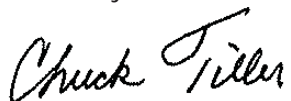
been extremely fortunate to work with some dynamic council members and the professional staff from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Our collaborative efforts have helped to establish and enhance vocational programs throughout the state of Arizona.

During the past year, SRC members have been significantly involved in a number of disability community activities statewide. In October, 2012, members of the SRC were active participants in the second annual "Dream Job Fair"; this event has expanded from only Tucson its first year to additional events in Flagstaff, Phoenix and Yuma. The SRC was active in the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) teleconferences, and collaborated with the Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI) to advocate for additional funding for RSA. In addition, the SRC also facilitated a vendor's booth at the Arizona Department of Education's Thirteenth Annual Transition Conference.

The Governor's State Rehabilitation Council assisted the RSA with the current client satisfaction survey and the Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan. Members of the Council also collaborated with other state disability Councils in the quarterly RSA Administrator's Disability Council Chair meetings.

Again, it has been a pleasure to serve on the SRC during the past three years and to fulfill our mission of advising, evaluating and partnering with RSA in support of improving access to employment and promoting a diverse workforce statewide. It has been rewarding and heartwarming to develop meaningful relationships with people who share similar goals while serving the disability population in our state. Arizona is fortunate to have such a variety of business leaders, agencies, educators and state personnel who share the same mission. I would encourage all council members to reach out to their colleagues and associates to join the SRC and promote the visions of the Council and the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Tiller". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chuck Tiller, Chair
Arizona Governor's State Rehabilitation Council



Input & Recommendations

A summary of SRC input and recommendations to the Arizona RSA VR State Plan

1

SRC recommends that AZRSA continue to focus their efforts to increase awareness and outreach of Vocational Rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities (including a broad spectrum of disability populations), while highlighting the importance of placement on the Order of Selection waiting list.

2

SRC recognizes and encourages the maintenance of the AZRSA collaborative efforts regarding youth transitioning from school to work as it relates to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Department of Education, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Behavioral Health, and American Indian Programs, using protocol and school-to-work contracts. SRC recommends the AZRSA expand collaborative efforts of VR representatives fully participating in joint opportunities at the state and local level through the Arizona and National Community of Practice forums (AzCoPT), the Secondary Transition Mentoring Project (STMP), and the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center Institute, which is designed to promote stakeholder work to identify emerging practices that could be utilized in Arizona.

3

SRC recommends that AZRSA communicate the status and implementation of the revised Arizona RSA Strategic Plan goals, objectives and action steps to SRC and RSA staff at all levels.

4

SRC recommends that AZRSA provide SRC with updates of the development of the 'performance report card/scorecard for providers.'

5

SRC recommends that AZRSA make efforts to identify and alleviate Vocational Rehabilitation Program service provision barriers in the rural areas of Arizona in order that services are distributed equally statewide.

6

SRC recommends that AZRSA make efforts to simplify the vending application process and include vendor input.

7

SRC recommends that AZRSA meet Federal Standards and Indicators and inform SRC of strategies being implemented to meet the rehabilitation rate.

8

SRC recommends that AZRSA continue to maintain partnerships with current Project 121 American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Programs in Arizona and identify strategies to partner with those tribes that do not have existing Project 121 programs.

9

SRC recommends that AZRSA provide SRC with the status and implementation of the Federal Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Center regional plan as it relates to training and technical assistance.

Committees of the Council

The council committees have specific functions to help the SRC achieve its goals.

The goal of the **Employment and Community Partnerships Committee** is to create and foster business and community partnerships, and to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities through collaboration with the Rehabilitation Services Administration/ Vocational Rehabilitation Program (RSA/VR) clients, outside agencies, councils and community partners. It is the Committee's vision to enhance SRC relationships with these partners in order to expand employment opportunities, encourage involvement in policy development, and promote advocacy for service provision and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

The **Executive Committee** provides leadership to the SRC in furthering its mission, vision, and goals. The Committee also seeks new members from the community who will represent, and be representative of, individuals with disabilities, specific disability groups, business and labor, rehabilitation program providers, disability advocates, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the State Workforce Investment Board, and American Indian Rehabilitation Programs. The Council accepts nominations at any time throughout the year when vacancies occur, and submits candidates to the Governor, who makes the final appointment of members to SRC.

The goal of the **Program Review Committee** is to advise, evaluate, and collaborate with the RSA / VR Program to improve the quality and efficiency of VR services, including transition services and Order of Selection, by building the capacity of RSA employees via the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, increasing employee satisfaction, and reviewing VR State Plan implementation.



Strategic Plan

2012-2014

Mission: To advise, evaluate and partner with the public vocational rehabilitation program in support of improving access to employment, and promoting a diverse workforce statewide.

Goal 1: Improve access and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities through collaboration with agencies, councils, business and community partners.

Objectives:

- Develop and participate in activities directed at employers and business (including but not limited to; Untapped Arizona, Employer Presentations, Ticket to Work, RSA Employer Coordinator).
- Review and promote self-employment.
- Maintain a current knowledge level about federal and state policies/legislation issues, including employment, that affect individuals with disabilities.

Goal 2: Advise, evaluate, and collaborate with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR) services.

Objectives:

- Monitor the Order of Selection (OOS).
- Monitor the Federal Standards and Indicators (S & I).
- Monitor Transition services statewide.
- Advise on the development and monitor implementation of the VR State Plan.

- Monitor employee satisfaction.
- Monitor Fair Hearing decisions.
- Assist with the Triennial Statewide Needs Assessment Project (SNAP).
- Participate in and monitor results of federal RSA monitoring visits.

Goal 3: Improve Council outreach and public input regarding Vocational Rehabilitation services in the State of Arizona.

Objectives:

- Partner with RSA on the VR client satisfaction survey.
- Facilitate public input regarding the vocational rehabilitation program.
- Prepare and submit an SRC Annual Report.
- Partner with the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC).



Membership 2013

Council Support

*Carolyn Maciel
Council Liaison*

*Nancy Kimball
Administrative Assistant*



Katharine M. Levandowsky
RSA Administrator
VR State Agency, Ex-Officio
Term: No Limit
City: Phoenix

Russ Bull
Disability Advocacy Rep.
Term: 2011-2014
City: Flagstaff

Sandra Espinosa-Canchola
Disability Advocacy Rep.
Term: 2012-2014
City: Rio Rico

Jenny Mutz
Specific Disability Rep.
Term: 2009-2014
City: Tucson

John Gutierrez
Client Assistance Program Rep.
Term: 2006-2014
City: Phoenix

Mark Jacoby
Community Rehabilitation Program
Service Provider Rep.
Term: 2009-2015
City: Phoenix

Suzanne Malson
Statewide Independent Living
Council Rep.
Term: 2008-2014
City: Bullhead City

Bill McQueary
State Education/Special Ed. Rep.
Term: 2011-2014
City: Glendale

Bob Neckes
Business, Industry and Labor Rep.
Term: 2012-2015
City: Phoenix

Allan Potter
Specific Disability Rep.
Term: 2011-2014
City: Queen Creek

Everett Ricketts
Specific Disability Groups Rep.
Term: 2012-2015
City: Avondale

Adam Robson
Specific Disability Rep.
Term: 2011-2014
City: Phoenix

Brian Satran
Business, Industry and Labor Rep.
Term: 2011- 2013
City: Laveen

Randy Schiller
Business, Industry and Labor Rep.
Term: 2012- 2013
City: Laveen

Paula Seanez
121 Project Director's Rep.
Term: 2002-2013
City: Window Rock

Linda Tasco
Specific Disability Groups Rep.
Term: 2012-2015
City: Glendale

Judith Teran
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
Rep.
Term: No Limit
City: Yuma

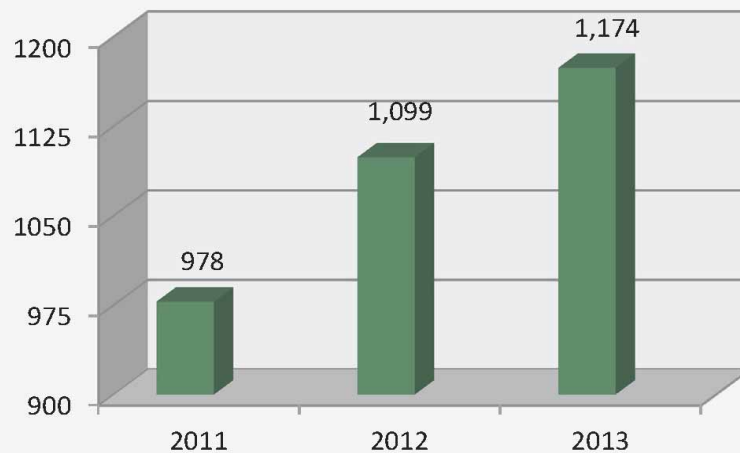
Charles Tiller
Business, Industry and Labor Rep.
Term: 2009-2015
City: Tucson

Vocational Rehabilitation Program Basics

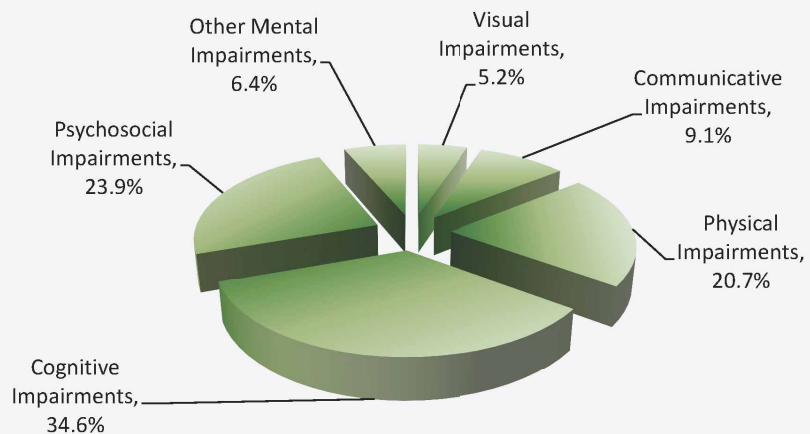
The mission of the Arizona Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR) is to work with individuals with disabilities to achieve increased independence and/or gainful employment through the provision of comprehensive rehabilitative and employment support services in a partnership with all stakeholders.

The VR Program provides a variety of specialized services to individuals who have physical, mental or emotional impairments that create barriers to employment and/or independent living. Eligibility for the VR Program is determined by the following: an individual wants to become or remain economically independent through work; an individual's disability is serious enough to make it hard to get or keep a job; available services can help the individual get or keep a job; the VR Program is the only or best place to provide the individual with the help he or she may need.

Arizonans Employed As A Result of VR Services



State Fiscal Year 2013 Total Individuals Receiving VR Services: 19,506 By Disability



VR Highlights 2013

*A review of Vocational
Rehabilitation Program
activities throughout the year:*

Statewide Coordinator Updates

*13th Annual Transition
Conference*

Self-Employment

Arizona Industries for the Blind

Blind Enterprise Program

Statewide Coordinator Updates

Assistive Technology Coordinator, Sue LeHew

is responsible for overseeing assistive technology needs as it relates to the wide range of individuals served in RSA. Ms. LeHew's background is serving individuals with developmental disabilities, augmentative communication and physical access, but she is also well-versed in assistive technologies used by individuals who are blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing and/or benefit from AT for cognitive support. Ms. LeHew has worked for RSA for 18 years, and states it is a privilege to be included on the service team with counselors, purchasing techs and supervisory staff. Ms. LeHew supervises all AT-Unit staff including an AT-IT BVI Consultant, the Home Modification Construction Coordinator, and two AT-Rehabilitation Technicians. Specialty projects include contract management of all AT related contracts, including Adaptive Aids and Devices, CORE Training for AT, Libera accessibility testing, program planning for the annual AT Conference with AzTAP, and consultation for field staff in all areas of assistive technology, especially AT-Adaptive Driving and AT-Vehicle Modification.

Behavioral Health Coordinator, Andrea Benkendorf

The Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator oversees the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services (ADHS/DBHS). The purpose of the IGA is to increase successful employment of individuals with a serious mental illness. During the last fiscal year, the Division of Behavioral Health Services and RSA agreed to re-enter a funded IGA. The IGA monies provide Vocational Rehabilitation services to clients with serious mental illness, and fund dedicated Vocational Rehabilitation staff positions.

The Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator conducted quarterly meetings with RSA and RBHA staff to increase collaboration and improve service delivery to mutual clients.

IGA site reviews were completed with DBHS and the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHA) at various behavioral health clinics statewide to obtain information for program improvement and enhanced service delivery. The site reviews included focus groups with clients receiving services and staff interviews.

The Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator partnered with various RBHAs to deliver Mental Health First Aid training to RSA staff. More than 100 staff were trained in identifying, understanding, and responding to signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance use disorders. Quarterly meetings with RSA and RBHA staff were held to increase collaboration and improve service delivery to mutual clients. The Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator conducted numerous community presentations regarding mental illness and Vocational Rehabilitation. Technical assistance and guidance regarding behavioral health best practices, problem resolution, and identifying resources was also provided.

Deaf/Blind Coordinator, Ellen Boyd

The Deaf/Blind Coordinator is responsible for overseeing all services to deaf/blind individuals, including case reviews, program facilitation and policy collaboration, training development, and problem resolution. This coordinator also develops the RSA Resource Directory.

Over the past two years, RSA conducted a Comprehensive Needs Assessment for Individuals with Combined Hearing and Vision Loss (CHVL). Staff from RSA and the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) traveled thousands of miles throughout the state to interview individuals with CHVL about their service needs. Approximately 100 individuals with CHVL and 63 RSA vendors/contractors were surveyed. The needs assessment was completed in the summer of 2013, and the data has been released to the HKNC for analysis prior to being published. Other activities included training Rehabilitation Counselors for the Blind and Independent Living staff on how to work with a person that is deaf and blind, developing state certified curriculum regarding communication modalities, developing an assistive technology checklist for CHVL individuals, and working with technology staff to develop a demonstration assistive technology library.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Late-Deafened Clients Coordinator, Sue Kay Kneifel

The primary responsibility of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Late-Deafened Clients Coordinator is to provide technical assistance, resources, information, referral and support to staff serving consumers with hearing loss, and to consumers with hearing loss seeking services with RSA. Other duties include implementing the Model State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation Services to Persons who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing, or Late Deafened (MSP). In SFY 2013, Coordinator activities included analyzing RSA client statistics to identify the need for additional Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf, and utilizing available funding sources to expand services to currently unserved or underserved areas. The Coordinator also provided training to supervisors and counselors on working with non-signing clients with hearing loss, reading and understanding the basics of an audiogram, maintaining a caseload of deaf clients, reviewing cases for Federal RSA compliance, reviewing cases for OOS priority status changes, and outreach to schools with deaf students and their parents, and to employers on working with deaf and hard of hearing clients. The coordinator partnered with the Region 1 Employment Specialist to develop, plan and implement employment readiness workshops and mock interviews for deaf/hard of hearing clients. providing communication access at all job fairs and conferences wherein RSA is a partner, providing training from RSA's audiology consultant on hearing aids and hearing aid compatible devices, serving as the RSA representative to the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, AZ PEPNET statewide transition team for deaf and hard of hearing students, providing case consultations to specialized and general counselors, advising the Office of Procurement in the selection process for the current state in-person ASL/VRI/CART contract, developing the concept of point of contact counselors in each VR office to be designated and work with non-signing clients with hearing loss, developing and implementing protocol for signing clients to work with VR for direct communication access, holding semi-annual stakeholder meetings, developing curriculum for RCD competency enhancement, and representing Arizona on the CSAVR sub-committee on deaf/hard of hearing needs.

Employer Coordinator, Tim Stump

Over the last year, RSA created several Employer Coordinator positions across the state to assist in improving the employability of individuals with disabilities. Employer Coordinators work with counselors and prospective employers to increase employment opportunities. Region 1 Employer Coordinator, Tim Stump, implemented the concept of Job Clubs held at local VR field offices for both general VR clients and specialized populations, such as the deaf and hard of hearing. Employers participated by conducting “mock” or practice interviews with VR clients in order to help them prepare for actual job interviews.

This method helps the VR client improve and enhance their interviewing skills, as immediate feedback is provided to them by the employer. The VR counselor also benefits as they are able to sit in the feedback session with the employer and client to gain a better understanding of what skills/attitudes the employer is seeking during the interview. Other employment activities conducted by Mr. Stump include distributing job leads from local employers to VR counselors statewide, the creation of an RSA employer database with employer contact information, participating in Job Fairs targeted to individuals with disabilities, and coordinating a special pre-DREAM job fair event for persons with significant disabilities in order that these individuals could better prepare themselves for the larger job fair, working with RSA Community Rehabilitation Service Providers (including vendors under contract), working with job developers and conducting quarterly Job Developer meetings to enhance networking with local employers. Most recently, Mr. Stump coordinated ‘Employment Encounters,’ a employment career and job fair all-in-one event for high school students with disabilities, which involved reaching out to local high school districts to coordinate an employment event that drew over 400 students. The concept continues to grow, with nine additional Employment Encounters planned across the state in 2014. Tim Stump has also been working with the Maricopa Community Colleges to establish a West Valley Employer Outreach meeting, which brings together local workforce development entities, employers and the educational community, and researching the viability of a virtual job fair to include virtual positions for clients in rural areas. An additional RSA Employer Coordinator position has recently been filled to serve southern Arizona.

Independent Living/Home Modification Construction Coordinator, Paul Ferry

The start of SFY2013 required adjusting to a budget that was significantly less than the prior year. An RSA Public Forum was held in August, 2013 to solicit ideas on how to preserve the Independent Living Rehabilitation Services (ILRS) Program. A commitment was made by the RSA Administration that all ILRS cases currently in a plan, with services in place, would move forward, and a waitlist would be established for new clients until additional funding became available. It was also determined that the Core services, Information and Referral, Independent Life Skills training, Peer Counseling, and Client Advocacy would continue to be offered to anyone who was signed up with the ILRS Program. In a continued effort to assist potential ILRS clients, ILRS Counselors are sharing resources in their respective communities by utilizing referrals to the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and local community groups.

The Home Modification Construction Coordinator position is also filled by Paul Ferry. Mr. Ferry works with IL and VR Counselors, clients, client family members and an Evaluator to develop a plan of accessibility in the client's residence. The Coordinator solicited project pricing (bids) from RSA construction contractors based on their RSA contract and ensured adherence to the bid specifications during the project and the satisfaction of all parties involved at completion. The most common home modifications were ramps, roll-in showers, high-rise toilets, roll-under sinks, grab bars, doorway widening, and the adaptability of kitchens. Home modification can also include new products such as adaptable devices (electronic control units) for individuals that are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or those individuals with significant mobility limitations. The Coordinator was also involved in educating RSA offices regarding the home modification process, and presenting at the AZ-Tap Conference on the many different products that are available for residential and commercial accessibility. The Coordinator has the ability to work together with VR Counselors, the client, and other professionals to accomplish the client's goals and ensure their safety.

To assist potential clients, ILRS Counselors are sharing resources in their communities by utilizing referrals to the CILs and local community groups.

The Transition Team's focus on increasing community relationships has identified areas in the state lacking community connections, and has set a goal of expanding the RSA network to District 4.

Transition Coordinator, Ana Nunez

The Transition Coordinator manages a transition team consisting of a Third Party Cooperative Agreement (TPCA) Liaison and two Transition Specialists. In SFY2013, an Administrative Assistant was added to the team, who also serves as a Purchasing Technician to assist with the processing of invoices for the Transition School to Work (TSW) contracts. The additional position has resulted in increased customer service and satisfaction, as timely processing of funding has improved.

RSA's TPCA Liaison led an effort to request and process TSW budgets prior to the 2014 Federal Fiscal Year, resulting in all budgets being submitted and approved quickly. Through outreach, a new school district was recruited to participate in the TSW TPCA (marking the 21st such agreement where RSA has administrative oversight), and negotiations are underway with another district. The Transition Team hosted several meetings to disseminate information to VR staff serving both TSW and non-contracted school districts. For the first time, RSA co-sponsored meetings with the school districts and RSA VR staff servicing the contracts. The Transition Team has also participated with multiple local efforts, supporting various events (technical assistance, job fairs, agency collaboration functions, conferences, etc.). The largest event of the year was the Transition Conference. Aside from project planning, the team was involved in five different presentations which reached a large audience. There were 876 conference attendees from more than 200 agencies statewide. The Transition Team's focus on increasing community relationships has identified areas in the state lacking community connections, and has set a goal of expanding the RSA network to District 4. Protocol projects (high school age general cases) have increased substantially in Yuma, where a local AZ Community of Practice (AZCoPT) has been established. Three 'Employment Encounters' for high school students were successfully executed during the 2012-2013 school year. The Transition Team is developing committees to host Employment Encounters in Lake Havasu and Kingman, with a focus on launching the first event in the 2013-2014 school year. Multiple committees have been established; seven sites have been identified for the upcoming year. The Transition Team has fixed all the corrective action items from the 2011 federal monitoring review, completing a Technical Assistance Plan that

has remedied specific items from the corrective action plan related to the transition program. The Transition Team had the opportunity to review data that indicated an improvement in the transition rehabilitation rate, which included both TSW and non-contracted schools. There was an increase to 41.8% in FFY 2013, from 29.7% in the previous federal fiscal year.

13th Annual Transition Conference

The Transition Conference is a collaborative, cross-stakeholder, professional development event designed to provide meaningful and pertinent information regarding the secondary transition planning process. It is sponsored by the Arizona Department of Education and other agencies. Participants include youth and young adults with disabilities, family members and other important support persons for students with disabilities, state agency staff, educators, and service providers, who all share a commitment to the successful transition of students to adult life. This year's conference hosted a number of national speakers and state-level experts, presenting sessions aimed at improving strategies for youth success, family involvement, and interagency and community collaboration.

The theme, ' "I"s Focused on the Future: Invested, Involved, and Independent,' reflected the emphasis on student engagement, self-advocacy and self-determination that is essential for youth and young adults in achieving post-school success. The conference showcased effective intra and interagency collaboration toward improving postsecondary opportunities for youth and young adults with disabilities in the areas of employment, education, training, and adult living. For the eighth consecutive year, the creativity of youth and young adults was emphasized through displays of their artwork.

Self Employment

Self-Employment is one of an array of employment settings available to the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) client, and is identified in an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) as a setting in which the VR client plans to accomplish his/her vocational field of work, profession, or trade that the client is capable of performing. Self-Employment is work done for a profit in an individual's own business, profession or trade, with the VR

client owning at least 51% of the business and directly operating the business, managing all, or most aspects, of the operation. The individual takes personal responsibility for all business decisions and activities, including services rendered, hours of operation, his/her own services, pricing, and furnishing their own equipment/tools.

The decision to commit VR funds in support of Self-Employment is based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to the viability of the VR client's Self-Employment Business Plan, the potential for supporting resources (financial and non-financial), total start-up costs and detailed financial projections, and evident sound business decision making. In SFY2013, nine Self Employment Business Plans were presented to the RSA Self Employment Review Committee (SERC), resulting in seven approvals, one denial, and one withdrawal. The approved plans were funded with Vocational Rehabilitation 110 grant client service dollars in varying amounts not exceeding \$18,000. The types of businesses funded included nursing consultant, custom jewelry making, psychotherapy, residential pool/spa repair and cleaning service, construction, and food service/catering.

Arizona Industries for the Blind

Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB) was established in 1952 to provide employment and training opportunities for individuals who are blind. AIB functions as a self-sustaining enterprise fund operating under the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act. Employees of AIB have an uncompromising dedication to their work and to the quality of products and services provided to the federal government and U.S. armed forces. This results in jobs with competitive wages, benefits, and upward mobility. All employees receive competitive wages with full benefits, including major medical, dental, life insurance and retirement. AIB paid approximately \$3.0 million in wages and benefits to 79 employees who are blind, visually impaired, deaf-blind, and multiple disabled Arizonans during SFY2013.

During SFY2013, AIB achieved total sales of \$20.4 million, a 6% increase from the prior year. AIB continues to pursue growth opportunities for employment and training in Document Management Services, Contact Center Operations, Production Services, and Warehousing and Distribution.

Business Enterprise Program

The Arizona Business Enterprise Program (BEP) trains and places qualified legally blind individuals as operators of merchandising businesses. Current business sites include food service operations such as full service cafeterias, snack bars, gift shops, military dining, and vending operations. During SFY 2013, BEP made program and facility adjustments. These adjustments involved some facility consolidation and service level adjustments to allow effected operations to remain profitable. In 2013, two BEP Trainees began a six-month Training Program to become BEP Licensees. In 2013, BEP surveyed 80 U.S. Postal Service locations statewide and contracts for placement of vending machines are in process. These new locations will bring additional revenue opportunities to existing operators.

BEP will continue to focus on establishing additional opportunities through a Luke Air Force Base food service facility, and advancing the Statewide Post Office agreement. The program is also looking at opportunities in parks, recreation centers and other locations, and will begin surveys of these sites in 2014.

The program is evaluating new concepts for operators to manage, including a micro-market vending stand, which is being tested at the Department of Public Safety in Phoenix. Evaluation of early data from the project shows up to a 500% increase in vending sales with the micro-market vending concept over a traditional vending bank. The program is also working to develop a relationship with branded concepts like Subway, Dunkin Donuts, and others, which will be tested in 2014.

The focus of the BEP training program is to teach trainees skills that will enhance their upward mobility among licensed operators and to seek new individuals interested in the entrepreneurial aspects of business. Solicitation to recruit new qualified trainees will continue throughout the year. A completely revised six-month training program is in development, and will commence training in SFY2014. This new program will be offered more frequently, have additional skills and knowledge opportunities, and will offer more training opportunities statewide.

In 2013, BEP surveyed 80 U.S. Postal Service Locations, and contracts for placement of vending machines are in process. These new locations will bring additional revenue opportunities.

Success

Client Successes

Celebrating VR client achievements!

Mark

Mark K. In May 2007, a 24-year-old man was referred to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program through the Tempe Union High School. Mark K. was presented as being very good with computers, very smart, and 'just needed a chance.' This young man wanted to work with computers, attend ITT Technical Institute, and wanted to get a job at Intel. Mark had been diagnosed with Asperger's when he was 19 years old. He presented with symptoms of constantly rocking back and forth, unable to make eye contact, withdrawn, and mostly non-verbal except when asked a direct question. Mark could speak clearly, but only when he could not avoid it, letting his mother answer questions and supply information. Despite these deficits, Mark seemed to display a tremendous amount of integrity, willingness to work, and desire to succeed. His mother related that on their way to Arizona from upstate New York, the vehicle they were driving broke down. Mark took apart the carburetor piece by piece by the side of the road and put it back together in order for them to get to Arizona. He had never seen a carburetor before, but seemed to have the ability to understand the technical aspects related to what needed to be done to successfully repair it. This young man was determined.

Mark was eligible for the VR program based on his disability of Asperger's Disorder and other areas. His Vocational Goal was to work with computers. The VR services he received were Psychological Evaluation and Services, Vocational Counseling and Guidance, Mental Health Restoration, tuition, books, and other employment related expenses. He attended ITT Technical Institute, with perfect attendance and achieving straight A grades. He began to do side jobs fixing computers to help out with his expenses. Mark still had his goal of working for Intel in mind, and he decided in order to get the job that he really wanted he would need a Bachelor's Degree. ITT gave him a scholarship, he applied and received a Federal Pell Grant, and the VR program paid the difference in tuition. He began working in

the computer lab at ITT, tutoring his peers, and continued with his perfect attendance and straight A's while focusing on his major of Computer/Electronics Engineering Tech.

During his last term at ITT, Intel conducted interviews and he was hired. He began working at Intel in the Fall of 2012 as a Facilities Technician-Sub Fab Technician, receiving a competitive salary with bonuses, a complete medical benefits package, and profit sharing. He reports he loves his job, his flexible working schedule, and his love of fixing computers. His employer states that he is doing extremely well and has received a bonus. Mark says that VR provided the assistance he needed to live his dream!

Daniel

Daniel K. applied for VR services in 2008, upon graduation from high school, his eligibility based on several disabilities including ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome, OCD, and depression. Daniel had difficulty developing relationships and interacting with others, was unemployed, and utilized AHCCCS and parental support to meet his needs. As a youth, Daniel was a 'rock hound' who scoured the desert with his father for rock specimens. He was always interested in geology, stones and gems. Working with his VR counselor he developed a career goal of Gemologist in jewelry sales. VR provided assistance with bus transportation, tuition for an AA degree at a community college, books and school supplies, tuition at the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), job development and placement, job coaching, and vocational counseling and guidance.

He earned his AA degree with a focus on metalwork and design, followed by completion of a six-month training program at the GIA School of Gemology. Daniel achieved certification as a Graduate Gemologist, specializing in diamonds and colored stones. Daniel had numerous interviews at many companies; he ultimately secured a seasonal job at the prestigious Tiffany and Company store. Although it was a temporary job, it was a great addition to his resume. Daniel continued to seek permanent employment, and was hired at a high end jewelry store that specializes in custom, designer, and estate jewelry, loose diamonds, and precious metals. After Daniel completes

his probationary period, he will be eligible for benefits and will no longer need AHCCCS to provide his health care and medications. Daniel's case was closed successfully in May, 2013. He loves his job and the opportunity to learn new things. His ultimate goal is to design his own line of jewelry and to travel the world to purchase gems.

Chris

Chris M. came to the VR program as a self-referred consumer, after meeting a VR Counselor while volunteering at a local Senior Center. At his first appointment in the VR office, his outlook was bleak, because his physical disabilities proved to be barriers to his former work in the construction industry and he was living on his unemployment benefits, which were soon to expire. Chris's debilitating physical injuries included spinal fusions in his back and other orthopedic injuries, and he had functional limitations with strenuous physical work, bending, lifting, and suffered significant swelling in his knees and chronic pain after physical activity. He also had a history of episodic clinical depression. He was made eligible for the VR program and soon his willingness to work and "do whatever it takes" to become completely independent and gainfully employed was evident.

VR provided services in order for Chris to reach his goal of becoming competitively employed in the preventive maintenance area. In February 2013, Chris became the Public Works Director for a town in the northern part of the state. Working full time, he earns \$58,000 annually, and receives full insurance benefits provided by his employer. He also continues ongoing education in the field provided by his employer. Perhaps the best part of the story is Chris's permanent employment, which brings benefits to him and his family. Chris was closed as successfully rehabilitated, as he had achieved his goal of gainful employment and was well on the road to being self-sufficient. Chris says his current employment and well-being is a direct result of VR services, and credits his VR counselor with support of his education and career choice. In Chris's words, "You guys are all awesome and you all care a lot, which means a lot to a man like me. Just when I thought I couldn't go on, you stepped in and showed me the way. What you do matters big time. I'm paying it forward. Today I'm training an 18-year old girl from

Arizona Workforce Connections because she cannot get a job as she has no experience. I know what that feels like. Been there, done that. I'm trying to give her and others the same step up you guys gave me."

Anita

Anita C. applied for VR services in 2005. Although she had worked before, she needed a job that was less physically demanding due to her disability. Her disabling conditions consisted of a major depressive disorder, mathematics disorder, muscle and joint pain issues due to cancer, and chronic fatigue. She met with her VR counselor and together they developed a goal of case manager for a social services agency. The VR Program assisted Anita with school tuition, books and school supplies, a computer with Dragon Naturally Speaking software, and other assistive technology devices to help her complete her studies.

Anita's excellent grades earned her a Phi Theta Kappa scholarship, which paid a portion of her tuition. She also applied for and received a Pell Grant for federal student aid. Anita graduated *summa cum laude* with a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) from Arizona State University, maintaining a 4.0 grade point average (GPA). Paying for additional education on her own, she earned her Master of Social Work (MSW) degree in 2012, also maintaining a 4.0 GPA. VR provided funding for her to take the Association of Social Work Board exams and the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners Licensure exam to enable her to become a Licensed Master Social Worker.

Anita is now employed with a transitional housing agency for homeless veterans, a private, non-profit organization located in Tucson. Anita works full time, with a complete benefit package paid by her employer, enabling her to discontinue receiving AHCCCS benefits. Anita's duties include developing treatment plans, crisis intervention, providing vocational, educational, and recreational opportunities for the residents, assisting them to apply for SSI/SSDI if needed, developing and facilitating psycho-educational groups, working with families, and helping transition residents to independent community living. She works with many veterans who have physical and mental disabilities, as well as substance use issues. Anita is now an important member of the agency team.

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

The overall satisfaction rate across all groups increased to 78.4% in SFY 2013, from 72.9% in SFY 2012.

In SFY 2013, the RSA Client Satisfaction Survey was revised to allow polling of clients throughout the vocational rehabilitation process. Surveys are e-mailed, if an address is available, or mailed. The client is given the option of returning the mailed survey or completing the survey on the RSA website. Surveys are sent to clients under the following circumstances:

- Clients who have been found eligible (status 04 or 10).
- Clients who signed an individualized plan for employment, (IPE) (status 12).
- Clients who have received services for one year or who are ready for employment. whichever came first (status 13 or 20).
- Clients who have received services and have closed, with or without employment (status 26 or 28).

Total Surveys	Response by Mail	Response by Website	Overall Response Rate
8,913	2,197	46	25.2%

The overall satisfaction rate across all groups increased to 78.4% in SFY 2013, from 72.9% in SFY 2012. The reported major cause for dissatisfaction at closure was that the services took too long to implement (12.0%).

Overall Satisfaction Rates - SFY 2013			
Clients Found Eligible	Clients with a Signed IPE	Clients in Service for 1 Year/Ready for Employment	Clients Closed with or without Employment
79.9%	89%	77.8%	61.7%

NOTE: The survey results should be viewed within an overall continued economic context for SFY 2013. State budget and economic impacts still necessitate the continued closure of the Order of Selection priority categories two and three.

The average hourly wage of cases closed with employment has increased 3.66% from the previous year.

Average hourly salary of successfully closed cases (26s)			
SFY 2010	SFY 2011	SFY 2012	SFY 2013
\$11.71	\$11.20	\$11.20	\$11.61



Statewide Directory

RSA Offices

RSA Administration

1789 W. Jefferson St., 2NW
Phoenix, AZ 85007
(602) 542-3332
1-800-563-1221
TTY 1-855-475-8194 (statewide)
Letitia Lebreque, *Administrator*

Region I Administration

3221 N. 16th St., Ste. 200
Phoenix, AZ 85016
(602) 266-9206

Region I Offices

BLIND COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

4620 N. 16th St., Ste 200
Phoenix, AZ 85016
(602) 212-0068

NORTH 16TH STREET

3221 N. 16th St., Ste 200
Phoenix, AZ 85016
(602) 266-6752

MESA

120 W. 1st Ave.
Mesa, AZ 85210
(602) 771-6544

GILBERT - CHANDLER

2328 W. Guadalupe Rd., Bldg. 1
Gilbert, AZ 85233
(480) 820-5629

SURPRISE

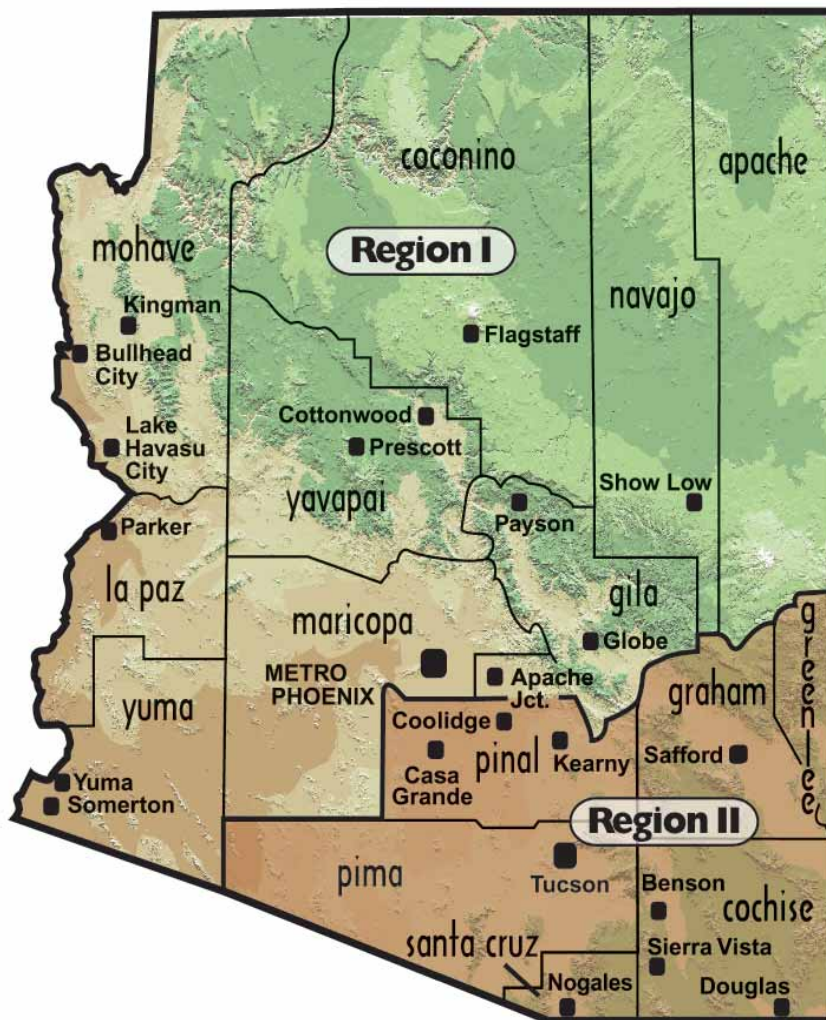
11526 W. Bell Rd.
Surprise, AZ 85374
(602) 771-1850

SCOTTSDALE

10900 N. Scottsdale Rd., Ste 401
Scottsdale, AZ 85254
(480) 948-3819

NORTH CENTRAL / VA

3839 N. 3rd St., Ste. 303
Phoenix, AZ 85012
(602) 266-4434



BLACK CANYON

13610 N. Black Canyon Hwy., Ste 106
Phoenix, AZ 85029
(602) 771-9850

GILBERT - TEMPE

2328 W. Guadalupe Rd., Bldg 1
Gilbert, AZ 85233
(480) 926-5100

NORTH 51ST AVE.

515 N. 51st Ave., Ste 250
Phoenix, AZ 85043
(602) 771-9160

95TH AVENUE

1850 N. 95th Ave., Ste 192
Phoenix, AZ 85037
(602) 771-6680



SOUTH PHOENIX

4411 S. 40th St., Ste. D-12
Phoenix, AZ 85040
(602) 470-1802

GILBERT ONE-STOP

735 N. Gilbert Rd., Ste 134
Gilbert, AZ 85234
(602) 372-9736

SHOWLOW

2500 E. Cooley, Ste. 410
Showlow, AZ 85901
(928) 532-4300

PRESCOTT

1519 W. Gurley St., Ste. 12
Prescott, AZ 86305
(928) 277-2788

COTTONWOOD

1500 E. Cherry St., Ste. H
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
(928) 649-6873

KINGMAN

518 E. Beale St., Ste. 130
Kingman, AZ 86401
(928) 753-5105

BULLHEAD CITY

2601 Highway 95
Bullhead City, AZ 86442
(928) 704-7776

LAKE HAVASU CITY

232 London Bridge Rd.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403
(928) 854-0377

YUMA

1185 Redondo Ctr. Dr.
Yuma, AZ 85365
(928) 247-8880

Region II Administration

400 W. Congress St., Ste. 420
Tucson, AZ 85701
(520) 628-6810
1-800-835-2100

Region II Offices

NORTH STONE

100 N. Stone Ave., Ste 500B
Tucson, AZ 85701
(520) 629-0225

WILMOT

899 N. Wilmot Rd., Ste. C7
Tucson, AZ 85711
(520) 790-0107

NORTHWEST

7225 N. Mona Lisa Rd., Ste 202
Tucson, AZ 85741
(520) 544-8618

ROMERO

4004 N. Romero Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85705
(520) 638-2980

IRVINGTON

195 W. Irvington
Tucson, AZ 85714
(520) 638-2390

E. 29TH STREET

4710 E. 29th St., Bldg. 12
Tucson, AZ 85711
(520) 790-0787

CASA GRANDE

401 N. Marshall St.
Casa Grande, AZ 85122
(520) 426-3529

COOLIDGE

1155 N. Arizona Blvd.
Coolidge, AZ 85228
(520) 723-5351

APACHE JUNCTION

11518 E. Apache Trail, Ste. 110
Apache Junction, AZ 85120
(480) 983-0427
TTY (480) 288-0697

GLOBE

605 S. 7th St.
Globe, AZ 85501
(928) 425-3101

PAYSON

100 N. Tonto St., Ste. #100
Payson, AZ 85541
(928) 468-9829

DOUGLAS

1140 F Ave.
Douglas, AZ 85607
(520) 364-4446
1-800-670-2028

BENSON

595 S. Dragoon St.
Benson, AZ 85602
(520) 586-8330
1-877-402-8800

SAFFORD

338 N. 8th Ave.
Safford, AZ 85546
(928) 428-3059

SIERRA VISTA

1843 Paseo San Luis
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635
(520) 458-3545

NOGALES

Santa Cruz One Stop
610 N. Morley Ave.
Nogales, AZ 85621
(520) 375-8019

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Do you have ideas that may improve employment opportunities?

Would you like to be an advocate for improving the delivery of Vocational Rehabilitation Program services in Arizona?

Would you enjoy working with other stakeholders from around the state?

Become a member of the Governor's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)!

Get more information by contacting the SRC:

Call Us! 602-364-1773, TTY 1-855-475-8194

Fax Us! 602-542-3778

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E-mail our Council Liaison! CMaciel@azdes.gov

Write Us!

Site Code 930A

1789 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Flr NW

Phoenix, AZ 85007



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