

UTAH
STATE

REHABILITATION COUNCIL REPORT

2018



**WORKFORCE
SERVICES
REHABILITATION**



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UTAH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
1595 WEST 500 SOUTH
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84104
JANUARY 2019

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

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MISSION

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

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

REHABILITATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- James Harvey, Business, Industry and Labor, Chair
- Rob Ferris, Utah Statewide Independent Living Council, Vice Chair
- Melissa Freigang, Business, Industry and Labor, Past Chair
- Eliza Detherage, Community Rehabilitation Provider, Member-at-Large

MEMBERS:

- Kelly Boehmer, Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Ken Gourdin, Consumer
- Lavinia Gripentrog, Special Education
- Helen Post, Utah Parent Center
- Velma Spencer, Title 121, Navajo Nation
- Helen Saaed, Business, Industry and Labor
- Lindsey Boerens, Client Assistance Program
- Brian Lahti, Consumer
- Sandy Terry, Department of Workforce Services
- Rylee Williams, VR Counselor Representative
- Glenn Fitzpatrick, Community Rehabilitation Provider
- Jamie Wuthrich, Division of Services for People with Disabilities
- Jay Wheeler, Service Provider



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR



IT HAS BEEN AN HONOR to serve as the chairperson for the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the past year. I was invited to join the SRC in 2015, and throughout my tenure as a council member, vice-chairperson and council chair, I have witnessed a great deal of change in the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR). During that time, USOR has experienced three executive director changes, transitioned from governance under the Utah State Board of Education to the Department of Workforce Services, implemented “Order of Selection” and successfully transitioned people in need of services off of the waiting list. Throughout all of this turmoil, USOR has not wavered from its mission — to provide the consumers of vocational rehabilitation the best, most innovative services possible

while maintaining fiscal responsibility. For this reason, I commend the leadership of USOR, for 2018 has been a tremendous year of stabilization.

As a member of the SRC I have had the pleasure of working with past council chair, Melissa Freigang, vice-chairperson Rob Ferris, Rehabilitation Services program director Aaron Thompson, SRC staff liaisons Gordon Swensen and Sylvia Gines and USOR Division Director Sarah Brenna. Freigang took on the responsibilities of the Council chair with incredible energy and implemented actionable goals to support USOR and increase the engagement of the SRC members. The SRC meetings are more efficient and effective because of her positive changes.

The most consistent voice throughout this transition has been program director Thompson. He provides the SRC with regular updates regarding the state of USOR. He has been instrumental in the design and implementation of the new reporting structures such as the dashboard. With Thompson’s guidance and assistance, the SRC has reviewed and advised on multiple Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act initiatives, Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment (ASPIRE), Pre-Employment Transition Services, Common Core initiatives, Community Rehabilitation Program relations, “Order of Selection,” including the various challenges facing our service delivery systems, and how to increase awareness of our various advocacy impact programs. I truly want to thank Thompson and new USOR director Brenna for their dedicated leadership and support for the SRC.

I want to thank the incredible members of the SRC. I cannot express how impressed I am with the competency, knowledge and dedication I have witnessed from the Council members. Your advice, advocacy and unwavering voices need to be recognized and commended. It has been such a great experience being a part of an amazing group of people. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve on the SRC and I am excited to see the continued improvement of the valuable services USOR provides to our community.

Respectfully,

James J. Harvey
Council Chair 2018



MESSAGE FROM THE USOR DIRECTOR



I AM PROUD TO PRESENT to you the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's 2018 Annual Report. I want to recognize the incredible efforts of our dedicated and professional team of employees, community resource providers, employers and State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) members for their dedication to the people served by USOR.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) had many notable accomplishments during the last year. Order of selection continues to be effectively managed. The Most Significant Disability and Significant Disability categories have remained open over the last year. Nearly 700 clients in the Disability category were released during the year, none of whom waited more than 30 days to be served. In total, nearly 17,000 individuals with disabilities received services from Vocational Rehabilitation, the Utah Work Incentive Planning Services or the Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT).

Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires vocational rehabilitation agencies nationwide to provide, at certain prescribed intervals, career counseling and information and referral services to individuals who are known to be employed at subminimum wage. This requirement is designed to promote opportunities for competitive, integrated employment. Over the last year, career counseling and information and referral services were provided to more than 1,300 individuals.

We continue to expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities to obtain employment through our business services team. Employer workshops and mentoring events for students with disabilities were expanded this year.

Our Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) hired a new director, Dan Mathis. Mathis is overseeing several large projects, including the development of a new Utah Interpreter Certification Program web-based application and new American Sign Language (ASL) certification testing procedures. The Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DSBVI) offered a new low-vision curriculum in 2018 specifically designed to teach clients on how to use low vision technology.

Disability Determination Services (DDS) continues to meet and exceed federal performance standards despite the federal hiring freeze and increasing vacancies. As you can see, USOR continues to provide services consistent with its mission to help individuals with disabilities obtain meaningful employment, increase independence and enhance quality of life.

Respectfully,

Sarah Brenna
USOR Director

Introduction



THE UTAH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

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

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

The Council provides direct communication from consumers, rehabilitation professionals, business, industry, labor, service providers and other individuals interested in improving the services provided by the state agency. Collectively, this group reviews, analyzes and advises USOR regarding the VR program in the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

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

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

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



PURPOSE: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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



2017–2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

DIVISION DIRECTOR UPDATES: The Council was provided with regular reports on state and national issues affecting USOR. As the new Division Director, Sarah Brenna was involved in visiting offices and programs throughout the state for several months. She also directed hiring interviews for a new DSDHH Program Director (Dan Mathis). At the January Council meeting, Brenna discussed the current legislative session, including a request for ongoing funding for the independent living centers and the deaf/blind advocacy committee's support of service coordinator positions. In the March SRC meeting Brenna discussed the 2.5 percent salary increase (including the 401K match and health insurance increases provided by the legislature). She also discussed the federal hiring freeze for Disability Determination Services (DDS). DSBVI would be starting a college preparation course for the fall 2018 semester for the blind and visually impaired clients, as well as discussion regarding the deaf interpreter certification. Budget preparation for FY 2019 and FY 2020 was underway and would be discussed at future meetings. On August 14, Brenna hosted the Social Service Appropriation Sub-Committee meeting at the Judy Ann Buffmire Building. She also announced her selection as chair of the Coordinating Council for People with Disabilities for the next two years. In October 2018 she met with Governor Herbert and the Governor's Committee on the Employment of Persons with Disabilities director Leah Lobato regarding the upcoming Golden Key Awards, held October 16, 2018.

SRC ANNUAL MEETING: At the September 2017 meeting, James Harvey was unanimously selected as the new chair for the State Rehabilitation Council, with Rob Ferris elected as vice-chair and Eliza Detherage as secretary. The Council presented outgoing chair Melissa Freigang with a plaque in recognition of her service to the Council. Ferris discussed the bylaws and the roles

and responsibilities of the Council members. Council members would have responsibility for reviewing the agency budget, ensuring the program functions per state and federal mandates, monitor the Order of Selection process, and adherence of the USOR to the State Plan. Council members were reminded to become well informed in their advisory capacity, as well as attendance requirements for membership. New chair James Harvey discussed the current three goals of the Council and the value of these as USOR became a new division with the Department of Workforce Services.

VR PROGRAM UPDATES: Assistant Director Aaron Thompson provided the Council monthly reports and information on a number of VR program-related topics, including VR program outcomes, Order of Selection updates, personnel updates, CSAVR meeting reports, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act updates, an overview of the application process, monthly reviews of the division dashboard report and outcomes, and budget and audit reports. The dashboard reports were helpful for Council members to understand performance and outcomes measures tracked by VR. Gordon Swensen, SRC Staff Liaison, updated the Council on the Annual Council Report for 2017 and its release in January 2018. Thompson also provided updates on the America's Job Center certifications for the Logan, Provo and Cedar City offices, including collaboration with other Workforce Services divisions at several one-stop centers. At the February Council meeting, Thompson provided an overview of the State Plan goals and objectives (including progress), as well as the Year Three (2018-19) goals for outreach to minority populations, client job readiness improvement, employer coordination and improved services to persons with disabilities at subminimum or non-competitive integrated employment. Thompson provided an overview of the Rehabilitation Services

Administration (RSA) site visit to the USOR in June.

POLICY UPDATES: Emily Stirling, Policy Director, presented at several SRC meetings on new regulations, policies and practices, and was a resource to Council members with VR program questions. In January, Stirling presented on Competitive Integrated Employment, including the criteria regarding wage, benefits, community location of employment and advancement possibilities. She answered Council questions regarding self-employment and the team approach by counselor, client, mentors and community partners to increase the likelihood of a successful employment outcome. At the August Council meeting, Stirling provided a Community Rehabilitation Program Revision PowerPoint presentation, including the results of a November 2017 survey sent to Community Rehabilitation Programs in terms of work strategy assessments, Supported Employment approval levels and collaboration with VR. A focus group of community providers through the Workforce Innovational Technical Assistance Center was conducted in December 2017, and a March meeting to discuss professionalism/fee rate increases was discussed, including milestone payment adjustments.

TRANSITION, PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT AND 511 PROGRAM

UPDATES: In November, Aimee Langone, Transition and Supported Employment Specialist, presented to the Council. She gave a transition services update, including the review of six Pre-Employment Transition Services contracts. Staff, school counselors, teachers and administrators were surveyed and needed additional training. That training started in January 2018. Langone reported on the creation of a transition council to expand services and partnerships, the development of a liaison list for schools and the community to access financial literacy services. In February, Jeff Pitts, 511 Program Coordinator provided the Council with an update on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations regarding subminimum wage, employers or sheltered workshops, and the requirement for clients over 25 to receive career counseling, Pre-Employment Transition Services, and VR

case closure. The Department of Labor will be auditing employers randomly to check on compliance with this law.

ASPIRE PROGRAM PRESENTATION: In March, Carol Ruddell, ASPIRE Projects Director, provided an overview of the original grant award from 2013 and the six western states involved with the ASPIRE Grant (Arizona, Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Utah). She described the target population of 14-16 year olds who receive Supplemental Security Income and the goals of ASPIRE in terms of employment opportunities for this population of youth with significant disabilities. Ruddell reported the challenges for the grant include "...maintaining Social Security Administration level of security, watching for surprises, checking on each position, maintaining the fidelity of ASPIRE services across the sites and sustaining enthusiasm, overcoming discouragement and increasing a refreshed spirit in staff." Surveys conducted demonstrate the higher expectations for increased levels of independence and employment success for the targeted population.

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)

PRESENTATION: In January, CAP advocate Lindsey Boerens presented on the purpose for the program in assisting individuals with disabilities to navigate the VR process and provide assistance with counselor and programmatic concerns over a client's case. Informed choice in selecting a vocational goal, changing that goal, disagreement over services, eligibility denials, change of counselor requests or case closure concerns are all part of the services the CAP provides. CAP advocates are federally mandated to advocate for VR clients and represent clients as non-neutral third parties. Boerens discussed a preference for resolution of issues at the lowest possible level. As part of the larger Disability Law Center, other services available to clients include community integration, abuse and neglect, access and rights, education, employment, fair housing and public policy.

UTAH PARENT CENTER PRESENTATION: At the February meeting, Helen Post, Executive Director of the Utah Parent Center, presented the history of the organization by using the program's model of the grant

redwood trees: they have a shallow root system, grow only in groves and intertwine their roots. This collaboration has led to 29 funding sources for the Utah Parent Center to assist families in need. The Parent Center provides free training, information and assistance to parents of children and youth with all disabilities (physical, mental, learning and emotional) and the professionals who work with them. IEP advocates, online training modules, Social Security and Medicaid application assistance and the Family to Family Network are a few of the services provided by the program.

UTAH WORK INCENTIVES PLANNING SERVICES (UWIPS) PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

At the March meeting, Jolene Wyler from Utah Work Incentive Planning Services provided an overview of its program for serving clients on disability benefits who are considering work but afraid to lose those benefits. Benefits planners look closely at the client's financial, healthcare and primary needs and how these impact the client's ability to work. Wyler provided examples of successful collaboration with VR counselors, employers and community programs to allow clients to participate in community work activities, including competitive, integrated employment.

DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (DSPD) PRESENTATION:

In February, Anne Stephens, Home and Community-Based Manager from the Utah State Department of Health, presented on the Settings Rule and the mandatory requirements for the quality of home- and community-based settings. This includes integration and access to the greater community; increased opportunities for successful employment in competitive, integrated settings; greater engagement in community life; and better control over personal resources. Services provided would ensure that individuals have equal access, optimized individual initiative and autonomy. Stephens also provided a list of settings that are not approved under this rule (e.g. nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities). Utah was required to submit a plan within one year of the effective date of the final rule

(including elements, timelines and required deliverables).

BUSINESS RELATIONS PROGRAM

PRESENTATION: In March, Tom Smith, Business Relations Specialist, gave an update on the seven mentoring events held this past year, at W.W. Clyde, doTERRA, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, Davis Tech College, Weber State University and Verisys. Smith also discussed the successful Spring Employer Workshop and the Workability Job Fair (held in April 2018).

ALTERNATIVE STATE APPLICATION AND ADA TRAINING:

At the May Meeting, Leah Lobato, Director of the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, presented on the Alternative State Application Program (ASAP). She discussed the upcoming ASAP training by Human Resources for March and September with hiring managers. She reviewed the ASAP policies for non-competitive hires for state government employment, including the applicant's responsibilities and VR counselor involvement. Lobato also discussed ADA accommodations questions that businesses have, including tax credits for employers needing interpreter services for employees. She reiterated that it is the employer's ultimate responsibility to provide those accommodations to their staff members with disabilities. Lobato also reported on business concerns for hiring individuals with blindness or visual impairments, as well as those with mental illness.

TURN COMMUNITY SERVICES OVERVIEW:

SRC member Eliza Detherage presented to the Council on the history of TURN Community Services, including residential services, group homes and supervised apartments for those with most significant disabilities. She also provided information on supported employment, the Art and Learning Centers, family support and respite, and the 8-10-week summer camp for children and youth ages six to 22. TURN has developed several community partnerships to provide comprehensive and quality services to the individuals in their program. The goals for TURN include 1) improve and expand services to people with disabilities; 2) increase supported

employment and reduce unemployment among participants of the program; 3) improve stability and quality of life for participants and staff by decreasing staff turnover and improved training; 4) create accessible and affordable housing for low income individuals; 5) increase independence through assistive technology; and 6) create a culture of healthy living for participants and staff through an employee wellness initiative.

NEW VR COUNSELOR TRAINING

OVERVIEW: Jennifer Smart, USOR Training Coordinator, presented on the process for training new VR counselors hired by the division. The first couple of weeks include training and supervision by district supervisory staff. The employee then meets with Smart for training in the online case management system with a significant focus on comparable benefits, procedures for completing authorizations and aspects of effective case management. They also receive orientation to the other programs within VR, along with Comprehensive Assessment and the Workforce Services website. Smart also described the larger two-day Basic Counselor Orientation Training, where other departments present to the new employees on areas including Transition Services and Pre-Employment Transition Services, UWIPS, Ticket to Work/Choose to Work, Purchasing, Business Relations, Independent Living, Assistive Technology, etc. Smart also shared the requirements for counselors meeting Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, including the five-year rule for being eligible to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor exam and eligibility for licensure with the state of Utah.

UCAT UPDATE: The Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT) State Advisory Council (a committee under the SRC) met quarterly to discuss the specialized services offered through the program at the Judy Ann Buffmire Rehabilitation Service Center. Mike Wollenzien, DRS Director of Specialized Services, provided updates on a wide variety of community outreach, independent living, and assistive technology services. There was significant media coverage during the year on the Go Baby Go program and other services

offered through UCAT. The annual UCAT Open House was held in October 2017 to highlight the services of community providers and the UCAT staff.

ATTACHMENT 4.2 (C)



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

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

The following is a summary of SRC recommendations made from October 2017 to September 2018, and USOR's response and actions taken with regards to these recommendations:

SRC RECOMMENDATION 1:

Following discussion by Council members at the September 2017 meeting regarding the Council's obligation to be informed to better advise the USOR, the SRC requested copies of the customer feedback forms the division has been sending out to former VR clients. Other ideas were discussed about how to get a higher return rate with the surveys.

USOR RESPONSE 1:

At the SRC November 2017 meeting, staff liaison Gordon Swensen talked about the types of surveys sent to former clients, including mailing times, the random pull of potential survey participants, and the amount of returns. USOR's intent was to use current technology to assess client satisfaction with services that would yield a higher return of participation and information. This would be an ongoing discussion.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 2:

At the November 2017 meeting, Council members requested a new, evolving common performance measure dashboard with historical information, earnings, skill gains and credentials, as well as establishing a baseline moving forward and a VR specific common measure.

USOR RESPONSE 2:

In response to this request, Assistant Director Aaron Thompson explained that USOR is currently developing a baseline and will include historical information in future years.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 3:

At the November 2017 meeting, Council members requested a VR acronyms document to assist with understanding the many definitions, programs and services associated with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation.

USOR RESPONSE 3:

Following the meeting, SRC Staff Liaison Sylvia Gines compiled and forwarded that information (through email) to all members of the Council.

SRC RECOMMENDATION 4:

At the May 2018 meeting, Assistant Director Thompson discussed the upcoming RSA Monitoring Visit to Utah scheduled for June 19-22. He reviewed the planning process and gave an overview on the process involved to prepare for a monitoring visit, as well as areas for review including VR performance; Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act implementation; Supported Employment, Transition Services, Eligibility and Individualized Plan for Employment Development Compliance; and a Transition Counselor Focus Group. SRC members requested that a future meeting include a report of the RSA monitoring visit outcomes and recommendations.

USOR RESPONSE 4:

At the June 2018 meeting, Thompson discussed the monitoring visit, staff members involved with the review process, preliminary findings and the future report from RSA with recommendations (to come late 2018).



COMMITTEES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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

NOMINATING AND INTERVIEWING COMMITTEES

Resignations and the expiration of terms for a few members created openings on the Council. A few members chose to be nominated to serve a second term. There were few vacancies that needed to be filled with required members as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act. The 121 Native American program for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe SRC member position was vacated and may not be filled soon due to tribal personnel concerns. The representative for the Navajo Nation has been identified and attends the majority of the Council meetings by phone. The Nominating and Interviewing Committee was formed to solicit and review nominations, conduct interviews and present the individuals to the Council for consideration. Names were submitted to the executive director of Workforce Services in accordance with internal policies. Highly qualified and committed individuals were appointed to the Council. They bring commitment and unique expertise to the SRC.

UCAT COMMITTEE

The UCAT advisory committee was established, consisting of Ken Gourdin, SRC consumer representative and Glenn Fitzpatrick, SRC Community Provider representative. The committee met quarterly and included Kent Remund of the Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT); Alma Burgess of the Utah Assistive Technology Program; Helen Post, SRC member and Executive Director of the Utah Parent Center; Brian Carroll (UCAT); Janis McCullough (Utah Independent Living Center); Crystal Thomas (State Board of Education); and Tom England (Independent Living). England has retired and his replacement is new Independent Living Coordinator for USOR Noreen Roeca. Meetings were conducted by UCAT Director Mike Wollenzien. Recommendations were made and implemented regarding UCAT services, budgets, reports and outreach.

CSAVR MEETINGS

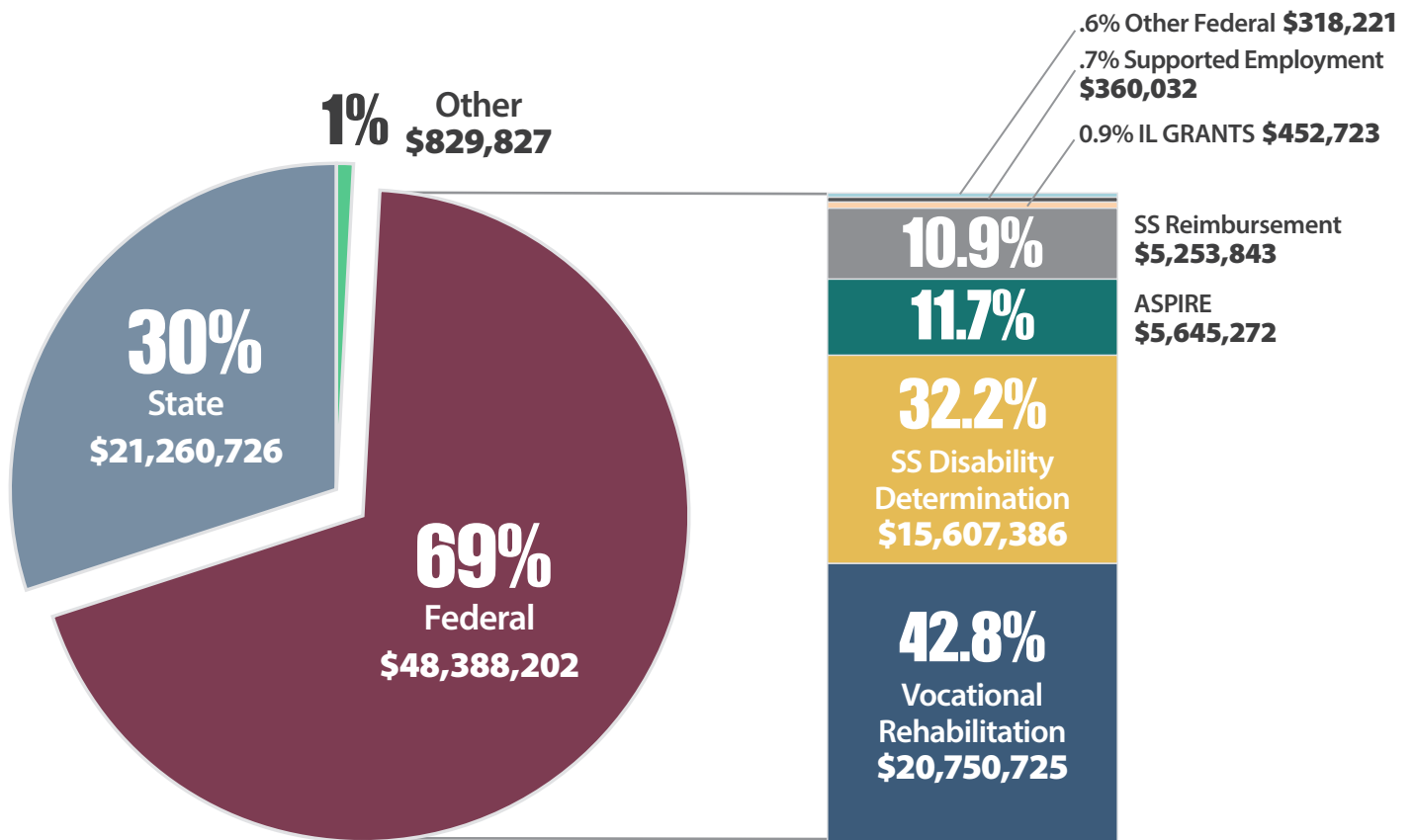
SRC chair James Harvey attended the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) meetings with Sarah Brenna, Director, and Aaron Thompson, Assistant Director. They reported on updates on national VR and disability issues. Harvey reported on the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils meetings and the differences between states in terms of SRC support. He discussed what makes a great annual report, including the new leveraged services as part of Workforce Services.

SRC STRATEGIC PLANNING

The executive committee considered needs and strategies to be implemented during the coming year. The meetings were dedicated to looking at the SRC priorities, goals and mission by all members of the Council. Through interactive whiteboard sessions and small group discussion, the SRC was able to formalize specific goals for the next two years of the Council. Those three goals include 1) The SRC will assist and advise the USOR to preserve and improve services to clients; 2) Review data and relevant information; and 3) Increase visibility and value of the SRC.



USOR SFY 2018 FUNDING



Sources of Info:

- 2018 Final Close Spreadsheet
- 2018 SEFA

USOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION 2018 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



The following information reflects the individual and program successes of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program during the past year.

- 1,856 individuals with disabilities were successfully employed.
- 94% of those employed were significantly disabled or most significantly disabled.
- 593 public assistance recipients successfully gained employment.
- 483 Social Security Disability recipients successfully gained employment.
- 137 individuals successfully gained employment through Supported Employment Services.
- 39% of individuals served were transition-age youth with disabilities.
- 595 Benefits Summaries and Analysis were presented to social security recipients by the Utah Work Incentives Planning Services team.
- 548 new individuals were referred to the Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT).
- 165 employers accessed training, resources and hiring support from Business Relations.



SUCCESS STORIES



Katie Stoddard



OCCUPATION:

Specialist at Roads to Independence

VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational Counseling and Guidance
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- Education Assistance
- Interview Clothes
- Job Development and Placement
- Work Incentive Counseling (Utah Work Incentive Planning Services)

Katie sought help for work incentives counseling in August 2011 as she was concerned about how working would affect her Social Security and medical benefits. She had very expensive medications and wanted to ensure working wouldn't affect her access to healthcare.

Katie's Community Work Incentives Counselor Farrah Edwards helped her understand how work would affect her various benefits including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Housing, Food Stamps and HEAT. They also discussed how interim work would help her while she was at school and discussed the benefits and pitfalls of working at different levels of income.

With USOR's help explaining how she could pursue education and work, Katie explored her career options with her VR counselor Ted Deelstra and decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in social work. Through her hard work and persistence, Katie graduated Cum Laude in 2017.

Choose To Work Specialist Shelly Sorenson helped Katie find work at Roads To Independence, where she is now a specialist

for clients on the Physical Disabilities Waiver. In her work, she has already received a promotion and a raise. She has the satisfaction of helping other people with disabilities and uses her personal experiences to better serve her clients.

Katie is also pursuing a master's degree in social work while working full time. While Katie is accomplishing much, her disability has not disappeared. She has not lost her disabling condition because of work. She works in spite of her disability. Every day she continues to manage her medication and to accommodate the needs of her specific disability.

Ultimately, Katie's dedication to her education along with understanding her benefits has helped her have confidence to look for and find a job. She is now financially independent and working her way off receiving benefits.

USOR's investment in Katie helped her build a successful launch pad for the next phase of her life—as an educated, successful working woman.



Ricky Hansen



OCCUPATION:
Lobby Attendant

VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational Counseling and Guidance
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- Work Strategy Assessment
- Job Development and Placement
- Supported Employment Job Coaching
- Collaboration with Community Partners

When Ricky came to the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation in September 2016, he shared his interests as reading and playing video games, and declared he would like to work at McDonald's. Ricky had many employment-related skills he needed to learn and practice before entering the workforce. Fast forward a couple of years, and today Ricky proudly puts on his McDonald's hat and uniform five days a week, where he enjoys his work as a lobby attendant.

Ricky received several services from USOR's vocational rehabilitation (VR) program and from his counselor, Kate Hinchee. These services included counseling and guidance, career exploration and an individualized plan for employment. Additionally, VR provided funding for on-the-job support and coaching

provided by CHOICE Supported Employment. While positions with other employers were considered, Ricky persisted in getting hired by McDonald's. To ensure Ricky's long-term success, USOR coordinated with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) to provide extended support services with the Life Skills and Individual Needs Center (LINC) of Brigham City.

When he is not working, Ricky is a busy man, as he participates in groups and activities in the LINC Day Supports program. He especially enjoys cooking and job skills classes. USOR is pleased to share this success with so many community partners and believes this job is a stepping-stone to additional opportunities for Ricky.



Bruce Tebbs



OCCUPATION:
Director of Academic Budgets
& Support at Southern Utah
University

VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational Counseling and Guidance
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- Disability Treatment and Stabilization Services
- Hearing Aids

When Bruce Tebbs first walked into his local Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office, he was seeking services that would help him address his hearing loss. Bruce was struggling to hear and communicate effectively with those he interacted with at work. During the same time, Bruce also learned that he had a unique cataract that was progressing rapidly and obstructing his vision. Bruce states, “the anxiety and fear of losing my job was extremely hard for me to manage, as I’m the breadwinner of a very young family.”

Bruce was quickly referred to VR Counselor Kester Tapaha in St. George, who specializes in assisting clients who are blind or visually impaired. Early in the process, it was evident that Bruce would need VR services to address both his hearing and vision loss; both of which were jeopardizing his 14-year career as the Director of Academic Budget & Support at Southern Utah University. Bruce recalled,

“my productivity had decreased and I’d made some clerical errors. I had several embarrassing council meetings as I couldn’t see facial features or hear what was being said.”

Kester and Bruce were able to meet and create an Individualized Plan for Employment. This plan included VR assistance with complex cataract surgeries on both eyes as well as coordinating services with an audiologist for a hearing assessment and hearing aids. Bruce was able to continue working successfully as a Director at SUU. Bruce expressed the following about his VR experience, “Some people really are amazing at being able to adapt with their disabilities, and I can see it isn’t without major struggles. I was blessed to have the help from VR and to have the technology available to restore the functionality I was losing. The human care and understanding I experienced in the St. George VR office was very important to me at the time.”



Jacob Anderson



OCCUPATION:
Teacher Assistant

VR COUNSELOR: Amanda Salmon (Ogden District)

VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational Counseling and Guidance
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- Transportation
- Career Discovery Assessment
- Customized Employment Services

Jacob Anderson applied for services with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) in June 2009 with the hopes of increasing his independence. Jacob attended school in both Davis and Weber School Districts where he worked on further developing his skills through his Individualized Educational Plan. Jacob graduated from the Weber School District Life Program in May 2015 with his high school diploma.

After graduation, Jacob was unsure of what he would like to do and was uncertain what his future would look like. In an effort to continue to develop his skills and to work towards employment, Jacob began working at the sheltered workshop at Pioneer Adult Education. With the support of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Jacob was encouraged to pursue competitive, integrated employment. Jacob completed a Discovery Assessment through the Pathways Program at PARC where his interests and ideal conditions for employment were identified.

Jacob really wanted to find a job where he would be able to work at a school, helping children to achieve their goals the way that school staff previously assisted him in reaching his own. Through Customized Employment and with the support of Pathways to Careers and his VR counselor, Amanda Salmon, Jacob was able to secure a position as a teacher assistant in the Davis School District. Beloved by the students that he works with, the school has even used extra time with “Mr. J” as a reward for students that are exceeding their goals in the classroom and with behavioral plans.

Jacob is able to ride on UTA’s public transit independently from his house in Pleasant View to his job at South Clearfield Elementary, helping him to further his independence. He was sad that the school year came to an end, but is excited to work with a new group of students in the fall. When asked about his thoughts on the support he received from USOR, Jacob expressed, “They helped me find my dream job.”

FY 2018–2019 MEETING SCHEDULE



FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS
9:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.
(LAST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH)

October 24, 2018

November 28, 2018

December (No Meeting)

January 30, 2019

February 27, 2019

March 27, 2019

April 24, 2019

May 29, 2019

June 26, 2019

July (No Meeting)

August 28, 2019

September 25, 2019

Annual and Final 2019 Meeting

Individual committees may meet following the full Council meeting.

Meeting location:

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

For more information:

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

Website: usor.utah.gov/councils/src



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Utah State Office of Rehabilitation
A Division of the Department of Workforce Services

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