

## Success Stories: Vocational Rehabilitation



# 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 the VR Counselor in St. George, Kester Tapaha, 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.”