

Annual Report 2011



Arizona Governor's State Rehabilitation Council



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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.



Thoughts

from the
SRC Chair

*Gretchen Evans reflects on the
Council's activities for the year*

**It has been my pleasure
to serve** as the Chair of the SRC

this past year. We have continued to face funding challenges due to the economic downturn, but have been able to begin to see some progress in spite of these external factors. In our work as a partner with the Arizona



Rehabilitation Services Administration (AZRSA) there has been improvement in the ability to fill vacancies allowing for more individuals to be served and taken off of wait lists. As we have monitored this situation, there has been slow but consistent progress. This year's annual report highlights some of the efforts and activities of the SRC.

Arizona SRC continued with its connection to the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) providing an opportunity to keep informed about national issues facing SRC's. The NCSRC annual meeting was once again held in Phoenix in 2011. The Arizona SRC participated in this annual meeting and facilitated a presentation from Safeway, Inc. regarding the work they do on behalf of persons with disabilities in Arizona and other states. In addition, the Arizona SRC also participated in the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Institutes held throughout Arizona in 2010-2011.

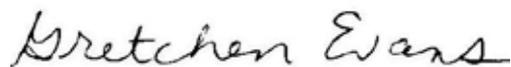
This past year, the AZRSA was subject to a federal monitoring visit. Arizona was one of the first states visited utilizing a new

format and focus. Council members participated in interviews with the federal monitoring staff during the visit and the Council was apprised by AZRSA of the results of the report.

On July 21, 2011, Council members participated in the development of a new SRC strategic plan for the next three years. The strategic planning meeting took place in Tucson and was hosted by the Beacon Group. This new plan will guide the work of the Council. The plan was significantly simplified from prior plans and will provide a tool for tracking Council activities.

This is also the end of my second term on the Council and I will be leaving the SRC as well as ending my year as Chair. It has been a privilege to work with such dedicated Council members, Council staff, and the AZRSA management team. I know I am leaving the SRC in good hands and that next year will be a productive year for the SRC.

Sincerely,



Gretchen Evans, Chair
Arizona Governor's State Rehabilitation Council





Input & Recommendations

SRC input and recommendations to the AzRSA 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, highlighting the importance of placement on the Order of Selection waiting list.
2. SRC continues to strongly recommend that AzRSA emphasize 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 Services and American Indian programs with a consistent protocol for working with schools. SRC also recommends the AZRSA allocate funding to send VR representatives to cross stakeholder opportunities such as the secondary transition mentoring program, which does not have RSA representation.
3. SRC recommends that AzRSA communicate 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 preliminary results of the 'performance report card/ scorecard for providers' within State Fiscal Year 2012.
5. SRC continues to recommend that AZRSA outreach to other disability populations, such as individuals that are deaf/blind and individuals with Asperger's Disorder.

6. SRC recommends that AZRSA continue to explore and specifically identify alternative funding sources with SRC, particularly in rural areas of the state, in order that Vocational Rehabilitation services are distributed more equally statewide.
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 increase partnerships with all tribes in the state of Arizona, including those without an American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program, in an effort to maximize Vocational Rehabilitation services in all communities.
9. SRC recommends that AZRSA involve SRC in the ongoing enhanced training implementation plan of the Federal Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Center.
10. SRC recommends that the 2011 SRC Client Public Input Survey questions be considered for inclusion in the AZRSA Client Satisfaction Survey and Vocational Rehabilitation clients are surveyed throughout the rehabilitation process.



Committees of the Council

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

The goal of the **Access and Employment Committee** is to increase access and employment opportunities for people with disabilities through collaboration with the Rehabilitation Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (RSA/VR) Program clients, outside agencies, councils and community partners.

The goal of the **Business and Community Partnerships Committee** is to create and foster business and community partnerships, while enhancing the SRC relationship with these partners, in order to expand employment opportunities, encourage involvement in policy development, promote advocacy for service provision, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

The goal of the **Executive Committee** is to provide leadership to the SRC in furthering its mission, vision, and goals.

The **Membership and Nominating Committee** seeks to recruit 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 Planning Committee** is to advise, evaluate, and collaborate with the RSA/VR Program to improve the quality and efficiency of VR services, including transition services, 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

2009-2011

Goal 1: Increase access and 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.

- **Objective 1:** Research and utilize client satisfaction survey data to frame priorities for further discussion and partnership with RSA.
- **Objective 2:** Facilitate public input regarding the Arizona Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- **Objective 3:** Monitor the Order of Selection (OOS) category status.
- **Objective 4:** Promote employment of individuals with disabilities.

Goal 2: Create and foster business and community partnerships, while enhancing the SRC relationship with these partners, in order to expand employment opportunities and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

- **Objective 1:** Conduct outreach to employers, government, state agencies, and private businesses to increase employment of individuals with disabilities.
- **Objective 2:** Conduct outreach to increase education and understanding of the new Ticket to Work regulations.
- **Objective 3:** Increase interaction with other councils, particularly those that service individuals with disabilities.

Goal 3: Encourage SRC involvement in public policy development and advocacy to enhance service provision to individuals with disabilities.

- **Objective 1:** Educate SRC members about legislative issues that have the potential to impact VR and individuals with disabilities, and be informed about priorities of other disability organizations within the community, including membership in the Arizona Disability Advocacy Coalition (AzDAC).

4 Goal 4: Provide leadership to the SRC in furthering its mission, vision, and goals.

- **Objective 1:** Maintain fiscal accountability for the SRC.
- **Objective 2:** Partner with RSA regarding the Triennial Statewide Needs Assessment Project (SNAP).
- **Objective 3:** Promote diversity within the VR service delivery system and the composition of RSA staff.
- **Objective 4:** Promote diversity within the SRC.
- **Objective 5:** Partner with RSA on the RSA strategic plan.
- **Objective 6:** Partner with the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC).
- **Objective 7:** Update the SRC Full Council on RSA status and progress with the Federal Standards and Indicators.
- **Objective 8:** Update SRC Full Council on RSA progress with the Federal Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

5 Goal 5: Advise RSA to develop a statewide transition plan that addresses services to transition aged youth in order to prepare youth for employment by 2011.

- **Objective 1:** Initiate discussion with RSA regarding current transition practices.
- **Objective 2:** Determine baseline for services currently being provided by RSA to meet the needs of transitioning youth.
- **Objective 3:** Partner with RSA regarding research in relation to developing a statewide transition plan using recommended/ best practices.

6 Goal 6: Advise and partner with RSA in development of the VR State Plan and in reviewing implementation of the VR State Plan.

- **Objective 1:** Obtain a formal training for the SRC Full Council regarding VR State Plan content and submission including timelines.
- **Objective 2:** Determine a process regarding submission of SRC recommendations to assist RSA in developing workable timelines for completion of the VR State Plan.

7 Goal 7: Partner with RSA in development of a plan to increase employee satisfaction.

- **Objective 1:** Determine a baseline for the RSA Employee Satisfaction Survey results.



Membership

2011

Council Support

*Carolyn Maciel
Council Liaison*

*Nancy Kimball
Administrative Secretary*

Katharine M. Levandowsky

RSA Administrator

VR State Agency, Ex-Officio

Term: No Limit City: Phoenix

Julianne Bird

Disability Advocacy Representative

Term: 2008-2011 City: Chandler

Robert Blaylock

Business, Industry and Labor Representative

Term: 2007-2012 City: Mesa

William Downey

Disability Advocacy Representative

Term: 2006-2011 City: Tucson

Michael Duncan, Chair

Disability Advocacy Representative

Term: 2006-2012 City: Phoenix

Gretchen Evans

Disability Advocacy Representative

Term: 2006-2011 City: Phoenix

Erika Fillman

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Representative

Term: 2005-2011 City: Tucson

George Garcia

Specific Disability Representative

Term: 2009-2012 City: Laveen

Jenny Goeckel

Specific Disability Representative

Term: 2009-2011 City: Tucson

John Gutierrez

Client Assistance Program Representative

Term: 2006-2012 City: Phoenix

David L. Hirsch

Specific Disability Group Representative

Term: 2006-2011 City: Flagstaff



Mark Jacoby

Community Rehabilitation Program
Service Provider Representative
Term: 2009-2012 City: Phoenix

Suzanne Malson

Statewide Independent Living Council
Representative
Term: 2008-2011 City: Bullhead City

William McQueary

State Education/Special Education
Representative
Term: 2008-2011 City: Glendale

Donald P. Price

Current/Former Recipient of VR
Services Representative
Term: 2005-2011 City: Tempe

April Reed, Vice-Chair

Specific Disability Representative
Term: 2006-2011 City: Buckeye

Paula Seanez

I2I Project Director's Representative
Term: 2002-2010 City: Window Rock

Charles Tiller

Business, Industry and Labor Representative
Term: 2009-2012 City: Tucson

Elizabeth Toone

Disability Advocacy Representative
Term: 2007-2011 City: Prescott

Leslie Williams

Parent Training and Information Center
Representative
Term: 2009-2012 City: Phoenix

Chris Zabramny

Specific Disability Groups Representative
Term: 2009-2012 City: Tucson



Council Activities

2011

Highlights of the Council's activities this past year:

Employer Presentations

NCSRC Fall Conference

Untapped Arizona

TACE Training

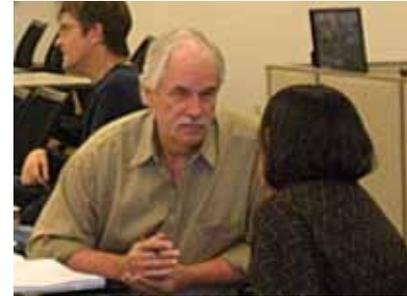
Pilot Employer Questionnaire

Employer Presentations

The Arizona State Rehabilitation Council developed an informative, visual presentation to inform and educate employers on the employability of individuals with disabilities, a largely overlooked labor pool. The presentation provided information on persons with disabilities as employees as well as members of society. Topics presented included myths and facts, typical accommodations, benefits employers receive when hiring persons with disabilities, potential tax credit information, and a list of website resources to obtain more information. Presentations were given throughout the year by SRC members to the Arizona Network of Employment and Training Professionals Association (NETPA), the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Institutes, and various other employer groups.

National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) Fall Conference

The NCSRC Fall Conference was held in Chandler, Arizona on October 23rd, 2011. Arizona SRC Chair, Mike Duncan provided a welcoming address to attendees. SRC Vice-Chair and Safeway Human Resources Division Manager, Bob Blaylock spoke to attendees about the employer presentations given by the Arizona SRC to underscore the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. Mr. Blaylock also gave a PowerPoint presentation on Safeway's collaboration with the community in developing training centers throughout the state and shared the development and growth of Safeway's efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving and maintaining employment with Safeway and other grocers in Arizona through hands on training and interview classes. Bob Blaylock explained Safeway's corporate commitment to social responsibility within the community and he offered to serve as a contact and resource for other entities that were interested in developing training centers



within their state. The NCSRC expressed interest in posting the Arizona SRC Employer Presentation on their website for potential use by other SRCs across the country.

Untapped Arizona

Over the course of 2011, Untapped Arizona (UAZ) has continued to build business engagement capacity and infrastructure. The capacity of the collaborative has grown over the year due to outreach to both businesses and community stakeholders. It is imperative for the business community to be aware of the UAZ resource as well as community stakeholders to be involved to support the coordinated effort to help businesses gain access to job candidates with disabilities.

UAZ participated in, and sponsored two key events to build capacity of business engagement activities including two Megellan Health Services job fairs and the Arizona State Society for Human Resource Managers Conference. In respect to building community stakeholder collaboration, UAZ has continued to hold regular monthly meetings with representatives from government and private sector agencies/organizations (.e. vocational counselors, job developers, human resource professionals, etc.) that all play a part in supporting people with disabilities to start or return to work. Additionally, UAZ provided a professional development opportunity for employment service providers. Employment service providers heard from a panel of human resource professionals who identified strategies and best practices to use in partnering with them to support job candidates with disabilities get employed.

To support infrastructure building activities, a small subset, representative of the stakeholder group, has served as core



advisors on the day-to-day operations and future organizational development opportunities for UAZ. UAZ is in the process of securing funding for the hiring of an Executive Director to oversee the organizational development of the non-profit organization as well as other capacity building activities. The purpose of the funding is to secure the sustainability of the organization by providing resources to institute and establish the self-sustaining non-profit organization governed by business leaders.

TACE Training

The Arizona State Rehabilitation Council continued its involvement with the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Institutes this year held in Tucson, Phoenix, and Flagstaff. TACE was created to assist community rehabilitation programs and their staff by providing continuing education opportunities in the field. TACE was sponsored by the Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies at the University of Arizona, College of Education, in collaboration with San Diego State University.

In addition to providing a presentation on hiring persons with disabilities, SRC member Bob Blaylock participated on a panel to discuss employer perspectives of hiring persons with disabilities. Additional segments included in the two-day institutes were the National Rehabilitation Association and Arizona Rehabilitation Association, history, role and importance of membership, veterans return to work issues, ethical challenges in changing times, overview of labor market information and how to assess for effective vocational rehabilitation and self-employment.



Pilot Employer Questionnaire

The Arizona State Rehabilitation Council initiated a pilot employer questionnaire which was distributed to attendees following SRC employer presentations. The questionnaire asked about the quality of the presentation, recruitment and hiring practices of employers, knowledge of benefits of hiring persons with disabilities, and preferred mode of communication. Preliminary results of the questionnaire indicated the majority of attendees found the information presented was useful but new to them, they primarily recruit employees through the internet and job fairs, they had positive experiences hiring persons with disabilities, and their preferred mode of communication for obtaining information was email followed by telephone, in person, and social media. A revised survey is planned for a larger employer distribution pool in the next year.

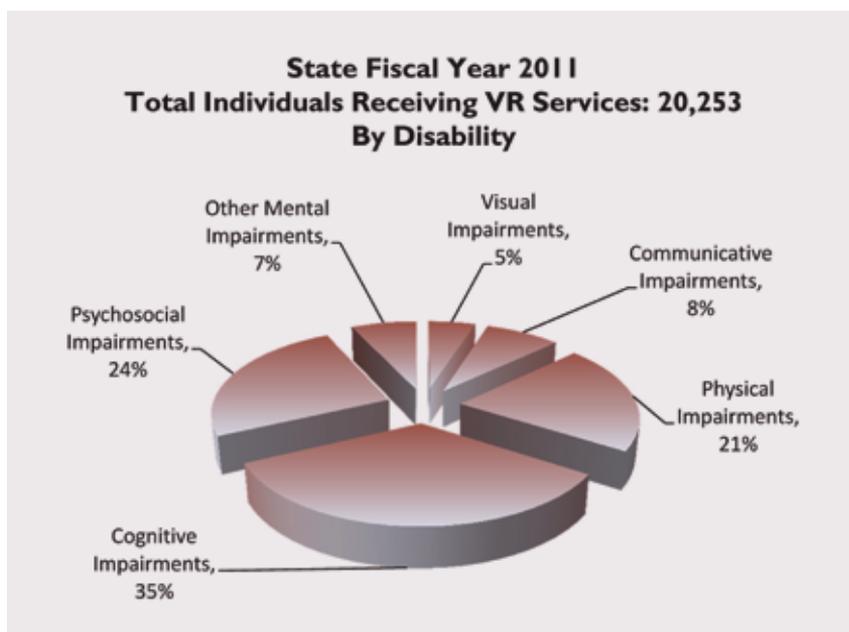
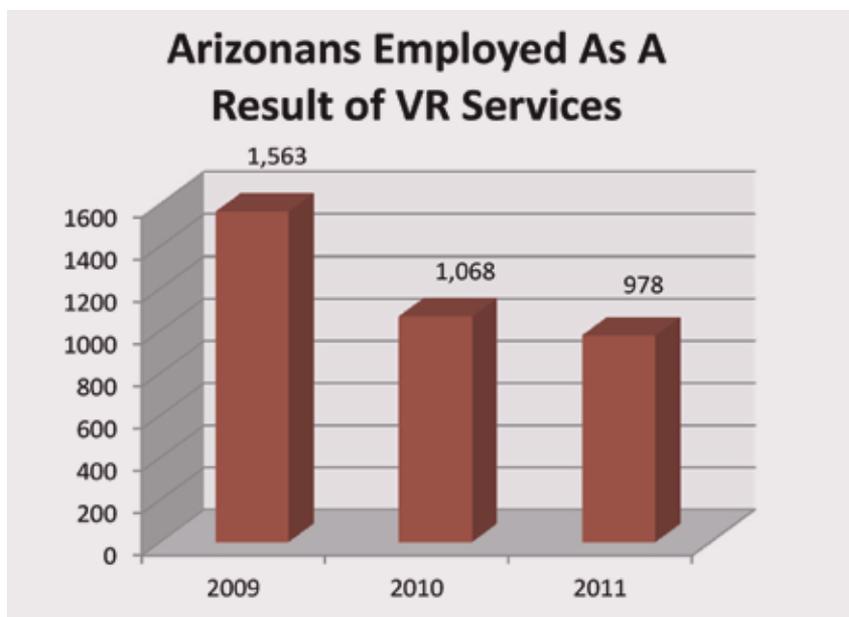


Vocational Rehabilitation

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.





VR Highlights

2011

A review of Vocational Rehabilitation Program activities throughout the year:

Eleventh Annual Transition Conference

Self-Employment

RSA Self Employment Survey

Arizona Industries for the Blind

Blind Enterprise Program

New RSA Mission Statement

Eleventh Annual Transition Conference

The Eleventh Annual Transition Conference, sponsored by the Arizona Department of Education and other agencies, was held October 3-5, 2011 at the Talking Stick Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona. The theme of the conference was Imagine It, Plan It, Do It, reflecting the creativity and energy of youth and young adults in determining their plans for adulthood.

The Transition Conference is a collaborative, cross stakeholder, professional development event aimed at providing meaningful and pertinent information in the transition planning process for youth and young adults with disabilities. Participants had the opportunity to attend sessions representing current and innovative perspectives from local and state leaders, and nationally known and respected experts in secondary education and transitioning youth with disabilities. The conference content areas were diverse, including topics such as community partnerships, family voice, special education in secure care facilities, career and job development, medical and social empowerment, youth and young adult empowerment, curriculum and instruction, and accessibility of community resources.

For the sixth consecutive year, Arizona's Transition Conference highlighted the creativity of youth and young adults with disabilities through displays of their artwork. In addition, a dedicated session was provided with content tailored specifically for a youth and young adult audience.

Self-Employment

Self-employment is a vocational setting that RSA's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program coordinates for some clients to assist with achieving the client's vocational goal. A self-employment setting requires that a client take personal responsibility for all business decisions/activities, including

control of services rendered, hours, pricing, and any ongoing needs for equipment and supplies. The client develops a self-employment business plan, including financials, marketing, and sales forecasts. VR clients have an opportunity to use the services of a consultant in developing their plans. All self-employment business plans of \$5,000 or more must be reviewed and approved by the RSA Self Employment Review Committee (SERC). The SERC meets once per month to review proposals. The VR client presents his/her business plan to the SERC, and can request the presence of the consultant in addition to his/her VR Counselor when presenting the plan. The SERC discusses each individual business plan, asks questions, analyzes the viability of the plan, and ultimately makes a determination as to whether the plan will be supported by RSA. Business plans are approved, denied, or occasionally conditionally approved, pending additional details or exploration of the VR client in relation to elements of the plan.

Fourteen VR clients' self-employment business plans were approved by the SERC in SFY 2011.

Fourteen VR client's self-employment business plans were approved by the SERC in SFY 2011. These included the following types of businesses: pool services, therapeutic and health related massage, leather care, a candle shop, a hair salon, ornamental ironwork, sand blasting, photography, illustrator/writer, landscaping, web design and graphic arts, and vision rehabilitation therapist. The VR Program is pleased to provide funding for VR clients small businesses and afford them the opportunity to use self-employment as a vocational setting to achieve their goals.

RSA Self Employment Survey

During SFY 2011, RSA completed a statewide telephone survey of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program clients who participated in the area of self-employment. The purpose of the survey was to analyze self-employment participation and outcomes by individuals with disabilities within the VR Program. The survey methodology included 50 current and former clients

with a self-employment type of plan in the VR database from June 2007 through March 2011. The selected respondents were interviewed by telephone. If three telephone contact attempts to reach the potential respondent were unsuccessful, the primary VR Counselor e-mailed the respondent, requesting that they contact survey staff. Survey areas covered such topics as funding, years of business operation, small business consultation technical assistance services, VR counselor satisfaction, government benefit status, marketing, business growth, pitfalls of starting a business, classes taken related to self-employment/business operations, and comments/advice related to self-employment to assist others in the future. Thirty-five surveys were completed from the 50 respondents selected. Thirteen of the respondents were closed successfully; four respondents were closed as unsuccessful. In the time period surveyed, four self-employment business plans were denied and 33 clients were still in plan. In addition, the survey results revealed that despite a difficult economic climate, all but one of the businesses created during the survey period were still functioning.

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. During SFY 2011, AIB paid approximately \$2.4 million in wages and benefits to 76 employees, who are blind, visually impaired, deaf-blind or with multiple disabilities.



During the fiscal year, AIB achieved total sales of \$19.1 million, representing an 8% decrease from the prior year. The decrease in sales was attributed to less demand for products sold to the military. AIB continues to pursue growth opportunities for employment and training in Document Management Services, Contact Center Operations, Production Services, and Warehousing & Distribution.

The AIB Rehabilitation Services Unit (RSU) provides support services to RSA and the community. Through the RSU, 60 blind and visually impaired individuals were provided with one or more of the following services: job placement, job retention, job search skills, labor market surveys, work site assessments, on-the-job training, work adjustment training and assessment, assistive technology training, and custom-produced turnkey computer and access technology systems. The RSU also assisted employers and RSA providers statewide with training and consultation.

Blind Enterprise Program

The Arizona Business Enterprise Program (BEP) trains and places qualified legally blind individuals as operators of merchandising businesses. Currently, the businesses consist of food service operations such as full service cafeterias, snack bars, gift shops, and vending operations.

During SFY 2011, BEP had to make further program and facility adjustments due to the economy. These adjustments involved some facility consolidation and service level adjustments to allow effected operations to remain profitable.

- In March of 2011, two BEP trainees began a six-month training program to become BEP Licensees.

During SFY 2011, AIB paid approximately \$2.4 million in wages and benefits to 76 employees who are blind, visually impaired, deaf-blind, and multiple disabled Arizonans.

Beginning with SFY 2012, Arizona RSA introduces a new Mission Statement, “The Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration will partner with eligible individuals who have disabilities to achieve employment and enhanced independence by offering comprehensive services and supports.”

- Of the eight roadside rest areas that were closed in SFY 2010, six were re-opened in October 2010 and are doing well in regard to generating much needed income and allowing two operators to re-open their facilities.
- BEP reviewed and established two new contracts to increase efficiency of services and support.

In SFY 2012, BEP will continue to focus on establishing additional opportunities through a Pinal County vending agreement and a statewide Postal Service agreement, as well as other possible vending locations. BEP will also continue soliciting and recruiting new qualified trainees, with plans to hold two six-month training programs. The focus of the training program is to increase efforts toward upward mobility among licensed operators and to seek out new individuals to secure new horizons.

New RSA Mission

Beginning with SFY 2012, Arizona RSA introduces a new Mission Statement: “The Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration will partner with eligible individuals who have disabilities to achieve employment and enhanced independence by offering comprehensive services and supports.” The mission statement is intended to be more encompassing of all services provided through Arizona RSA. A workgroup composed of administrative and field staff provided thoughtful consideration and valuable input in development of the statement and were essential to the process.



Client Successes

Celebrating VR client achievements!

A.R. is a 51 year old woman who initially applied for VR services in 2008. She had been a music teacher and a musician, but cervical radiculopathy caused the loss of function in her left arm, resulting in the loss of her employment. She had applied for but was not receiving Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). She had to leave her home in California and move in with her mother in this area, and was receiving public benefits. A.R. presented with transferable skills including her B.A. in Music. She had an extensive history as a music teacher and orchestra librarian. Her Individual Plan for Employment was developed with an employment goal of librarian. This goal was supported in the Labor Market research and would also accommodate her disabilities. She needed to obtain an M.A., and updated teaching credentials were also included to enhance her goal. She enrolled in an online course through the University of Arizona in Tucson. Services need by A.R. included Assistive Technology (AT) assessment and recommended devices, a computer, tuition and books, and maintenance when she was required to be physically present for workshops. In January 2010, she received her M.A. – Information and Referral, with an overall GPA of 3.4. She was able to earn this degree with VR supports of educational costs and assistive technology. She applied for librarian jobs posted online and received professional assistance with her resume. Although the recession has affected this vocation, she succeeded in obtaining employment in August 2010. She has moved back to California to enhance her job prospects, and is currently employed as a Music Teacher and Librarian at the International School of Monterey. Her accommodation is no large musical instruments and she is providing vocal teaching. She is working 28 hours a week, considered a full-time equivalent at the charter school, and she is receiving full benefits. She earns an annual income of \$43,680. As the economy recovers, her hours and librarian duties will increase. She is thrilled with this position and the environment of this educational institution. She anticipates long-term employment at the school and is grateful for VR support.

Matthew

Matthew was a self-referral to the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program in November 2009. At 26 years of age, he had struggled with keeping a job. There was often miscommunication between Matthew and his supervisors, causing him to get frustrated enough that he left jobs just to avoid the stress. He also lived in fear that his frustration or behaviors would lead to his being fired. Matthew indicated he had “learning troubles” and had difficulty with reading, writing, and problem solving. Through a psychological evaluation, Matthew was diagnosed with learning disabilities. He entered into an Individual Plan for Employment, with a goal of landscaper/groundskeeper. This goal was later changed to stock clerk. Matthew was matched with a job developer, and together they discussed how the employer would need to be supportive and understanding of Matthew’s needs for assistance in resolving issues at work. Matthew had no physical limitations and was anxious to prove to an employer how committed he could be to working. He obtained a position as a stock clerk at Kmart. Once in the job, Matthew needed initial and specific assistance in developing a method of accurately recording his work schedule. With the VR-provided job supports in place, it was discovered he lacked a sense of time which made him anxious and caused him to be late returning from lunch break. This was resolved when VR provided him with a digital timer that he could set to remind him to return from lunch promptly. Through the assistance of the VR Program and the partnership with his VR Counselor, Matthew was successfully closed from services on February 26, 2011. Matthew receives full benefits through his employer, works 30-40 hours weekly, earning a salary of \$8.25 an hour. Matthew was receiving food stamps and unemployment when he applied for VR services and he states he receives neither of these now. He no longer needs AHCCCS, as his medical benefits are provided through his employer. Matthew states that he feels this job is a good

match for him, and he is supported by his supervisors and appreciated by his co-workers. He is proud of the number of tasks he can complete independently, no one reminds him of his limitations, and he is frequently praised for the job he performs. He is grateful for this employment and for his independence, which he credits the VR Program with assisting him to obtain.

Chad

Chad attended the VR Program Orientation as he neared graduation from high school, and he became a VR client in 2008. Chad is diagnosed with autism, which primarily affects his ability to interact socially. Additionally, Chad needs extra time to process information and requires repetition in order to learn new tasks. At intake, Chad was receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) as a result of his disability. Chad completed high school and tried working with his father as a pipefitter. Despite numerous attempts, Chad was unable to retain positions due to the additional time he required to learn skills. Subsequently, Chad was enrolled in Career Exploration services offered by VR, and he decided to pursue the meat cutting program at the Maricopa Skills Center (MSC). VR paid for tuition, fees, books, and supplies. Chad required an extra month of instruction at MSC but successfully completed his training in January 2011. Job Development and Placement services were provided through VR, and Chad secured a full-time position with benefits as an Assistant Meat Cutter in the deli department of a major grocery store chain. Chad earns wages commensurate with individuals without disabilities in the same position. Chad has successfully maintained his employment and was closed by the VR Program as rehabilitated in June 2011. Chad anticipates he will earn enough money to be off SSDI by the end of 2011.

Sara is a young lady who participated in the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Youth Transition Program (YTP) at a high school in Gilbert, Arizona, and was eligible for VR services at that time. Sara had a diagnosis of ocularpharyngeal muscular dystrophy. She has limited range of motion in both upper and lower extremities. She uses a motorized wheelchair for mobility in the community and is able to move through her home using a seated walker. Sara completed an AA degree in Elementary Education at Chandler-Gilbert Community College, and was later hired as a paraprofessional for elementary-aged children at a charter school serving K-6, located in Mesa, Arizona. Sara has worked at the school for two years and plans to return next year. Paraprofessionals assist classroom teachers by providing additional instruction to small groups of students, completing duties as assigned such as copying worksheets and grading papers, devising worksheets for student use, and conducting testing of students. The VR Program provided Sara with tuition, fees, books and supplies for part of her degree program. Assistive technology and training was provided to circumvent the functional limitations imposed by her disability. Sara utilizes public transportation to travel to and from school, and distance education to meet her needs and complete her program of study. Sara works 20-25 hours per week and earns \$10.00 an hour, which is commensurate with her non-disabled peers. Sara works part time as she fatigues easily due to her disability. She continues to live at home with her family, and states the school is very willing to provide assistance where needed and willing to work with her needs. Sara's VR case was closed as successfully rehabilitated because she became gainfully employed. Sara recently reported she loves her job and the people she works with and remains a valued member of the school.

Molly

Molly was first referred to her VR Counselor in 2003 while enrolled in school. She had been diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at 14 months of age. The fact that she had a genetic predisposition toward this condition did not make the 12 corrective surgeries she had any easier. However, Molly possessed the intellect, fortitude and wisdom, coupled with the partnership she developed with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the VR Program, to set her upon the path that would lead to great things in her life. Molly walks with relative ease, having had surgery to straighten bones in her foot when she was in high school. Due to the expansive campus at the University of Arizona in Tucson, she required the assistance of a wheelchair to navigate it. The VR Program paid for disability passes so that she could park closer and shorten the distance to her classes, and contributed the cost of tuition and books. Molly assumed student loans, and worked part time jobs in a mall and café to pay for her education. In 2008, Molly graduated *summa cum laude*, of highest distinction, with a Bachelor's Degree and majors in literature and philosophy. Molly talked with her VR Counselor about her dream to become an attorney. Subsequently, VR conducted an evaluation assessing her future law office technology needs. In May 2011, Molly earned her Juris Doctor Degree from the University of Arizona, Rogers College of Law. As part of her program, she completed two internships at the Center for Disability Law and volunteered 100 hours for the Family Advocacy Clinic. The VR Program paid for her bar exam, and a 10-week preparation course. Molly intends to practice disability law. She will be assisting others to obtain benefits, uphold employee rights, adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and access accommodations, communication and education needs.



Client Satisfaction

Survey Results

In SFY 2011, satisfaction with last job obtained as a result of receiving VR services increased by 10 percent over SFY 2010.

In state fiscal year (SFY) 2011, there was a slight reduction in the number of clients who reported “Overall satisfaction with services provided by VR staff directly, especially your VR counselor,” with 72% of the respondents indicating satisfaction. This is a 4% decrease from the previous year and 3% from SFY 2009. The largest upsurge was in the “Satisfaction with the last job obtained as a result of receiving VR services” category with an increase from 51% to 61%. This is a 10% rise over the previous year and 14% over SFY 2009. Also improving from the previous year is the number of respondents reporting current employment. Fifty-eight percent report employment, which is 7% over SFY 2010. Decreasing by 1% is the clients reporting satisfaction with their job (74%); however, this figure indicates a 24% increase over SFY 2009 for the same time period.

Average hourly salary of successfully closed cases (26s)

SFY2009	\$12.24
SFY2010	\$11.71
SFY2011	\$11.20

	SFY 2009 Responses		SFY 2010 Responses		SFY 2011 Responses	
	Satisfied / Very Satisfied	Neutral	Satisfied / Very Satisfied	Neutral	Satisfied / Very Satisfied	Neutral
Overall satisfaction with services provided by VR staff directly, especially your VR Counselor	75%	10%	76%	8%	72%	9%
Satisfaction with the last job obtained as a result of receiving VR services	47%	10%	51%	32%	61%	21%
Currently working (Y/N)	59% Y	—	51% Y	—	58% Y	—
If yes, satisfaction with this job?	50%	5%	75%	6%	74%	13%

NOTE: The survey results should be viewed within an overall continued economic context for SFY2011. State budget and economic impacts affected both the job development process for clients, and delays and interruptions in service because of staff vacancies that could not be filled due to hiring freezes. The Priority One category under the Order of Selection was gradually reopened throughout the fiscal year, but Priority Two and Priority Three remain closed. Given these impacts, some decline in client satisfaction might reasonably be expected.



Statewide Directory

RSA Offices

RSA Administration

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 Phoenix, AZ 85007
 (602) 542-3332
 1-800-563-1221 (AZ only)
 TTY (602) 542-6049
 Katharine M. Levandowsky,
Administrator

District I Administration

3221 N. 16th St., Ste. 200
 Phoenix, AZ 85016
 (602) 266-6752
 TTY (602) 241-1048

District I Offices

NORTH 16TH STREET

3221 N. 16th St., Ste 200
 Phoenix, AZ 85016
 (602) 266-9206
 TTY (602) 266-9579

MESA

163 N. Dobson Rd.
 Mesa, AZ 85201
 (480) 890-7537

GILBERT – TEMPE

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 Gilbert, AZ 85233
 (480) 820-5629

SURPRISE

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

SCOTTSDALE

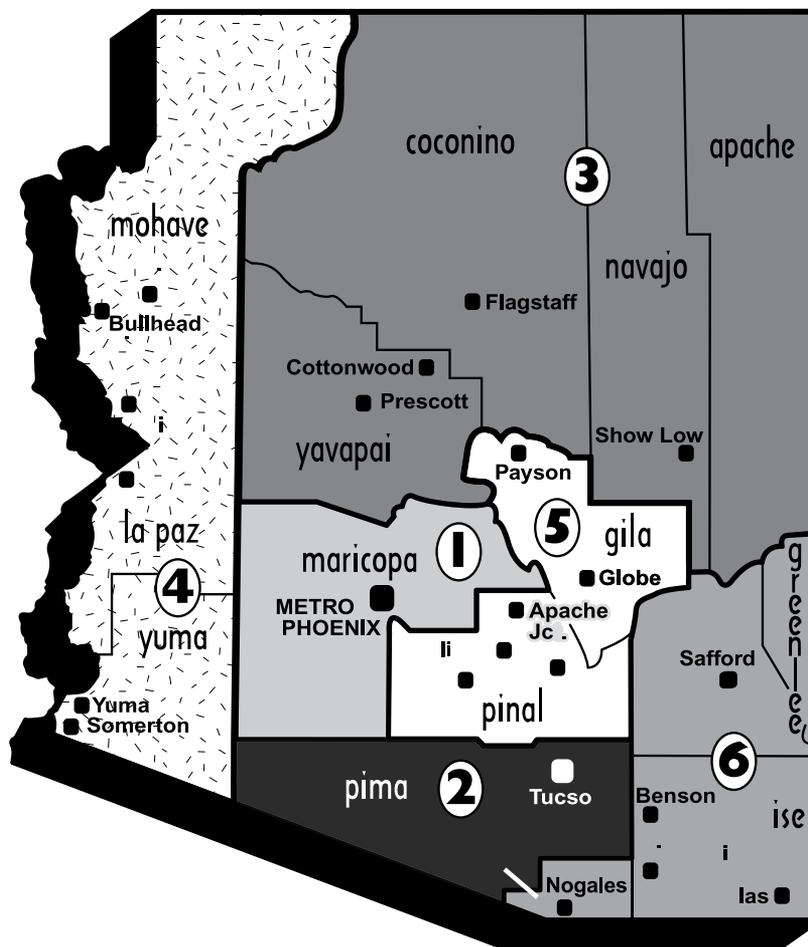
10900 N. Scottsdale Rd., Ste 401
 Scottsdale, AZ 85254
 (480) 948-3819
 TTY (480) 948-3819

NORTH CENTRAL / VA

3839 N. 3rd St., Ste. 303
 Phoenix, AZ 85012
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 TTY (602) 266-6716

TLAQUEPAQUE

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 Phoenix, AZ 85029
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 Phoenix, AZ 85031
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SOUTH PHOENIX

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District II Administration

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NORTHWEST

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TTY (520) 575-0295

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Tucson, AZ 85701
(520) 638-2980

SOUTHSIDE

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

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

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Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(928) 774-4557

PAGE

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Page, AZ 86040
(928) 645-4273

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. 12
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
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BULLHEAD CITY

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Bullhead City, AZ 86442
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TTY (928) 704-7713

LAKE HAVASU CITY

228 London Bridge Rd.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403
(928) 680-6007

YUMA

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Yuma, AZ 85365
(928) 274-8880

District V Administration

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District V Offices**CASA GRANDE**

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Casa Grande, AZ 85222
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TTY (520) 426-3963

COOLIDGE

1155 N. Arizona Blvd.
Coolidge, AZ 85228
(928) 723-5351

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TTY (480) 288-0697

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Globe, AZ 85501
(928) 425-3101

PAYSON

100 N. Tonto St., Ste. 100
Payson, AZ 85541
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District VI Administration

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Douglas, AZ 85607
(520) 364-4446
1-800-670-2028

BENSON

595 S. Dragoon St.
Benson, AZ 85602
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SAFFORD

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Safford, AZ 85546
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SIERRA VISTA

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