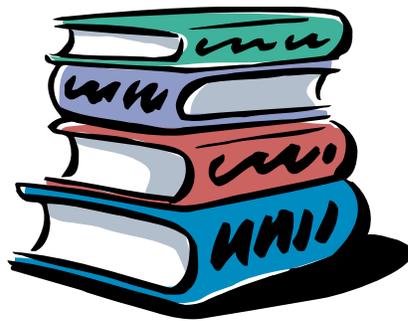


State Rehabilitation Council

Annual Report

October 2002-
September 2003



*Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Connecticut Department of Social Services*

December 2003

I am pleased to bring you the Connecticut State Rehabilitation Council's Annual Report for the federal fiscal year October 2002 - September 2003.

The Council membership is comprised of a great many role models in the field of vocational rehabilitation. They represent individuals who have succeeded in working with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services in obtaining and maintaining employment. They also represent individuals who have chosen to work in a profession that will assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining meaningful employment. The membership is the key component to ensuring that the Bureau is working well with the Council in achieving satisfactory outcomes.

The Council meets six times per year in full Council meetings. The Council has several committees which are responsible for carrying out specific activities. The Council meetings are held in different locations throughout the state of Connecticut so that local Bureau staff may participate.

The Connecticut State Rehabilitation Council moved forward this past year in achieving long-term goals such as ensuring greater satisfaction among the consumers working with the Bureau. It has hosted or participated in initiatives that will expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The Council is committed to continuing this work in the future as well as increasing its role in the decision making process within the Bureau. In this report, you will find numerous examples of accomplishments and goals that will speak to the above vision.

This next year will be one of opportunity for the Council. The leadership of the Council as well of the Bureau will be changing. With this change, comes the hope of an increasingly strong partnership between the Bureau and the Council to ensure appropriate and meaningful careers for individuals who have disabilities. This is a responsibility and an opportunity. I am confident that those who will take on this leadership will be open to possibilities, for only with this openness of mind comes great accomplishment. And, great accomplishment for individuals with disabilities is our ultimate goal.

Sincerely,

Helen K. Bosch, M.S.
Chairperson, Connecticut State Rehabilitation Council

Mission of the State Rehabilitation Council

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides assessment, advice and recommendations to the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and others regarding coordination and effectiveness of programs and strategies which promote community-based competitive employment for persons with disabilities.

Goals of the State Rehabilitation Council

To assess the effectiveness and delivery of vocational services provided by BRS to individuals with disabilities.

To improve the coordination of vocational services among BRS, state agencies and public and private entities for the benefit of consumers of BRS.

To make recommendations to the Governor, BRS and others for developing and improving strategies for the employment of, and vocational services for, individuals with disabilities.

Functions of the State Rehabilitation Council

To review, analyze and advise the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services regarding its performance in carrying out its responsibilities as the state agency designated to administer the public Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

To provide input to the Bureau in preparing the state plan for vocational rehabilitation services, as well as other plans, reports, needs assessments and evaluations.

To provide input to the Bureau regarding the Bureau's coordination activities with Connecticut's workforce investment system.

To review the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, the performance of the Bureau and other public and private agencies in providing vocational rehabilitation services to Connecticut residents with disabilities.

To prepare and submit an annual report to the governor of the state of Connecticut and the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

To coordinate with other advisory councils in the state which oversee services to individuals with disabilities.

To perform other functions as appropriate to the mission of the Council.

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

Committee Reports

Consumer Satisfaction

Purpose: To assess consumers' views of vocational rehabilitation, including evaluating the effectiveness of VR in assisting consumers to obtain and maintain employment.

Chairperson: Lee Nosal

Members: Kenn Messman, Linda Donahue

2003 Accomplishments

- Assisted with the implementation of the next consumer satisfaction survey
- Reviewed the results of this survey and provided feedback to the Council and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
- Based on the results of both surveys conducted by the Center for Research and Public Policy, planned for future assessments

2004 Key Goals

- Review the results of the New England Regional Consumer satisfaction survey
- Use the results of this survey to plan for future assessments as needed
- Assist with the implementation of the next consumer satisfaction survey

Intercouncil Coordination/Nominations

Purpose: To foster linkages with other councils that oversee or have input into the provision of rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities, to plan training for Council members to foster effective council teamwork.

Chairperson: Mike Valuckas, Heidi Mark

Members: Jerry Koret, Nancy Blackwell-Todd

BRS Liaison: Evelyn Oliver Knight

2003 Accomplishments

- Conducted outreach to nominees for appointment to the Council, with particular emphasis on broadening Business & Industry representation
- Continued to develop a resource manual of councils in the state that advocate for persons with disabilities
- Finalized the Web Site concept

2004 Key Goals

- Conduct outreach to nominees for appointment to the Council, with particular emphasis on meeting legislative requirements
- Organize orientation for new members
- Develop a Mentoring Program to increase Council participation and productivity

Policy and Planning

Purpose: To assist in developing the state and strategic plans for Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Chairpersons: C. Kwame Ocansey, Heather Harrison

Members: Ann Seigel, Pearl Brooks

2003 Accomplishments

- Reviewed the state plan and provided recommendations
- Organized and hosted a public forum in April at the MDC offices
- Provided (limited) monitoring of the legislative action plan

2004 Key Goals

- Establish an identity as Policy & Planning committee as separate from the legislative function
- Review the state plan and provide recommendations
- Host a public forum in the Spring of 2004

Business Partnership Committee

Purpose: To enhance employment outcomes for people with disabilities, while providing timely focused service to their employers, by fostering collaboration among all the related service providers and employers (public and private, for profit and non-profit); by assessing employer satisfaction with VR programs; encouraging coordinated training and orientation of employers, employees and co-workers; and determining and addressing the employment needs of business and industry.

Chairperson: Tom Savard

Members: Joyce Budd, Maggie Boyce, Mark Myers, George Narvaez

2003 Accomplishments

- Continued to monitor the Small Business Start-Up Grant Program. Followed up with BRS district offices to ensure adequate small business training and adoption of the team approach between the counselor and consumer in an effort to increase successful outcomes
- Offered financial and in-kind support for the Youth Leadership Forum which works in association with the Governor's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities
- Worked to establish a link between the SRC and Connecticut Business Leadership Network (CTBLN), a business-led initiative that promotes the hiring of qualified workers with disabilities in partnership with the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
- Worked with BRS district offices to create and establish a Summer Internship Program. The program is designed to prove out the capabilities and eliminate stereotypes for selected 2nd or 3rd year college students.

2004 Key Goals

- Continue to support the Youth Leadership Forum with financial and in-kind resources.
- Continue to monitor the Small Business Start-up Program

- Finalize the link between the SRC and the Connecticut Business Leadership Network (CTBLN), a business-led initiative that promotes the hiring of qualified workers with disabilities in partnership with the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. This is important because both organizations have similar mission statements and goals, providing a synergistic opportunity for a common board member.
- Finalize details and fund the Summer Internship Program for 2 qualified disabled college students. Monitor the success of the outcome through a client satisfaction survey as well as a company/customer satisfaction survey.

Legislative Planning Committee

Purpose: To keep updated on Federal and State regulations of persons with disabilities, also involvement with developing state strategic plans for VR

Chairpersons: Ray Venter, Lois Rosenwald

Members: Brita Darany

2003 Accomplishments

- Worked with BRS staff to implement state plan of action by reviewing updates and submitting recommendations
- Utilized public forum to discuss the state plan
- Developed a Legislative Action Plan working with the Executive Committee
- Implemented legislative advocacy training for council members

2004 Key Goals

- Work with BRS to develop state plan
- Host public forum during Spring of 2004
- Commit to keep updated on legislative plans
- Visit legislators and establish contacts
- Respond to Action Alerts that impact the Bureau

Membership on the State Rehabilitation Council

Members of the State Rehabilitation Council are appointed by the governor of the state of Connecticut. The membership includes representatives from the BRS consumer community, business and industry, community-based providers of vocational rehabilitation services, advocacy organizations, and state agencies that serve individuals with disabilities. A majority of the members of the Council have physical and/or mental disabilities.

The director of the designated state agency, which is the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services of the Connecticut Department of Social Services, serves *ex officio* on the Council, as does a student representative.

Members of the State Rehabilitation Council

Helen K. Bosch, Chairperson
Linda Wallace, Vice Chairperson
Francis McCarthy, Secretary
Mark Myers, Treasurer

Madison
Middletown
Woodbridge
Canton

Nancy Blackwell-Todd (*Bridgeport*) * Maggie Boyce (*Shelton*)

Pearl Brooks (*Bridgeport*) * Joyce Budd (*Shelton*) * Margaret Cordeiro (*Milford*)

Brita Darany (*Greenwich*) * Nancy Dolan (*New Fairfield*)

Linda Wheeler Donahue (*Southbury*) * George Dowaliby (*Middletown*)

John Esteves (*Stratford*) * Lynn Goodrich (*New Britain*)

Heather Harrison (*New Britain*) * Jerry Koret (*Hamden*)

Michael Krieger (*Pleasant Valley*) * Morag MacDonald (*Bloomfield*)

David Majeski (*Hartford*) * Marty Mancuso (*Litchfield*)

Heidi Mark (*Meriden*) * Kenn Messman (*Bridgeport*)

Keith Mullinar (*East Hartford*) * George Narvaez (*New Haven*)

Libera Nosal (*Milford*) * Cephas Kwame Ocansey (*Portland*)

Lois Rosenwald (*Wallingford*) * Tom Savard (*Easton*)

Ann Seigel (*West Hartford*) * John Shea (*Hamden*)

Diane Thompson (*Sandy Hook*) * Mike Valuckas (*Waterbury*)

Raymond Venter (*Lisbon*) * Marybeth Waltman (*Rocky Hill*)

Susan Werboff (*Hartford*)

*For information on the State Rehabilitation Council or
the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, contact:*

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State Rehabilitation Council Liaison***

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Please visit our Website: www.brs.state.ct.us

*The Department of Social Services is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative
Action Employer, and offers its programs regardless of race, color,
national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation,
religion, age, sex, or marital status.*

*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this report is
available upon request in large print, braille, or on audiocassette
or computer diskette.*

State of Connecticut
John G. Rowland, Governor

Department of Social Services
Patricia A. Wilson-Coker, Commissioner

Claudette J. Beaulieu, Deputy Commissioner of Programs

Michael P. Starkowski, Deputy Commissioner of Administration

John J. Galiette, Interim Director
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Richard E. Carlson, Interim Chief
Client Services

Brian M. Merbaum, Interim Chief
Disability Determination Services

Evelyn Oliver Knight, Editor
Organizational Support