

**NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (N.S.R.C.)  
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 9am

Rehabilitation Administration  
751 Basque Way, Carson City, NV 89706  
&  
Vocational Rehabilitation  
3016 West Charleston Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89102

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Raquel O'Neill  
Judy Swain  
Rebecca Rogers  
David Nuestro  
Tucker Morgan  
Jack Mayes  
David Fisher

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Alex Goff  
Austin Olson  
Sandra Sinicrope

**GUESTS/PUBLIC:**

Steven Cohen, member of the public  
Cindi Swanson, member of the public  
Carley Murray, Nevada PEP  
Doralee Martinez, member of the public  
Emire Stitt, DP Video Staff  
Julie Irish, DP Video Staff  
Nicholas Merk, DP Video Staff

**STAFF:**

Homa S. Woodrum, Deputy Attorney General  
Javier Fernandez, VR Liaison to NSRC  
Drazen Elez, VR Administrator  
Sheena Childers, VR Bureau Chief  
Mat Dorangricchia, VR Northern District Manager  
Marshal Hernandez, VR Rehab Manager  
Faith Wilson, VR Quality Control Specialist  
Laura Fink, VR Counselor  
Shay McGee, VR Transition Coordinator

1. **CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS, AND VERIFY TIMELY POSTING OF AGENDA**

Raquel O'Neill, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Javier Fernandez NSRC Liaison called the roll.

Mr. Fernandez determined a quorum was present and verified that the posting was completed on time in accordance with Open Meeting Law.

2. **FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT**

Raquel O'Neil opened floor to public comment. Cindi Swanson member of the public wanted to hear more about Nevada being an Employment First State and what that means and the strategies of how it is implemented. Ms. Swanson would like to see it on an upcoming council meeting to hear updates on the

particulars of how it affects the state and the workers. Ms. Swanson would like to add that the Colorado Model of Employment First strategy of all agencies working together with employees and employers working together with government agencies. Ms. Swanson has concerns over the efforts of helping the employers, but not a lot going into teaching the employees to use and access benefits for becoming employed. The Colorado model has very specific plans and would like to see it implemented in Nevada.

Stephen Cohen a member of the public, mentioned he is looking forward to working on NRS 284.327 with VR staff to work on implementing changes to the proposed language to the 700 Hour Program.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MAY 10, 2022, MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. O'Neil asked the council for any modifications, changes, corrections to the May 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes.

Jack Mayes made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Judy Swain seconded. All in favor, none-opposed, none-abstained, motion carried.

4. **POLICY & PROCEDURE CHANGES MADE FROM MAY 10, 2022, NSRC MEETING**

Faith Wilson, VR Division Quality Control Specialist presented the policy items and updates to be voted on for approval from the NSRC Council from the May 10<sup>th</sup> NSRC Meeting. New additional changes include:

**Nevada Rehabilitation Division Additional Updates to Participant Services Policy Manual for Nevada State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Date: 09/13/2022**

Policy and Procedure Combined Manual was 441 pages. Version 8 Participant Services Policy Manual is 118 pages.

Note that the definition Competitive Intergraded Employment is in the Definition of Terms and Acronyms which will be included in the manual. **New Target Effective Date: 10-01-2022**

**Topic: Recipients of SSI and SSDI Benefits for a disability**

**Clarification or Change Summary:**

Remove references that a participant receiving SSI or SSDI will be expected to contribute 75% of their SSI/SSDI allowance to the cost of their living expenses before VR provides maintenance funding for a student to attend a training institution.

Applies to Sections:

12.5 Post-Secondary Education and Training at Vocational Training Facilities

12.8 Maintenance and Services to Family Members

16 Comparable Services and Benefits

**Explanation:**

This comes in response to RSA Technical Assistance Circular (RSA-TAC-22-03) which prohibits beneficiaries of SSI due to a disability and SSDI from financially participating in the cost of VR services. The TAC is attached to this email for your reference.

NV- VR has implemented via directive to staff.

**Topic: OIB Reference**

**Clarification or Change Summary:**

Added reference specific for the OIB program when individuals with a disability makes an informed choice not to pursue an employment outcome under the vocational rehabilitation program..... as applicable, refer

individuals to the Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program.

Applies to Section 6 Application and Intake

**Explanation:**

This comes in response to NSRC Member recommendation from 05-11-2022 meeting.

Ms. O'Neil opened the floor for discussion on the additions.

Mr. Mayes shared the changes with the CAP staff and the feedback was that clients understand that CAP is not mandated to be involved in the Appeals Process in Section 22. Mr. Mayes wanted to be on record that CAP does not get involved with the client in the appeals process if the individual does not want them to be.

Drazen Elez, mentioned the changes are part of the initiative that VR has making accessible documents in many different formats. We have taken out the technical state processes and language from the policies. The VR Policy and Procedures Document has been reduced for the clients to comprehend their rights, benefits, options, services, and procedures in a clearer accessible format.

Ms. O'Neil asked for a motion to approve the changes.

Jack Mayes, motioned to approve the changes to the policies as reviewed. Judy Swain seconded the motion. All in favor, none-opposed, none-abstained, motion carried.

Ms. O'Neil thanked Faith Wilson and her team. Changes will be effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

5. **NSRC ANNUAL REPORT FIRST DRAFT**

Emire Stitt, DP Video contractor reviewed the annual draft report. Ms. Stitt mentioned the brochure is designed with the branding of VR logo, coloring, state shape and contemporary clean lines. We tried to make the brochure appealing, but also speak to a younger audience. We tried to be creative add more visual content with less text. People can very quickly see the statics that relate to the accomplishments to Vocational Rehabilitation.





www.VRNevada.org  
https://detr.nv.gov

Administration Office  
751 Basque Way, Carson City, Nevada 89706  
(775) 687-6860

Vocational Rehabilitation is an Equal Employment Opportunity program/service.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request during consultations with counselors and service providers.

**YOU CAN ALSO FIND US ON:**



THE SERVICES AND/OR GOODS DESCRIBED HEREIN ARE FUNDED, IN PART, WITH FEDERAL FUNDS AWARDED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION UNDER THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, AND/OR THE INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES FOR OLDER INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND (OIB) PROGRAMS. FOR PURPOSES OF THE VR PROGRAM IN NEVADA, THE FEDERAL VR GRANT PAID 78.7 PERCENT OF THE RELATED COSTS. IN FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2019, NEVADA VR RECEIVED \$19,623,751 IN FEDERAL VR FUNDS. FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE STATE OF NEVADA AND/OR ACQUIRED FROM OTHER NON-FEDERAL SOURCES PAID 21.3 PERCENT OF THE RELATED COSTS (\$5,211,130). FOR PURPOSES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM, FEDERAL FUNDS PAID 95 PERCENT OF THE

TOTAL COSTS. IN FFY 2019, NEVADA'S VR PROGRAM RECEIVED \$69,685 IN FEDERAL SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FUNDS. STATE APPROPRIATED FUNDS PAID 5 PERCENT (\$4,003) OF THE TOTAL COSTS UNDER THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. FOR PURPOSES OF THE OIB PROGRAM, FEDERAL FUNDS PAID 90 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL COSTS INCURRED UNDER THE PROGRAM. IN FFY 2019, REHABILITATION DIVISION RECEIVED \$221,143 IN FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS FOR THIS PROGRAM. FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE STATE PAID 10 PERCENT (\$24,571) OF THE TOTAL COSTS INCURRED UNDER THE OIB PROGRAM. (775) 687-6860

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**ABOUT NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

**OUR VISION**

A skilled and inclusive Nevada workforce.

**OUR MISSION**

The Mission of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) is to help ensure the Vocational Rehabilitation Programs (Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation and Bureau of Services to persons who are Blind or Visually Impaired) are consumer oriented, consumer driven and the programs' services and resources result in competitive integrated employment outcomes for Nevadans with disabilities.



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**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) is a citizen advisory council appointed by the Governor to serve both as a partner and to provide guidance to the state's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program.

The Council includes people with disabilities, community rehabilitation program staff, vocational rehabilitation counselors, advocates, VR clients and business leaders.



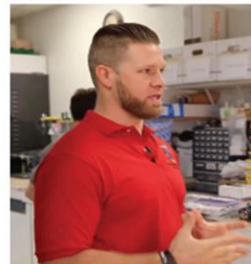
**Program Planning**

Members engage in strategic planning and provide guidance to promote competitive and integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.



**Assistance**

The Council assists in shaping policy, by guiding and assisting in making thoughtful, participant-focused decisions through needs assessments, consumer satisfaction surveys, and ongoing program evaluations.

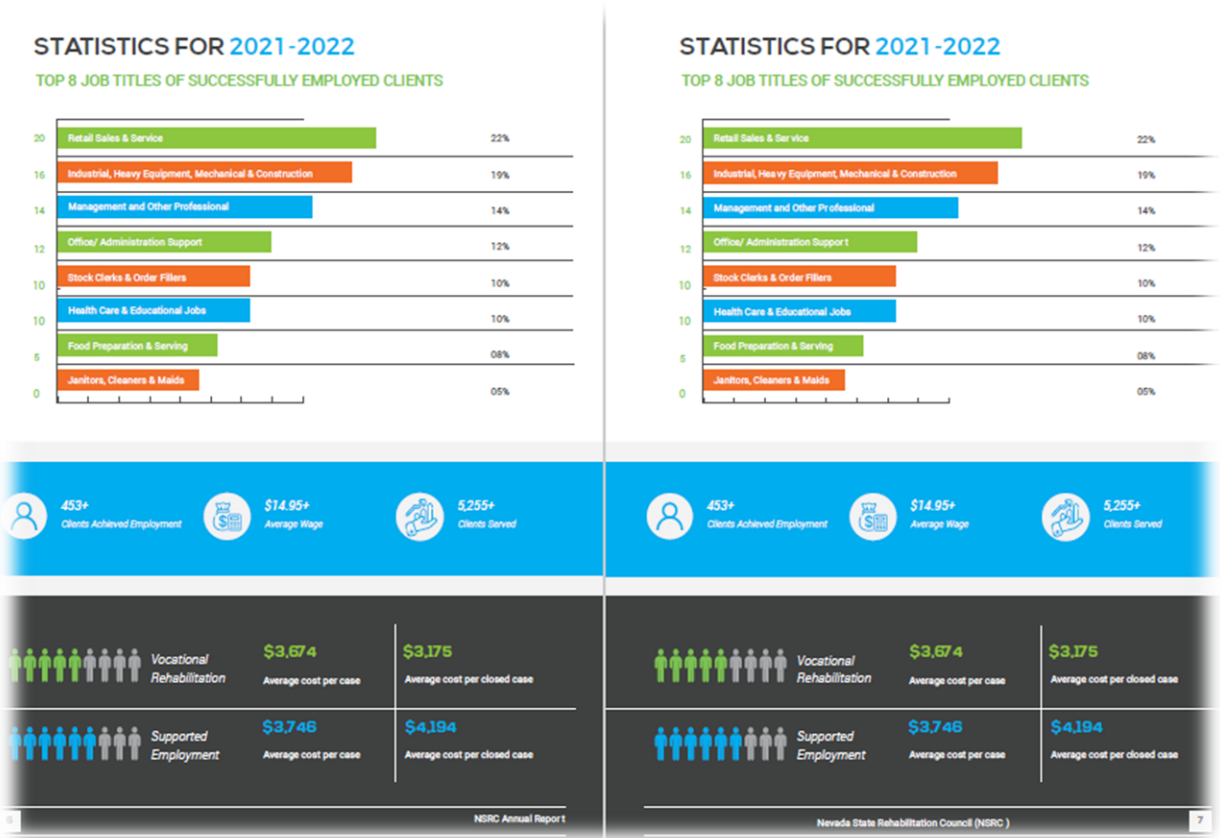


**BECOMING A COUNCIL MEMBER**

For more information on becoming a council member, contact the Rehabilitation Division Administration office at 775-687-6860, or visit our website at <https://detr.nv.gov>.


Applications for Governorial appointment to the Council may be found at <http://gov.nv.gov/boards/application-information>.

Ms. Stitt mentioned the figures are referring to statics and accomplishments of VR clients and are very compact. The brochure is very graphic heavy and has the bright colors.




Ms. Stitt mentioned for the success stories we kept the vision as text brief as possible.





## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD)

Students with Disabilities (SWD) Who Received Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) FFY21

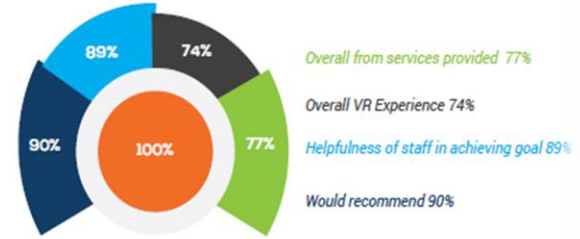
 <p><b>221 Students</b></p> <p>221 Students without Open VR Cases Spent \$34,179</p>	<p>+</p>	 <p><b>707 Students</b></p> <p>707 Students Served with Open or Closed VR Cases Spent \$301,201</p>	<p>=</p>	 <p><b>Total of 928</b></p> <p>928 Total Students Served Pre-ETS Spent \$335,380</p>
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**928 Students Served Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)  
\$335,380 Total Spent on Services Provided**

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## CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH VR IN %

The association between client satisfaction and survey response is only partly understood. In this report, we describe the association between average satisfaction and survey response rate across different services surveys, and model the association between satisfaction and propensity to respond for individual clients.



## CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH VR COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE IN %



## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR RAQUEL O'NEILL



**Raquel O'Neill**  
Chair of NSRC

Raquel has bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Las Vegas, Nevada. In social work, Raquel worked as a vocational rehabilitation counselor of state services to the blind, technology assistant through Easter seals teaching blind Veterans computer skills, then later worked as a disability specialist at both CSN and UNLV to provide equal access to college aged students with a variety of diverse abilities. Most recently Raquel has completed a clinical internship concentrating on therapeutic interventions with persons who have survived trauma. Now with her clinical home in social work, she passionately strives to lead our only blindness skills training center, BlindConnect, as president and program manager.

*JK*

As a newly elected chair of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC), it is an honor to present our 2021 Annual Report. As we reflect on this past year, many of us are reminded of the pandemic and how it impacted so many in varied ways. In Nevada, no one group was unaffected whether through their health or through the loss of a loved one or a job. During this time, we were all joined as one as we endured the repercussions of the pandemic. However, with the negative came some very positive things. We saw people's compassion as they reached out to their neighbors or provided emotional or fiscal support to loved ones or even a stranger during their time of need.

During this unprecedented time, we also saw opportunities created for persons with disabilities like never before. Through the emergence of universal virtual engagement, new opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate and stay involved in community and employment grew. This enhancement of the virtual environment in our daily lives helped bridge gaps in communication access, transportation needs, broaden services to rural areas, and forge new partnerships amongst organizations and groups for growing stronger services.

The NSRC recognized the need to provide guidance to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) leadership and community about challenges and solutions for employment of people with disabilities throughout Nevada especially during and post the pandemic, when employers faced a challenge in finding employees, a very real need resulting in thousands of jobs. While not all the jobs may be tailored for individuals with disabilities, the Council and VR are geared up to find jobs for disabled Nevadans.

While there are many things we continue to learn from the pandemic, I believe adversity and struggle will guide us to innovating a brighter and better future. I look forward to working with other council members and our community partners in making a difference for all Nevadans.

Respectfully,  
Raquel O'Neill

## OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS



**RAQUEL O'NEILL**  
Chair

Former VR Client  
BlindConnect



**DAVID NUESTRO**  
Vice Chair

Disability Advocate  
Rehead Supports



**REBECCA ROGERS**  
Disability Advocate



**MARY BRABANT**  
Member

Business, Industry & Labor  
Goodwill of Southern Nevada



**ALEX GOFF**  
Member

Business, Industry & Labor.



**JUDITH SWAIN**  
Member

Rehab, Program Rep.  
Opportunity Village



**ALLISON STEVENS**  
Member

Parent Training & Information  
Representative



**MARSHAL HERNANDEZ**  
Member

VR Counselor, Non-voting

**LETTER FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR**  
**DRAZEN ELEZ**



**Drazen Elez**  
Administrator, DETR  
Rehabilitation Division

Drazen Elez was recently named as Administrator of the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DE TR) Rehabilitation Division.

As the Rehabilitation Division Administrator, Mr. Elez is charged with oversight of Nevada's vocational rehabilitation and blind enterprise programs which are designed to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities. He also oversees the state's determination of eligibility for Social Security disability and supplemental security income.

I am pleased to join the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) in presenting the 2021 Annual Report that details our accomplishments from October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021. During this time, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has placed 453 individuals with disabilities into competitive, integrated employment, with an average wage of \$14.95/hour. We have also provided pre-employment transition services to 928 students with disabilities.

In Nevada, we have over 327,000 working age Nevadans with disabilities (ages 21-64) and of those, 58% are unemployed, compared to 21% of unemployed workers who are not disabled. People with disabilities constitute the nation's largest minority group as well as the ONLY group that any one of us can become a member of at any time. Of working Nevadans with disability, one quarter lives in poverty, which has only been exacerbated by the effects of the prolonged pandemic. These statistics show why it is so important that we continue to work on our mission to connect with Nevada businesses to understand their employment needs while creating incentive programs that develop the strengths, priorities and talents of individuals with disabilities assisting them with their entry into Nevada's workforce.

We could not carry out our work without our community partnerships with BlindConnect, Opportunity Village, Goodwill, SEPHORA, Bloom, Starbucks Roasting Plant, and Amazon to name a few. These partnerships enable us to continue expanding access Nevada employers have to a large talent pool of qualified individuals with disabilities. This helps not only seekers but employers as well, as full inclusion of people with disabilities has a transformative and positive impact on their business performances and ensures they have a diverse and inclusive workforce.

I would like to express my appreciation to all our community partners, but most of all to the State Council and our staff, whose dedication to Nevada's persons with disabilities is steadfast and is the reason why so many of us get up and begin our day of service. As we look to the horizon, we are reminded of how precious life is and our renewed commitment to ensuring that all persons are afforded a happy, healthy, independent and productive lives. Making a difference for all Nevadans.

Respectfully,  
Drazen Elez

**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**

**Danielle Bay-Trujillo**  
Rehabilitation Technician II at Ely, NV outreach office



Danielle Bay-Trujillo has held numerous positions in various fields throughout her career that have provided her with the experience and knowledge for her current position including her position as a team lead in an automotive service department, a supervisor for hospital admissions, a realtor, a florist, a barista, and cosmetologist. In these diverse careers, she has gained skills for time management, people management, active listening, developing policies and procedures, creating reference manuals, record keeping, phone etiquette, scheduling, multitasking, patience, deescalating stressful situations, urgency, customer service, and much more.

Danielle is also a member of the Policy and Procedure Review Team where they meet to see how they can improve to make the job easier and flow better for all departments. After two years, she continues to be positive and looks forward to learning even more. She is honest and direct about how much she enjoys working for the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation's Rehabilitation Division and is thankful for the opportunity's VR has presented.



**Danielle Bay-Trujillo**

Having a passion for helping others and wanted to make a difference in people's lives. She knew she wanted to be a part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) when she first read about VR. Coincidentally, there happened to be a position open where I live in Ely, so she applied and was selected for the position. Over the past two (2) years, she has been able to help the Ely area become more aware of Vocational Rehabilitation services. She has spoken at the local high schools and made progress with promoting VR in the clinics, pharmacies, schools, and other businesses around town. With the Rehab Counselor position vacant, Danielle had also been covering the area and taking on more responsibilities as well as assisting the Las Vegas area by filling in when Rehab Tech positions are vacant.

**TEAM SPOTLIGHT**  
**BUSINESS SERVICES TEAM**

The Business Services Team (BST) works collaboratively with local and national business partners to develop strategies that support businesses who want to build and maintain an inclusive workforce. The partnerships with public and private sector businesses help to increase awareness of the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.

Businesses call on BST for no-cost disability awareness training, in person and online recruitment tools, information about hiring incentives and job accommodations.

BST also provides employment information, resource materials, technical assistance, and training to the Nevada's BVR Teams statewide, supporting the successful implementation of local employment strategies. Utilizing the services of the Business Services Team benefits Nevada's Employers in the hiring of people with disabilities.

**GOVERNOR SISOLAK JOB FEST 2021**  
December 7th, 2021



**OUTREACH EVENTS AND TOURS**

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



Event	Date	Location
Summer Job Fair	7/9/2021	Las Vegas Convention Center
Governor's Job Fest	12/7/2021	Las Vegas Convention Center
Nevada Association for Behavioral Analysis	4/2/2022	401 S. Maryland Parkway
Spring Job Fair	4/15/2022	Las Vegas Convention Center
Governor's Provider Summit	4/19/2022	Las Vegas Convention Center North Hall
Small Business Job Fair	5/4/2022	Johnson Street Library
Public Service Job Fair	5/5/2022	Las Vegas Convention Center West Hall
Spring Job Fair	6/15/2022	Nevada State Convention of Commerce Convention Center
Vegas Chamber Business Expo	6/16/2022	World Market Center

Employer	Date	Location
Safelite Defense Tour	10/20/2021	1379 Raiders Way, Henderson
Researcher Tour	5/6/2022 and 5/11/2022	1083 Clifton Street, Reno
BK Foods	6/6/2022	5555 Quail Manor, Reno
Armasor	6/8/2022	2730 N. Virginia Street, Reno

CLIENT  
SUCCESS STORIES

FULL STORIES ONLINE



**BRANDON GOLONKA**  
*Team member at Red Robyn*

Brandon Golonka applied for services in 2016 as a 17-year-old student of Reed High School and joined the collaborative program between Vocational Rehabilitation and Washoe County School District known as VOICE ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**OSCAR CHAVIRA**  
*Geo technical/civil engineer*

Oscar Chavira is from Battle Mountain, a small town in rural Nevada, but that did not stop him from achieving his academic and vocational goals. He was admitted to University of Nevada, Reno after graduating ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**TABATHA AVILA**  
*Child Development Associate*

Tabatha Avila is 42 years old and has a mild intellectual disability which impacts her written language abilities. She has had three cases with Vocational Rehabilitation, all closed successfully. Her first vocational goal ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



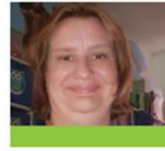
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NVSR Annual Report

CLIENT  
SUCCESS STORIES

FULL STORIES ONLINE



**WAYDD RECHAR**  
*Veterans grieving counselor*

Waydd came to VR for services on June 6, 2019. As a military veteran, a former felon, and a person with a disability, he has overcome so many obstacles and faced life head-on with a determined and positive attitude. ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**BRIAN RODRIGUEZ**  
*Gift shop cashier at Aria*

Brian has been on a journey of growth and self-improvement, possibly without being aware of it. Brian is a returning client, this being his 4th case with Vocational Rehabilitation. Brian Rodriguez is a 43-year-old ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**ROBERT SANDOZ**  
*Ruby Radio Associate*

Robert Sandoz, a 2019 graduate from Elko, is an avid outdoor person who enjoys hunting and fishing even though he has a Mobility Orthopedic/Neurological Impairment due to a stroke ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**SINA LOPEZ**  
*Walmart Associate*

Sina applied for services on February 18, 2020 and was determined to be eligible on April 6, 2020 due to her Cerebral Palsy. However, she was ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**BURNETTA SCHLECHTER**  
*Manager of Next Level Cafe*

Burnetta Schlechter applied for Vocational Rehabilitation services in 2017. She initially expressed an interest in working as a licensed ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**ALEM ABREHA**  
*Accounting Assistant*

Alem Abreha is originally from Ethiopia where he attended high school and pursued his studies in nursing. In December 2004 ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>

Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC)

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SUCCESS STORIES

FULL STORIES ONLINE



**JOSHUA GIURLANI**  
*DETR/ VR Administrative Assistant II*

Joshua (Josh) Giurlani came to Vocational Rehabilitation in August of 2020. He worked with his Rehab Counselor to become eligible for services and find a suitable employment goal. At the time of his intake, Josh's stated disabilities were ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**LAWRENCE FAULK**  
*Substitute Teacher - CCSJ*

Lawrence Faulk applied for VR services in March 2021. Due to Covid 19, he wanted to start over. He left Ohio and moved to Las Vegas to be closer to his sister. Lawrence was working with Ohio Disability Agency, where he was diagnosed with Bipolar which ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



**TANYA CASTILLO FLORES**  
*Teacher - Washoe County School District*

Tanya originally enrolled at Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) in 2016 in the Associate of Arts degree program in Early Child Education. She was already working as a mentor and volunteer in the Enliven Program ... read more at: <https://vrnevada.org/success-stories/>



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*Geo technical/civil engineer*

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NVSR Annual Report

CLIENT  
SUCCESS STORIES

FULL STORIES ONLINE



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Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC)

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Ms. Stitt mentioned the stories were kept to short sentences to start the conversion and invite the view in.



They can scan a QR code to que the story up online, some of them will be translated to video narrative for them to watch them or for them to just read online. They can see all the faces that speak of the success stories. The initial design will change as there have been many changes since the first view.



### INTERNAL JOB DEVELOPMENT TEAM PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

*"Teach people how to sell their skills, not their disabilities" is the motto of Sandra Mitchell, the Senior Job Developer on Vocational Rehabilitation's Internal Job Development Team (IJDT). Sandra is so passionate about the work of the IJDT. She says it is "Our job is to give people hope and confidence."*

This specialized team was formed in November 2019 out of a need for non-supported employment clients, who still needed encouragement, guidance and job seeking skills development to get the supports they needed to find a job, without hiring an external job developer. The IJDT Supervisor, Tammy Riley explained that some of the most valuable services they provide are resume development, application skills, interview preparation, job seeking skills, 700-Hour Program coordination, 30-day follow along and most importantly they listen.

Another key service provided by the IJDT is to register Vocational Rehabilitation clients referred to the team for job development with the state's EmployNV system, which is the tool in the state to match job seekers with employers seeking employees. Sometimes it takes time to get a job, and it can be a slow and frustrating process. The clients really appreciate having someone to vent their concerns to, and that the human connection is so important. The philosophy of the IJDT is to not simply provide job development, but to also teach clients skills on

how to do their own job development so they will be able to help themselves if they are ever unemployed in the future. The team often hears back from prior clients all the time telling them that the skills they learned while working with the IJDT helped them do their own job search and get hired for a new job. Staff on the team often say with pride makes the work on the IJDT so rewarding.

The IJDT is comprised of Supervisor Tammy Riley, Job Developers Sandra Mitchell, Michele Ray Morales and Felicia Dorsey, Rehabilitation Technicians Aimee Matts and Margaret Mack and Administrative Assistant April Beets. Way to go team and thank you for making a difference in Nevada!

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### Partnership Profile

### SEPHORA

In 2019, Sephora embarked on a journey to hire individuals with disabilities in our Las Vegas Distribution Center, in partnership with the Nevada Vocational Rehabilitation (NV VR) and Capability Health and Human Services.

Through our strong partnerships, the distribution center now has 35 full time employees with a disability - and that number continues to grow. The partnership with NV VR has been instrumental in the success of our program. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, counselors have continued to send a steady stream of referrals for potential new employees, which has even resulted in a wait list!

The program consists of a paid 9 weeks of on-the-job training that readies individuals for full-time employment by teaching specific job skills and providing evaluations. During this training program, trainees will learn three core job functions and are held to the same standards as all employees. At the end of the training program, successful trainees will join Sephora as full-time employees, earning equal pay and full benefits.

The opportunity to employ the clients of VR has had a huge impact on Sephora, and has created more opportunity for individuals with disabilities to have a level of independence and stability that they may have not had before. Overall, we have seen low turnover, absenteeism and safety incidents, plus improved productivity. We look forward to our ongoing partnership.



### COLLABORATIONS

*"It is the collaborative effort that paves the path to overwhelming success. Simply, we are just better together."*



Nevada VR's ongoing partnership with the Lyon County School District brads funding to improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities in Lyon County by providing them with support, resources and access to college and career pathways.



TheNextStep, is a collaboration with the Carson City School District and VR. The Next Step serves students from 18-22 who are interested in exploring work, having work-based learning experiences and developing their vocational skills in preparation for employment.



There are several Project SEARCH collaborations in Nevada. The first collaboration is with Clark County School District (CCSD), Sunrise Hospital, and Mountain View Hospital and Regional Transportation Commission. In the north, the collaboration is with the Washoe County School District (WCSD) and Atlantis Casino Resort Spa. In both collaborations, high school students are assigned to work sites at locations where they can complete several work rotations with support from their teachers and VR work-based trainers.



The Vocational Opportunities for Inclusive Career Education (VOICE) collaborative between the Washoe County School District (WCSD) and the State of Nevada, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program has served over 150 students during the 2019-2019 school year and focused on pre-employment transition services, work readiness skills training and specialized job development for the achievement of competitive, integrated employment for these students and youth.



Nevada is proud of the two CareerConnect collaborations between VR, Western Nevada College and the Truckee Meadows Community College. The program focuses on VR youth transitioning from high school to college and it provides guidance to students to acquire the academic preparation, work readiness skills, internship opportunities, and job development necessary to successfully complete college and obtain competitive integrated employment.

### COLLABORATIONS

*"It is the collaborative effort that paves the path to overwhelming success. Simply, we are just better together."*



The Career, Recreation and Vocational Education (CRAVE) camps held in Southern and Northern Nevada are geared for high school students with disabilities and provide students with hands-on experience with college life, living in the dorms, learning how to navigate the college system, communicating with professors, learning about budgeting for college, time management and job readiness skills.



VR has embraced the legislatively-enhanced 700 - Hour Program, which creates employment pathways for individuals with disabilities. These employment opportunities are with state agencies, and afford the employer and employee 700 hours to determine if the individual is a good fit for the job. This program has been highly successful, having placed over 100 individuals in the last year and a half.



In order to meet the expressed needs of business, VR has partnered with University of Nevada Reno, the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) and Professional Institute of Technology and Accounting (PITA) to develop soft skills classes. These classes prepare VR clients to meet the rigors of today's employment and include resume development, submitting online applications, reporting to work on time, work attire and hygiene, employer relationships/social skills, chain of command, employer workplace culture and communicates with a reverse job ask.

## COLLABORATIONS

*"It is the collaborative effort that paves the path to overwhelming success. Simply, we are just better together."*

### SEPHORA

The Sephora Training program is a collaborative training program between VR, Capability Health and Human Services and the Sephora Distribution Center in North Las Vegas. The training lasts 9 weeks, and clients learn soft skills as well as rotate between 3 warehouse/stocking positions in the warehouse. Once successful, the clients become permanent employees of Sephora. This collaborative program has served 27 clients in the last state fiscal year (7/1/19 - 6/30/20). Of those 27 clients, 24 continue to be employed.



The Starbucks Roasting Plant "Inclusion Academy" started in October 2015 by our Business Services Manager. Selected Vocational Rehabilitation clients are given the opportunity to join a customized pre-employment training program in the Starbucks Roasting Plant in Minden, NV. Clients learn in a classroom setting and hands-on in the workplace. Many are offered positions upon completion of the work-readiness training program. All who complete the program receive a certificate of completion of their bona fide training from this recognized industry leader.

Over 40 individuals with disabilities have been hired out of this program, for a 77% success rate.



Pathway to Work is a collaboration with Opportunity Village, Desert Regional Center, and VR. With a placement rate of 96%, Pathway to Work is a work-based learning program offering job coaching support and an extended training for individuals located in the community with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD).



## MORE COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS

*In appreciation, we acknowledge our other partners and collaborations:*

- American Council for the Blind
- Amplify Life
- Blind Center
- BlindConnect
- Bloom Consulting
- Capability Health & Human Services
- CART Church Hill Area Regional Transportation
- Colorado Center for the Blind Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities (CSPD)
- Community Services Agency
- Desert, Sierra and Rural Regional Centers (ADSD)
- Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe
- Fort Mojave Tribe
- Goodwill of Southern Nevada
- Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults
- Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Nevada
- JORN Inc.
- Marshall B. Ketchum University (iba Southern California College of Optometry Low Vision Clinic)
- Moapa Band of Paiutes
- National Federation of the Blind National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT)
- Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD)
- Nevada Blind Children's Foundation
- Nevada Department of Education, Career and Technical Education
- Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center
- Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD)
- Nevada JobConnect/DETR
- Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) member colleges and universities
- Nevada Youth Training Center (NYTC) NevadaWorks
- Opportunity Village Pride Industries
- Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
- Sephora
- Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley
- School Districts Statewide Starbucks Roasting Plant
- TAI-Talent Assessment, Inc. (TAI-Labs)
- The Sho-Pi Tribe in Owyhee
- University of Nevada, Reno, Center for Excellence in Disabilities
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRT-ACQM)

Julie Irish, DP Productions mentioned this is the initial design and have gone through with Mechelle Merrill and Drazen Elez and found ways to consolidate and make it more concise, by getting all the important information up front to the reader immediately. We will be making changes to some horizontal charts to a pie chart. The Vision and Mission Statement will be removed and me more about the NSRC Demographics and represented of the council. We removed a few pages that where not necessary this year. We are going to stick with icons, graphics, and imigary. A new page highlighting the Business Services Team is a great addition this year. This year we only have four Success Stories on a page limited to 12 stories.

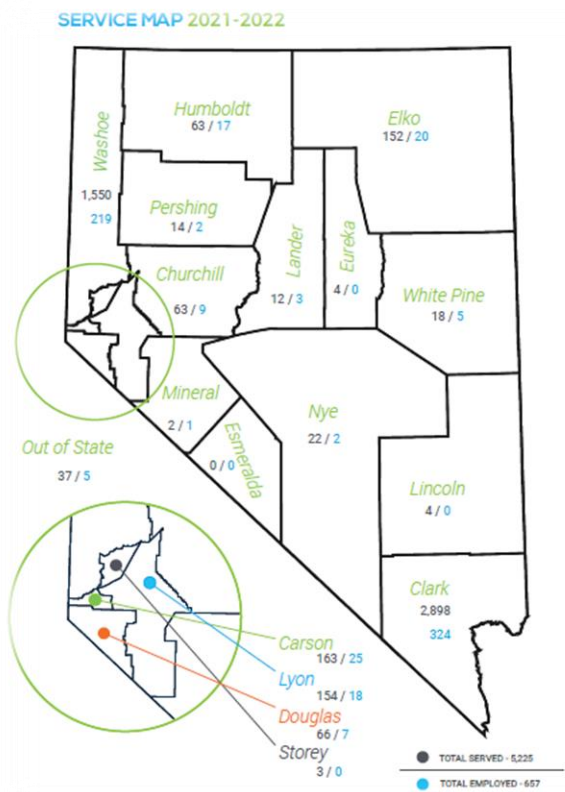
Ms. Irish indicated page 24 will be a tear out page and will have a few updates. We will be updating a lot of little things and updating to a fresh new and visibly appealing for your readers to understand the NSRC and Vocation Rehabilitation very quickly. Ms. Irish indicated that the totals will be updated to be current and the information you see are just placeholders.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

The following update from the 2021 Legislative Session cites the law that was approved and became law on July 1, 2021, and will have impact on Vocational Rehabilitation as well as some programmatic up-dates and changes that were approved by the Legislature.

## OFFICE LOCATIONS BUREAU OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Address	Phone
1933 North Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701 (Carson)	(775) 684-0400
4501 South Virginia Street, Suite H-1, Reno, NV 89509 (Reno)	(775) 284-9600



**VR Nevada**  
Vocational Rehabilitation  
At Work for Disability Inclusion

[VRNevada.org](http://VRNevada.org)  
detr.nv.gov

**(775) 687-6980**  
Administrative Offices

**761 Bosque Way**  
Carson City, NV 89708

**Dorson Box**  
Administrator, DETR  
Rehabilitation Division  
d-e-l-e-a-s@detr.nv.gov

**Michele Merritt MS, CRC, CPM**  
Deputy Administrator of  
Programs  
mwmerritt@detr.nv.gov

VR Nevada provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain jobs.

VR Nevada administers the Supported Employment Program to expand employment options for individuals with the most significant disabilities through intensive training, supervision, and other vocational rehabilitation services.

VR Nevada works closely with Nevada's businesses to fulfill their needs for trained and skilled employees in any area of commerce.

VR Nevada assists students with disabilities to successfully transition from secondary school to work or higher education.

**VR NEVADA SERVICES INCLUDE:**

- Counseling and guidance
- Assessments
- Assistive technology
- Transportation
- Occupational and vocational training
- Job placement and development

**FACTS FOR FFY20**

- 5,265 participants served
- 453 individuals achieved employment
- \$13.60 average hourly wage
- 1,228 students served pre-employment transition services

**Top Five Job Titles Achieved by Participants**

- Offshoring/Outsource Support
- Construction Occupations
- Food Preparation
- Maintenance
- Sales and Retail Occupations

**Primary Disability Breakdown of Employed Participants**

- Cognitive: 32%
- Mental Health: 20%
- Physical: 20%
- Hearing: 17%
- Visual: 14%

Find VR Nevada on:

Ms. Irish opened the floor to any questions or suggestions of the new formatting.

Judy Swain mentioned that page 21 “Pathway to Work program” is only offered at the Rio, that we have not been at Centennial Hills hospital or Get Fresh in a couple of years.

Ms. Stitt mentioned no of the content is final and only placeholders, that nothing is finalized yet. This is just the basic layout, and this is just copy and paste from last year’s NSRC Annual Report.

Jack Mayes, mentioned, we are services to the visibly impaired too. Is this document going to be in a format that is accessible to our visually impaired or blind clients as well?

Ms. Stitt mentioned “Absolutely all documents, social media, websites are 100% in ADA Compliance.”

Ms. O’Neil verified that DP Productions has done a wonderful job with labeling and tagging all the photos throughout the document and are able to be read by a couple of different screen readers. Ms. O’Neil mentioned a few suggestions. As you put it together, I strongly urge to use Uniformed Person First Language throughout the report. I noticed a couple of the headers like Students with Disabilities is framed good. Disability Breakdown of Served Clients, suggest we put person first and stay consist in the document.

Ms. Irish mentioned the chart was going to be changed to a pie chart, but that is a good note to focus on.

Ms. O’Neil consistence, page four, and page 6 the numbers do not match for the amount of people served. Ms. O’Neil would like the number to be highlighted to be celebrated as a success to the amount of people gainfully employed. Ms. O’Neil asked for further comments from the council.

Drazen Elez, VR Administrator, would like to add that this is a new face lift to the report. This year we wanted to change a lot of the information and are very fortunate to have Emire and her team help and work with us to update and make it fully accessible to everybody. Ensuring that it is a multiple media brochure and not just a pamphlet. It has a technical presence and has current video of clients that have received services this year. We feel this is a huge update in years.

Ms. O’Neil mentioned she is looking forward to the final draft in November. Final Draft will be voted on in the November Meeting.

6. **PROPOSED 2023 NSRC MEETING SCHEDULE**

Ms. O’Neil opened the floor to discussion for the meeting dates for the 2023 NSRC Council Meetings. Meeting dates are scheduled as February 7, May 9, July 5, September 12, and November 7. Possible issue is with July 5th meeting is too close to the Holiday.

Mr. Mayes had the same concern about the meeting date so close to the holiday. Mr. Mayes asked to move it to a different week, with a lot of people taking the whole week off and trying to pay attention after a holiday.

Ms. O’Neil asked for a motion by the NSRC Council to accept the meeting dates with the July State Plan meeting date changed to July 11th.

Mr. Mayes made the motion to accept the proposed meeting dates along with the changes suggested. Tucker Morgan seconded the motion. All in favor, none-opposed, none-abstained, motion carried.

7. **PRESENTATION BY THE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION TEAM (PRE-ETS)**

Shay McGee, VR Transition Coordinator presented an overview of the Pre-ETS Transition Team.



## AGENDA

- Who is the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)
- What are BVR Pre Employment Transitions Service (Pre-ETS)
- Pre-ETS Modules:
  1. Job Exploration Counseling
  2. Work-Based Learning Experiences
  3. Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities
  4. Workplace Readiness Training
  5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy
- Instruction Options
- Benefits of Pre-ETS
- Requesting Pre-ETS
- BVR Continuum of Services



Pre-ETS

Ms. McGee spoke about the acronym's and what they are. She mentioned they go over the 5 required modules, so they can explain what is happening in the classroom and some of the details in each module. She mentioned they talk about the instruction and how it can happen in the classroom, virtual or outside the classroom. She mentioned her team goes over the benefits from a parent perspective to the kids. She mentioned they like hearing the benefits from the teachers and how the collaboration benefits them and their kids. They go over the request process and what it looks like to request Pre-ETS services. She mentioned they talk to the parents and the students about what the teacher goes through, and what it looks like to them as a client receiving Pre-ETS services to being a client and they go over the Continuum of Services.



Ms. McGee mentioned they go over the different departments the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation offers and the services that are available. They present an overview of the 5 departments, Blind Services, Business Enterprises of Nevada (BEN) Program, 511 Supportive Services, Deaf & Hard of Hearing and the Pre-ETS department. She mentioned they provide information for the community to understand the different services we offer to service individuals with all sorts of disabilities, that services are available to them.

**WHAT IS PRE-ETS???**  
*Pre-ETS bridges the gap between disability and self-sufficiency.  
Pre-ETS is the earliest BVR service a student with a disability can access.*

- **Who qualifies???**
  - Ages 14-21
  - Documented Disability
    - IEP, 504, other documentation
  - Enrolled in an educational program
- **Who delivers?**
  - Pre-ETS Providers come to YOU
  - FREE services
- **There are 5 modules under Pre-ETS:**
  1. *Job Exploration*
  2. *Post-Secondary Education*
  3. *Workplace Readiness Training*
  4. *Self-Advocacy*
  5. *Work-Based Learning Experiences*

The infographic also features a central circular logo for Pre-ETS (Pre-Employment Transition Services Nevada) connected to five colored circles representing the modules: Job Exploration (grey), Post-Secondary Education (yellow), Workplace Readiness Training (blue), Self-Advocacy (green), and Workbased Learning Experiences (orange).

Ms. McGee spoke about the specifics of the getting into the Pre-ETS program, qualifies as an eligible student, age 14-21. She mentioned the documents needs such as IEP, 504 or other documents needed. She mentioned they talk about the definition of a student with a disability and the educational programs they would need to be attached to, to qualify. Delivery of services, the providers and services are completely free to the students and the families. For the teachers this is an opportunity for you one to come alongside

them and support them in the hard work they are already doing in the classroom.


### 1. Job Exploration



## 1. JOB EXPLORATION

- In-demand Industries & Occupations
- Administration of Vocational Interest Inventories
- Student Vocational Interest Results
- Non-traditional Employment Options
- Identifications of Career Pathways of Interest to Student
- Labor Market
- Career Awareness

Ms. McGee highlighted they go over the job exploration helps students to understand all the different the opportunities that available to them in the different industries and the labor market to those industries. She mentioned there is no limit to what they want to do. The early they can take advantage of the opportunities to start looking at what they want to do with their life, it makes the counseling portion when they become a client much smoother and allows them to transition from their IEP to an IPE with more clarity on what their goals are and what is out there from them.



## 2. POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Awareness of the 18 Broad Categories of Occupations
- Understanding Skill Development & Knowledge Relate to Future Opportunities
- Information & Guidance on PSE:
  - Community Colleges
  - Universities
  - Trade/Tech Schools
  - Military
  - Certificate Programs

Ms. McGee commented on Post-Secondary Education not only universities, but all the different capacities also they can gain educationally from Trade/Tech schools, Community Colleges, Military, Certificate programs

### 3. WORKPLACE READINESS TRAINING



Ms. McGee mentioned they speak about the readiness for applying for jobs, completing resumes, and even showing up at the job, soft skills needed for the job and learning independent living skills. Ms. McGee mentioned the importance for the parents to be prepared for what it is going to be like for the student to live independently. She mentioned the teachers already have the tools for the students and it is important for the parents and students to know about time management and money management to sustain live self-sufficiently.



## 4. SELF-ADVOCACY

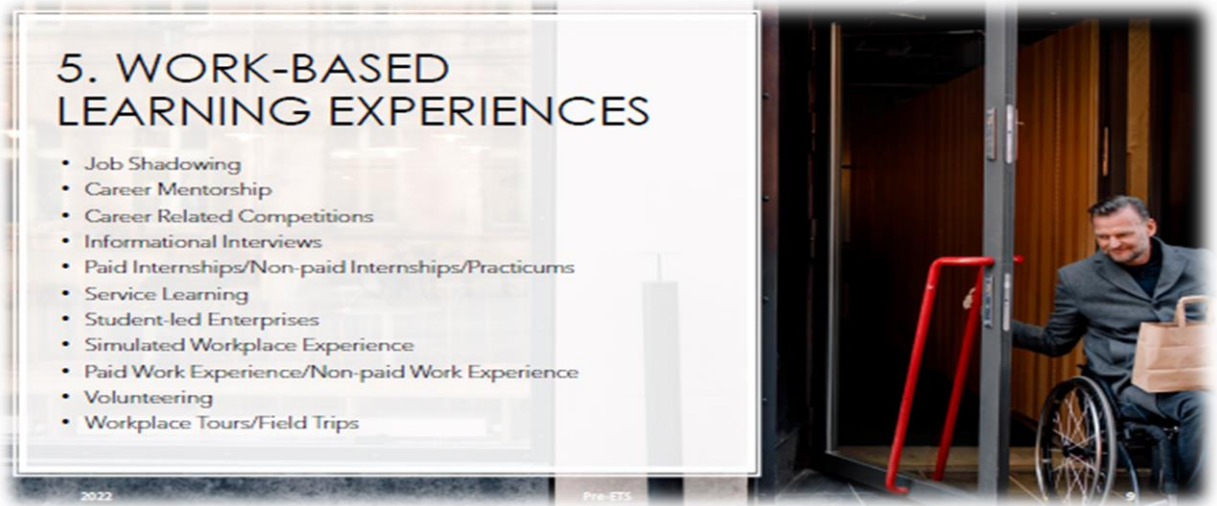
- Topics including:
  - Self-awareness
  - Disability Disclosure
  - Decision Making
  - Goal Setting
  - Evaluating Options
  - Identifying Independence
  - Requesting & Utilizing Accommodations
  - Knowing Your Rights & Responsibilities
  - Self-Determination
  - Knowing How to Request & Ask for Help
  - Intrinsic Motivation
  - Taking a Leadership Role
  - Assertiveness
  - Listening to Others' Opinions
  - Self-Monitoring Progress

2022 Pre-ETS 8

Ms. McGee mentioned Self-Advocacy is important for the student to set boundaries for themselves in the workplace or anywhere. The importance of disclosure or when it is needed, how to go about disclosing to create spaces for yourself when others do not know how to function or speak to you. Ms. McGee mentioned the importance for the student to speak for themselves, and to be assertive in the world. The Self-Advocacy model helps student learn the skills and tools to navigate through school, the workplace or wherever their



path leads them.



Ms. McGee mentioned this Model is the textile experience this module is the work-based learning experience, whether the student can do a career mentorship with someone in the industry already and carved out that path to success that they would like to work towards. We have opportunities for them to do volunteer work and when they became clients, they also have opportunities in the community to do paid work experience as a client. This gives the student a being as to what a work-based learning experience is, and it can be expanded on when they become a client.



Ms. McGee mentioned the key thing when talking to teachers they understand the modules taught in the classroom are aligned with the requirement of Indicator 13 which teachers use to develop their IEP plan. We want them to know the modules they bring to the kids are aligned with them at a state level.



Ms. McGee mentioned they go over with the teachers the forms they will need to fill out for services. She mentioned they go over each of the four forms and the details in which are needed to the referral for services. The team goes over the different type of services available provided in the classroom, virtual, after school job clubs and camps during certain times in the year.

## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE VENDOR

### In the classroom

- Communication between you the coordinator and the vendor.
- The vendor to come on days you've selected and present the WIOA required modules to your students.
- You would stay in the classroom with your students.
- Each vendor is slightly different so if you have questions or concerns, please bring them to your coordinator.

### In a virtual class

- The lesson can be self-paced or directed by a provider.

### With afterschool clubs & summer camps



2022 Pre-ETS

Ms. McGee mentioned the expectations from the teachers and the parents as to what it is going to look like when someone comes into their classroom and the expectation that the teachers to stay in the classroom. She mentioned different vendors maybe in the classroom and if that does not work for the teachers to say something to a coordinator to address and act on immediately. The if the needs of the student are not being meet in the diversity of the way the student is being taught that they address the needs and concern to be

addressed. Ms. McGee mentioned they have a ratio of 12 to 1 that the vendors can request and adjust accordingly to the needs of the class and student.

Ms. McGee mentioned the picture is from the CRAVE Campus held at UNLV Campus over the summer. Student got to spend the whole week on campus and have the experience of staying and sleeping at the dorms and eating in the cafeteria. During the day they were exposed to different industries and had tours. She mentioned it was a great opportunity to see the kids at the end of the camp and got to meet different people from all over the city. It was great to see the way they all came together as a group. At the end of the week got received certificates and shared a delicious meal together.

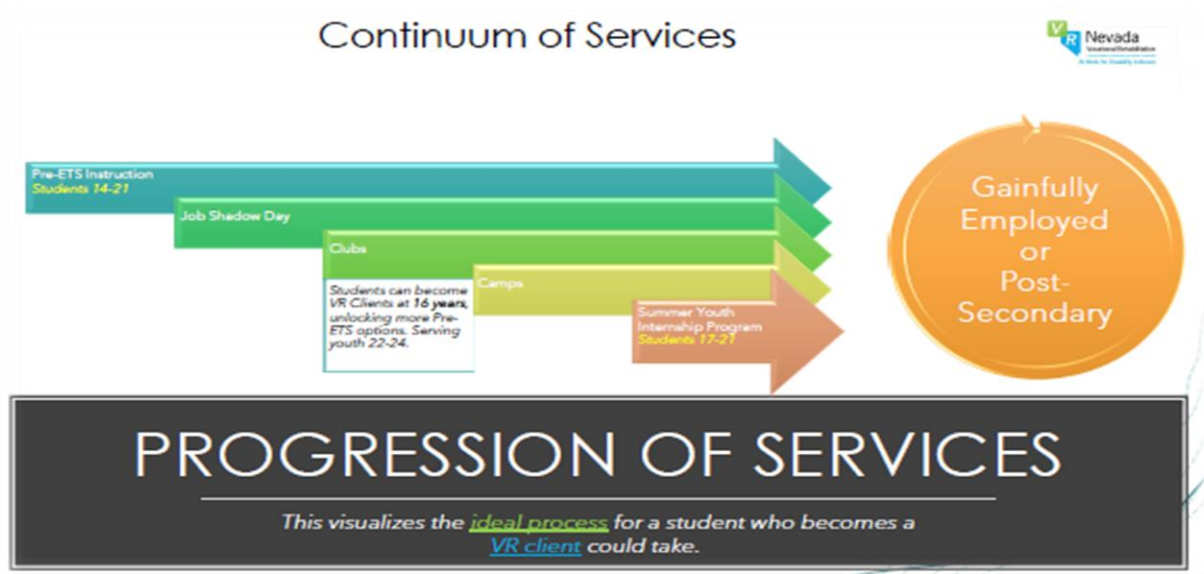


Ms. McGee mentioned at this point they like to engage with the teachers and what they feel the benefits are having these resources available to them. When we are speaking to parents and students, we are asking them as well what they see as the benefits we do ask them what they see as the benefits. Then we can highlight them in the presentation.



Ms. McGee mentioned the walk-through process with the teachers how to request for services, once they

are clear on who we are and what we are offering and who is eligible for the services. We walk them through what the request form looks like, what the consent form looks like that the student needs to complete. Ms. McGee mentioned the show what the process of getting a vendor looks like. At the very end when instruction has happened, and services have been provided. We let the teacher know we are going to have them fill out an evaluation and how effective the vendor was and is more detailed when the evaluation the student does. The student does a two-page evaluation on what they liked the most, liked the least, a couple of check boxes of what they took away from the modules.



Ms. McGee mentioned the Continuum of Service this is where we help teacher, parent, or student understand what the services are. We help them understand services are completely free, and available for students with disabilities from ages 14-21 and the other benefit is that any student 16 or higher can apply for VR services. We walk them through that the application looks like, now what we have a digital application. We talk them through the process of having a counselor and what it looks like, and set some realistic expectations, when an intake how happen and who would be reaching out. We speak about the additional services that open up to them when they become a client. They became more excited and are able to do out Summer Program Internship where they have a paid summer internship. They have so many more opportunities when they become a client and we share in that excitement and opportunities.

Ms. McGee mentioned in short that is the presentation her team shares with families and teachers. She mentioned the end goal is it gain and sustain employment and post-secondary education as well.



Ms. McGee mentioned at the end they have a survey and the QR code on the PowerPoint will take them

to the survey to give them feedback on the presentation. They are able to provide their thoughts and comments or what they would like to see in the presentation to be helpful.



Council members had concerns over the 511 Support Team and the Pre-ETS involvement with the needed certificate needed to have for employment in a Sub-Minimum Wage employment. Sheena Childers, VR Bureau Chief will provide a presentation on the 511 Support Team for a better understanding and the regulations and services it provided to clients at the next NSRC council meeting in November.

8. **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

Drazen Elez, VR Division Administrator provided an update on the new council members. Mr. Elez welcomed new council members Jack Mayes appointed in March, Sandra Sinicrope appointed in April, Tucker Morgan from Sephora appointed in April, and Austin Olson Department of Education appointed in June and David Fisher VR Counselor appointed in August. We are happy and excited to see the membership grow and thankful for the time, resources and services provided to grow and serve our clients. We look forward to welcoming new members and continuing to grow.

9. **OTHER REPORTS**

Jack Mayes, Executive Director of the Nevada Disability and Law Center and Client Assistant Program (CAP) shared that CAP is near the end of their fiscal year and will have a report ready for next meeting. We are in the process of developing our Annual Priorities, with CAP dictating what are priorities are and using surveys form the community to see what is needed in our other brands. Priorities mandated by CAP by order: 1. NDALC will advocate for applicants or a client to the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation: 2. NDALC will advocate for applicants or clients to the Bureau of Services to the Blind or Visually Impaired: 3. NDALC will advocate for applicants or clients to the Independent Living Services: 4. NDALC will provide information on Vocational Rehabilitation Services or Title 1 of the ADA to educate the public.

Raquel O'Neil council member of the Nevada Statewide Independent Living Council (NVSILC) provided an update. The council has heard from Vocational Rehabilitation on their Employer Training Tools and Modules provide to employers who are seeking to hire employees with disabilities throughout the state. It informs on how to hire and maintain employment for those with disabilities. It talks about accommodations and various work solutions. Based off of a National Best Practice and is always updated. Update for October meeting will include benefits and how the benefits impact social security to individuals looking for or are employed.

Updates will be provided by a member of the Social Security Administration. Final update Dawn Lyons is accepting questions from the public to present to the Olmstead Review Committee, the Olmstead Committee will be reviewing the previous Strategic Plan from 2016 to 2021 and the current formulation of the Olmstead plan moving forward. The questions will be sent ahead to the Committee for a possible answer to be given at the meeting in October.

10. **DIVISION REPORT**

Drazen Elez, VR Administrator presented updates on as State Fiscal closed out 2022 (June 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022). VR has had 540 successful closures, assisted with sustainable successful employment. A 31% increase of successful closures over previous State Fiscal Year. Cases stay open for minimum of 90 days, longer if needed or requested by the client, for a successful closure to happen. Staffing at VR has been an average of 25% vacancy rate, counselor positions the rate has been higher around 40% vacancy. The education and requirements for counselor is higher to meet the Federal Regulations and requirements to hold those positions. We have had a very successful Youth Internship Program with 31 youth with disabilities graduate from program. We have over a dozen different employers willing to participate in the program with the youths to work at there locations to receive meaningful work experience. The program rolled out initially in 2018, there has been 267 students participate from across the state even with the couple of years of closure during in the Pandemic. We have started a Pilot Program with the University of Reno (UNR) Path to Independent Program for individuals with intellectual comprehensive disabilities to learn academic and living skills, this is a two-year certificate program. We will look and see how to improve the program over the next year for a higher than 74% success rate. Update on the media sites from DP Productions with the interaction services offered. We are in the process of building the bi-annual budget with the deadline of September 22<sup>nd</sup> to have on the Governor's desk and we had it in on time. In January the State Budget will be coming out with all of agencies amounts of budget's will be announced they will go to the legislature in the spring before we are presented with the next budget for the bi-annual term. Updated the media system in the Westbay building to a loop system which helps the visionally impaired and hard of hearing to connect with their hearing aids while in the office,

Sheena Childers, VR Bureau Chief presented Faith Wilson to provide an update on Quality Control Team for update on how we are highlighting Counselor's performance. Ms. Wilson with QC developed a system to measure the three highest performers in the state, review cases for quality of documentation for counselors for technical assistance and individual performance. We wanted to do something to highlight the highest performers for case documentation and provide additional praise to staff doing well. Quality component is very essential for your clients to maintain quality employment and have long term success. QC developed methods to analyze and determine the three highest performers. We created Awards, Gold, Silver and Bronze awards with the individuals name printed out and given to them on September 19<sup>th</sup>. It will be presented to them in their offices, while others will be by Zoom. QC is looking for higher positive outcomes and looking to give praise to staff and for their tips that are helpful to others with good quality case documentation. It helps with the case review for the reviewers, helps manage their caseloads, helps in process of moving the cases forward for our participants. The awards presentation will be video, and links will be uploaded to the website for others to view online.

Ms. Childers reviewed the vacancies throughout the state in the VR program, currently 26 vacancies, 4 are in the Administrative Unit, 7 VR North, 15 in VR South. Tech and Counselor positions are a total of 5 in the North for counselor positions. In VR South we have 9 total for Counselor positions and 2 Rehab Techs. Recruitments are currently in progress statewide for Counselors and Techs. Services for the Blinds are Visually Impaired (BSBVI) 2 Counselors and 2 Techs, General VR we have 10 Counselor recruitments going. Highlight on Hiring Events for recruitment and retention thorough Job Connect. First was on September 7<sup>th</sup>, with a few individuals attending at Reno Town Mall encouraging outcomes. We are thinking outside the box in terms of recruitment strategy to get our positions filled. Since, May 10<sup>th</sup>, we

have had 8 departures across the VR program. We have had 14 hires including one reinstatement, 9 individuals have started since July 25<sup>th</sup>. Current active caseloads in VR and BSBVI we have actively open in the programs are 2945. Currently 212 individuals are employed and working and have not yet met their 90 days of consist employment to their case to be successfully closed. Average caseload size is 84 individuals per Counselor for VR and BSBVI programs despite our number of high vacancies.

NSRC Goals and Indicators. Time indicators from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, through September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, which are the first three quarters of the Federal Fiscal Year.

**Goal #1 Increase Number of Successful Employment Outcomes.** At the end of the second quarter, we have achieved 436 successful employment outcomes. Our goal is 550 it does look like we will be on track to reach that goal.

**Goal #2a Increase Participation for Students with a disability in VR Transition Services.** Total Transition Student Applications is 735 we have exceeded our goal of 200 students. We have surpassed and meet this goal.

**Goal #2b Increase Participation and Increase Successful Outcomes of Students with a disability in VR Transition Services and Post Secondary Education.** Column A Transition Students with an Employment Outcome is 4. Column B Transition Students with Postsecondary Education is 66. Column C Total of Measurable Skill Gains for Open cases is 232. Column D is Total Number of Measurable Skill Gains for Closed cases is 70. Columns added together the total is 372 our goal is 300. We have surpassed these goals. Federal performance indicators are Column C and Column D, are progress towards meeting or making measure skill gains toward employment or a credential.

**Goal #2c Increase Participation and Ensure Students with a Disability receive Appropriate Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).** We look at potential students with disabilities and with VR eligible students who are not out of high school looking for your services. We are at 450 our goal is 500 which we will easily meet this goal.

**Goal #3a Increase Participation of Supported Employment Consumers in VR.** We look at Column C which is division of Column A Total Open Supported Employment Consumers (445) by Column B Total Open Non-Supported Employment Consumers (1809) equals 25% with our goal of 35%.

**Goal #3b Increase Successful Outcomes of Supported Employment Consumers in a Competitive, Integrated Setting.** Column A Supported Employment Consumers Closed with an Employment Outcome of 95 with our goal of 100.

**Goal #3c Increase Successful Outcomes for Students with a Disability Who are also Supported Employment Consumers in Competitive Integrated Setting - Outcomes.** Are focus being on Column D Students with a Disability and Who are also Supported Employment Consumers Closed with an Employment Outcome 38. Column E Students with a Disability (Not Supported Employment Consumers) Closed with an Employment Outcome 78. Dividing Column D by Column E we have 49%, are goal is 40% which we are exceeding in this goal which is excellent.

**Goal #4 Collaborate with other Resources to Support Participants with Mental Health Disabilities to Obtain and Maintain Successful Employment.** Are percentage in this goal currently 33% with our goal of 40%.

**Goal #5 VR Staff Retention Efforts as a Reflection of Employee Satisfaction & Positive Work Culture.** We currently have 38 VR counselors, 32 Rehabilitation Technicians as of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Mr. Elez reported on Fair Hearings. The Rehabilitation Division has received 1 Fair Hearing request this quarter and we are awaiting notification from the Hearings Office.

11. **COMMENTS BY THE COUNCIL**

Ms. O'Neil asked for any comments from the council or, future agenda items to be discussed.

Mr. Mayes shared that on November 29th and 30th and December 1st there will be the National Agriculture Ability Project Regional Training Workshop. Project to encourage accessible agriculture for farming and to accommodate employment for individuals.

Tucker Morgan has noticed the pool of individuals for suitable employment training opportunities has diminished since the start of the partnership with the company he works for. Mr. Morgan is open for suggestion an opening the hiring pool up to get more individuals who are qualified for employment.

Ms. O'Neil mentioned appreciation with VR in assisting, and encouraging information be shared with newly blinded individuals through tips and tools to use to interact with individuals with low or no vision. VR and Blind Connect have partnered together to create Blindness Basics Video series on the DETR website as well as on You Tube. It's a great way for sharing public information and is looking for feedback on the provided information. She urges VR to work on the barriers of looking for employment and the loss of benefits an individual may loss if they already receive disability benefits.

Agenda Items for the November 1<sup>st</sup> NSRC- Sub Minimum Wage Certificates, Budgets, Nevada First State and Colorado Employment Model. Final Draft of Annual Report.

12. **SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. O'Neil opened floor for Public Committee. Cyndi Swanson dueling open door to Sub-Minimum Wage Federal 14c Minimum Wage. Setting rules for Medicare/Medicaid strong voice where we put people. Thanked Ms. O'Neil and Jack Mayes for mentioning the importance of visually impaired materials.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

**Edited By:**

Javier Fernandez

Javier Fernandez, N.S.R.C. Liaison

**Approved By:**

Raquel O'Neill, Chair