

MINNESOTA

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

2007
ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 1, 2006 — SEPTEMBER 30, 2007



REHABILITATION SERVICES MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

Empower Minnesotans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living and community integration.

VISION

Minnesotans with disabilities experience economic self-sufficiency and community integration, contributing their skills and energies to Minnesota's economic, political, social, cultural and educational life.

The business community and Rehabilitation Services engage one another as trusted workforce development partners.

Community rehabilitation programs, educators, employers, and other stakeholders and customers pursue partnerships with Rehabilitation Services to break through barriers to employment and independent living.

Rehabilitation Services is customer centered and recognized for the public transparency of its operations.

Rehabilitation Services staff are exemplary employees and leaders, the organization's valued asset. They are successful learners who take risks with new ideas, share knowledge, think critically, and adapt to change.

State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) members hail from across Minnesota and represent the state's broad diversity of disability advocates, businesses, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participants, community rehabilitation providers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and state policy makers. Their clear focus and common purpose is to empower Minnesotans with significant disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living and community integration.

Appointed by the governor, the Council serves as both adviser and partner to Minnesota's Rehabilitation Services/Vocational Rehabilitation (RS/VR) program. Its members participate in RS/VR's strategic planning by guiding and assisting in making thoughtful, participant-focused decisions through needs assessments, customer satisfaction surveys, and program evaluation.

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jeff Bangsberg
Advocate
New Hope
(appointed
10-07)

Steven Ditschler
Community
Rehabilitation
Provider
Eagan

Anne Dykstra
Business
Golden Valley

Rod Haworth
Governor's
Workforce
Development
Council
Apple Valley

Lois Johnson
Statewide
Independent
Living Council
Windom
(term completed
07-07)

Candy Kriska
Advocate
Owatonna
(term completed
09-07)

Mickey Kyler
Business
Crookston

Gloria LaFriniere
American Indian
Project
White Earth
Reservation

**Stephanie
Morris**
Advocate
Vadnais Heights
(appointed
10-07)

William Negaard
Business
Vernon Center

Justin Page
Client Assistance
Project/Disability
Law Center
Minneapolis

Kimberley Peck
Rehabilitation
Services
Director
Saint Paul

Elena Polukhin
Advocate
(term completed
05-07)

Thant Pearson
Vocational
Rehabilitation
Counselor
Blaine
(term completed
07-07)

**Christina
Persons**
Advocate
Bemidji
(appointed
10-07)

Wendy Rea
Former VR
Participant
Foley

Sean Roy
PACER
Minneapolis

Ardis Sandstrom
Former VR
Participant
Motley

Rebecca Sunder
Vocational
Rehabilitation
Counselor
Monticello
(appointed
10-07)

Robyn Widley
Minnesota
Department
of Education
Roseville

Ann Zick
Statewide
Independent
Living Council
(appointed
10-07)



Samuel Salzl Family Farm, Melrose

For Samuel Salzl it was one of those good Samaritan stories that nearly went tragically wrong — but instead became a story of resilience and triumph over adversity.

While assisting a motorist stuck in the snow near his farm in central Minnesota, Samuel was struck by another passing automobile. The resulting severe traumatic brain injury and other complications left him with impaired mobility and cognition, along with short-term memory difficulties.

Today Samuel walks with a cane. He has limited use of his left arm and hand. His balance is affected. But thanks to an intensive rehabilitation technology evaluation done in conjunction with the Minnesota AgrAbility Project, along with skilled and creative VR counseling and extensive workplace accommodations, Samuel is successfully working his dairy farm near Melrose, assisted by his wife and children — and he fully intends to continue farming.

The accommodations for Samuel's dairy operation were significant, ranging from modifications to his tractors and milking equipment to the purchase of new machinery to assist with the farming operations. By the end of 2007, Samuel was continuing to do extremely well on his farm, and the case was nearing successful closure.





SRC members can be proud of the work performed during the past year. The SRC worked diligently to meet its duties and responsibilities under the law. We were able to work on strategies to accomplish objectives within the framework of the revised “Mission, Vision, and Values” statements and five new strategic goals that were created last year. We also continued the practice of planning out the year in advance to help us accomplish objectives in a timely manner. Our working relationship with Rehabilitation Services staff was positive and effective. As is often the case, we lost some quality SRC members, but gained new ones who added different perspectives, skill sets, and fresh enthusiasm for our work.

In addition to recurring responsibilities that require our attention, we focused some of our time on the employment needs of disabled combat veterans as they return home. Traumatic brain injury was of particular concern since the incidence has been reported to be much higher in this war than past wars.

Another area of focus was how the vocational rehabilitation service system can better serve transition-aged youth. A goal to increase intensive services to that population was increased. Our customer satisfaction activity also focused on transition-aged youth.

Our committees have been active. Recommendations from our Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Committee resulted in some changes to help attract and retain quality staff. That committee will remain active; the nature of its work is ongoing. Our Self-Employment Committee has been very active working on a long-range plan and strategies for increasing the self-employment of people with disabilities served through the vocational rehabilitation service delivery system. We are very enthusiastic about the potential of this option. This is a significant initiative and will require the committee to remain active.

We were able to conduct two public forums again last year. One was in Saint Paul, and the other was in Moorhead. In addition, we visited a WorkForce Center. It is always beneficial to obtain input through these types of structured activities, especially when we can travel to Greater Minnesota. Some of the issues and challenges in Greater Minnesota are different than in the metro. Input through those types of activities helps guide our work.

It was an honor to serve as chair in 2007. The dedicated members of the SRC, and the Rehabilitation Services staff, should be proud of last year’s accomplishments. People with disabilities are an important part of the workforce. I am convinced that their importance will grow with time. We need to continue to work diligently to ensure their full participation and inclusion.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Ditschler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "S".

Steve Ditschler
Chair

Borrowing from the title of the Jim Collins best-selling book, here in Minnesota, we have been busy moving Rehabilitation Services “from good to great.” As Collins has it, moving an organization to greatness requires much more than good fortune or circumstance; it demands clear purpose and disciplined effort. This year, after confirming our mission, vision and values with the Council, and then jointly setting strategic goals, we are well on our way to great.



Rehabilitation Services is all about employment and community integration for Minnesotans with disabilities. RS staff can be proud of its role in positioning Minnesota as one of the states with the highest employment rates for persons with disabilities. This year, with help from RS, 2,502 Minnesotans with disabilities became employed, earning an average wage of \$11.10 per hour in diverse occupations including sales, health care, service, and managerial jobs.

Greatness cannot be achieved by working alone. Our work of building and strengthening robust partnerships in the community has also yielded impressive results. Our Business Services Specialists have forged strong relationships with Minnesota employers. We have leveraged partnerships with Minnesota's diverse network of community rehabilitation providers to promote innovation and evidence-based practices in job placement and retention services. We have also made significant investments to expand the availability of independent living services that are critical to success in today's job market.

We have also partnered with other state agencies to help us move forward. Our collaboration with the Department of Education has increased our capacity to serve youth with disabilities who are transitioning from school to the world of work. Our work with the Department of Human Services has begun to transform public policies and practice so persons with disabilities can more readily choose work, lessening their dependence on public benefits. Partnership with the Department of Employee Relations has led to increased employment for Minnesotans with disabilities in state agencies.

Even though Minnesota continues to rank among states with the highest rates of labor market participation for individuals with disabilities, we know Rehabilitation Services has destinations yet to reach. When we pause in our day's work and look back, we should take pride in our tradition of full participation for all Minnesotans in the social and economic life of our communities. Looking forward, we can also have justifiable confidence in greatness yet to be achieved.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberley T. Peck". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'K'.

Kimberley Peck
Rehabilitation Services Director

The Rehabilitation Act specifies that Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council must work jointly to develop the goals and priorities that create a road map for achieving VR's mission.

In 2007, the Council provided input through two facilitated discussions and a day-long workshop with Rehabilitation Services managers. At the January meeting, the Council unanimously endorsed the following strategic goals.

The Council points with pride to Goal 5 and has had several conversations on the meaning of a "**robust and effective**" Council. Members have discussed the role of state staff in Council deliberation and leadership, the amount and type of data provided to the Council, how to best support new members, effective subcommittee and workgroup participation, and adherence to statutory duties. Formal measures of Goal 5 will be developed in the 2007-2008 year.

GOAL STATEMENT 1:

Through purposeful innovation, build our capacity to deliver increased quality and number of employment outcomes, creating public value for the people of Minnesota.

GOAL STATEMENT 2:

Improve our organizational vitality as a customer-centered, mission-driven organization through individual professional development, continuous learning, best practices, adaptation to change and critical thinking.

GOAL STATEMENT 3:

Identify and publicly communicate strategic aims for our collaboration with community partners statewide, for advancing the mission and interest that we share with them and the state's employers.

GOAL STATEMENT 4:

Provide statewide leadership for continued development of the Minnesota WorkForce Center system's capacity to serve Minnesotans with disabilities.

GOAL STATEMENT 5:

Facilitate **robust and effective participation** of the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council in the achievement of our mission, consistent with the letter and spirit of the statutory roles.

Each year about one-third of the members complete their terms, so there's a recurring opportunity for new participants to become involved. In the upcoming year, the Council is seeking applicants from business, industry or labor and current or former Vocational Rehabilitation participants.

You may obtain an application form by calling 1-800-328-9095 (TTY 1-800-657-3973) or on the Internet at www.sos.state.mn.us.

Joey Carlson Medtronic Inc., Minneapolis

As a national speed skating champion, Joey Carlson was headed for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. But a car accident shattered his dreams. At the age of 17, Joey found himself in the hospital with fractured vertebrae and a severely injured spinal cord — and no shot, ever again, of skating for Olympic gold.



“In an instant my goals shifted,” he says. “Instead of striving for the Olympics, I was striving to do basic things for myself.”

Months of therapy, a stint at Courage Center, and intensive VR counseling and guidance helped Joey finish high school. And, with VR assistance, he began taking classes at Augsburg College in Minneapolis from which he graduated with honors with a degree in marketing.

But the story doesn't end there. It goes on to show how an effective collaboration between a corporate champion and a VR placement coordinator helped Joey land a marketing communications internship at Medtronic's world headquarters. Karen Quammen, project coordinator for Medtronic's Office of Workplace Inclusion, was helping to organize a national Business Leadership Network Career event at Medtronic's Minnesota headquarters. Seeing an opportunity, Joey's VR placement coordinator asked Karen if she needed a sharp marketing communications person to assist in marketing efforts for the event.



That got Joey an opportunity to do volunteer work at Medtronic, and his work was such that soon a vice president offered him an internship. And today he is in well into his second year working full-time at Medtronic as a successful and highly valued marketing communication specialist.

SRC SUPPORTS VR BUDGET INCREASE

In letters to key decision makers, the State Rehabilitation Council supported Governor Tim Pawlenty's 2007 legislative request to increase the Vocational Rehabilitation budget. The letters pointed out that:

There are 321,120 working-aged Minnesotans with disabilities. Of this group, only forty-seven percent are employed, compared to eighty percent of all working-age Minnesotans. Of those with disabilities who are not employed, two out of three indicate they want to work. . . . The benefit [of a budget increase] to Minnesota's economy, families, and communities is obvious and immeasurable. VR could assist many other people with disabilities.

The Legislature approved the proposed increase to the VR appropriation, and these additional dollars will be used to strengthen the delivery of services to VR participants and build capacity to serve unmet needs.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AT A GLANCE – 2007

WHO WE ARE

- There were 145 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, 38 Placement Coordinators, and 53 Vocational Rehabilitation Technicians.
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor's average caseload was 98.

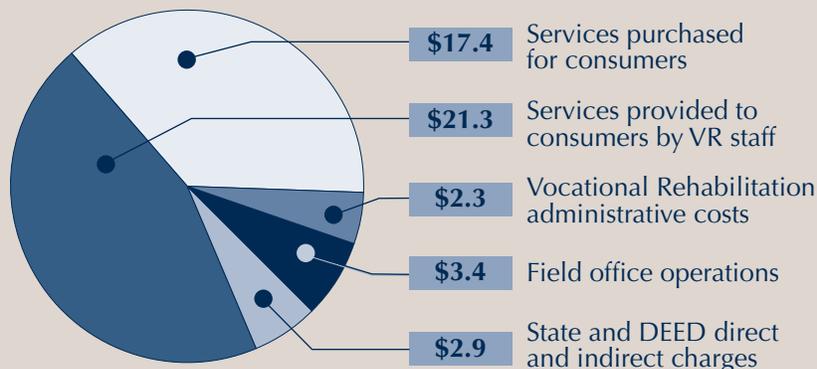
WHO WE SERVE

- There were 8,285 new applicants, compared to 7,158 applicants in 2006, and 7,723 in 2005.
- 75% of VR participants had three or more serious functional limitations, compared to 82% in 2006.
- 36% of VR's participants are transition-age, between 16 and 21.
- 32.5% of VR participants report a serious mental illness as their primary disability.
- 36.5% of VR participants receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or a combination of both.

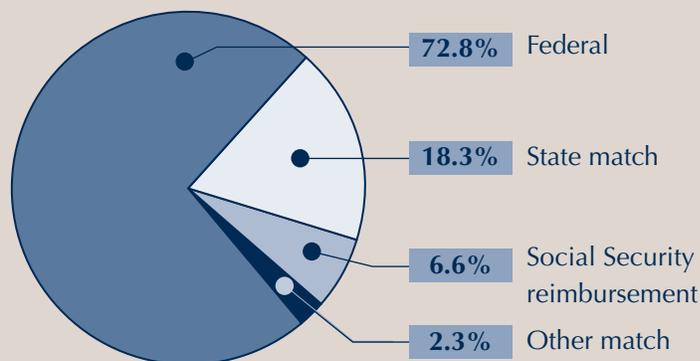
VR OUTCOMES

- 2,502 Vocational Rehabilitation participants obtained employment. The majority (2,407) found employment above minimum wage. The remaining 95 found employment in settings with potential for a competitive wage.
- Of all obtaining employment, 20% utilized formal supports.
- The average wage of those earning above minimum wage, without formal supports, was \$11.10. The average wage for all job vacancies listed for the fourth quarter of 2007 was \$13.70.

Vocational Rehabilitation Expenditures 2007 (in millions)



Vocational Funding Source 2007



12 Largest Disability Groups Served by Vocational Rehabilitation 2007

| Primary Disability Group | 2005 | | 2006 | | 2007 | | 2007 % of Placements |
|--|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| | Participants | % of Caseload | Participants | % of Caseload | Participants | % of Caseload | |
| Serious Mental Illnesses | 6,447 | 32.5% | 6,566 | 32% | 6,585 | 32% | 29% |
| Learning Disability | 3,066 | 15.5% | 3,249 | 15.5% | 3,461 | 17 | 18 |
| Developmental Disabilities | 2,595 | 13% | 2,581 | 12.5% | 2,497 | 12 | 13 |
| Orthopedic & Neurological Impairments | 1,652 | 8.5% | 1,836 | 9% | 1,774 | 8.5 | 8.5 |
| Traumatic Brain Injury/Stroke | 1,090 | 5.5% | 1,114 | 5.5% | 992 | 5 | 6 |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 969 | 5% | 984 | 5% | 960 | 5 | 5 |
| Chemical Dependency | 620 | 3% | 642 | 3% | 567 | 3 | 2.5 |
| Cerebral Palsy | 410 | 2% | 409 | 2% | 378 | 2 | 1.5 |
| Arthritis & Rheumatism | 319 | 1.5% | 362 | 2% | 374 | 2 | 2 |
| Spinal Cord Injury | 294 | 1.5% | 306 | 1.5% | 280 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Cardiac/Circulatory System/ Blood Disorders | 150 | 1% | 199 | 1% | 241 | 1 | 1 |
| Diabetes | 191 | 1% | 207 | 1% | 226 | 1 | 1.5 |

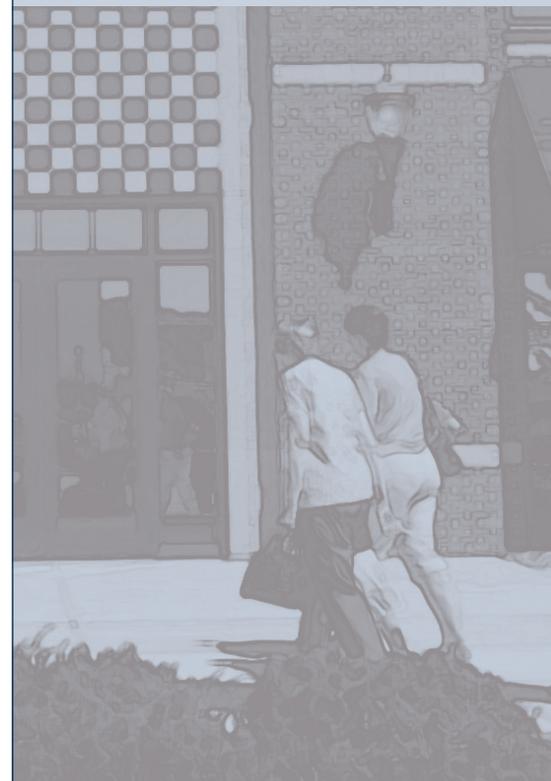
*Autism spectrum disorder falls within the developmental disability category. The numbers, while small, have been steadily growing. The percentage of participants with autism spectrum disorder has grown from 2% in 2004 to 3.5% in 2007.

Top Six 2007 Vocational Rehabilitation Referral Sources

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Educational Institutions | 27.0% |
| Self Referral | 20.5 |
| State or Local Government | 9.5 |
| Health Care | 7.5 |
| WorkForce Center | 7.5 |
| Community Rehabilitation Program | 7.0 |

Vocational Rehabilitation Participants Receiving SSI/SSDI at Application

| Social Security Benefits at Application | Number Served | Percent |
|---|---------------|-------------|
| SSI | 2,688 | 13.0% |
| SSDI | 3,812 | 18.5 |
| SSI & SSDI | 963 | 5 |
| Total | 7,464 | 36.5 |



VOCATION REHABILITATION AT A GLANCE – 2007

Competitive Employment Placements 2007— Without Supports

| Occupation | Number of Consumers | Percent of Total | Average Hourly Wage | Average Hours/Week |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Clerical/Sales | 531 | 27% | \$9.79 | 30 |
| Healthcare: support and service | 220 | 11 | \$10.83 | 28 |
| Industrial Trades | 302 | 15 | \$11.47 | 36.5 |
| Misc. Occupations | 135 | 7 | \$11.39 | 34 |
| Professional/Technical/Managerial | 368 | 18 | \$15.75 | 32.5 |
| Service | 435 | 22 | \$8.56 | 27 |
| Total | 1,991 | 100 | \$11.10 | 31 |

Competitive Employment Placements 2007— With Supports*

| Occupation | Number of Consumers | Percent of Total | Average Hourly Wage | Average Hours/Week |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Clerical/Sales | 114 | 28% | \$8.15 | 23.5 |
| Healthcare: support and service | 30 | 7 | \$8.22 | 23 |
| Industrial Trades | 50 | 12 | \$8.17 | 22 |
| Misc. Occupations | 26 | 6 | \$8.60 | 27 |
| Professional/Technical/Managerial | 24 | 6 | \$14.38 | 29 |
| Service | 172 | 41 | \$7.77 | 21.5 |
| Total | 416 | 100 | \$8.39 | 23 |

* 95 people found employment below minimum wage, but are working toward competitive employment. 80 of these employees are utilizing employment supports.

Placements by Type of Employment

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | Percent of 2007 Placements |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Competitive Employment | 1,787 | 1,978 | 1,964 | 78.3% |
| Self-employment | 45 | 43 | 42 | 1.7 |
| Employment With Supports | 385 | 502 | 496 | 20.0 |
| Total | 2,217 | 2,523 | 2,502 | 100.0 |

Consumers Served by Cultural/Ethnic Group

| Percent of Total MN Population ¹ | Cultural/Ethnic Group | Percent of Caseload | Percent of Total Employment Outcomes |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.0% | American Indian | 3.0% | 2.0% |
| 3.0 | Asian | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| 5.0 | Black or African American | 11.5 | 8.0 |
| 89.0 | White | 80.5 | 85.5 |
| 2.0 | Other Race | — | — |
| 4.0 ² | Hispanic | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey, Data Profile Highlight. www.factfinder.census.gov

² Duplicate Count.

Of those who found employment this year, 27 percent received health insurance through their employer, 13.5 percent carried private insurance, and 43 percent accessed Medical Assistance, Medicare or Minnesota Care.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Council uses seven performance indicators to understand and assess VR program performance. These were set by the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration in 2000, as required by Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act. Each has its own minimum performance level, to which state program performance can be compared. The first six look at aspects of program impact on employment, the last at equal program access.

1. Successful outcomes: Change in the number of employment outcomes.
2. Successful outcomes: Percentage of individuals exiting the program who are employed.
3. Competitive employment: Percentage of individuals exiting the program who are competitively employed.
4. Significant disability: Percentage of individuals exiting the program who have significant disabilities.
5. Earnings ratio: Ratio of the average hourly earnings of individuals achieving competitive employment to the average hourly earnings of all employed individuals in the state.
6. Self-support: The difference in the percentage of individuals at program entry who report personal income as their largest source of support, and the percentage who report personal income as their largest source of support when they exit the program.
7. Minority background: The ratio of the percentage of individuals with a minority background to the percentage of individuals without a minority background exiting the program having received VR services.

| | Federal Minimum Performance Expectation | MN VR 2005 | MN VR 2006 | MN VR 2007 |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Number of Successful Outcomes | Equal or exceed previous year. | 2,219 | 2,522 | 2,502 |
| Percent of Successful Outcomes | 55.8% | 57.6% | 60.5% | 63.9% |
| Percent in Competitive Employment | 72.6% | 96.1% | 92.5% | 96.2% |
| Percent with Significant Disability | 62.4% | 99.0% | 99.0% | 99.0% |
| Earnings Ratio | .52 | .51 | .52 | .53 |
| Self-support | 53.0% | 62.8% | 64.5% | 67.5% |
| Minority Background | .800 | .786 | .745 | .771 |

PUBLIC FORUMS

This year, the Council convened two public forums. The first, in June, was at Goodwill Industries in St. Paul. In addition to an open microphone, the Council hosted two panels, one of community rehabilitation programs and the other of small business owners. A second forum, in September, was held in Moorhead, where the Council heard of the challenges of providing services to a vast region with a small population. Transportation, economic development, limited resources, service gaps, school transition, and staff recruitment were discussed.

VETERANS TRAINING

Public forums are used to shape the work and advice of the Council. Through testimony at the September 2006 public forum, the Council heard of the high rate of blast concussions for combat soldiers. These concussions can lead to mild, often undiagnosed, brain injuries. The Council called upon Vocational Rehabilitation to provide leadership to the WorkForce Centers in preparing to assist returning veterans seeking employment.

In response, the WorkForce Center Veterans programs, Pathways to Employment, and Rehabilitation Services provided eight training sessions throughout the state during the spring of 2007. About 450 people were trained on veterans' reintegration issues and the local community resources. The State Rehabilitation Council provided advice throughout the process.

Nicole Brand, WorkForce Center, Duluth

Nicole Brand had been a Rehabilitation Services client in Duluth. She was making good progress in overcoming her disabilities when a VR counselor offered her an opportunity.



In 2007 Rehabilitation Services created several student internships for clients around the state, offering real work experience in WorkForce Center resource rooms. When Nicole's career counselor learned of the internship program there was never a doubt: it was perfect for Nicole.

A student at Lake Superior College majoring in social work, Nicole was hired part time to assist customers in the Duluth WorkForce Center where she quickly emerged as a valuable asset to customers and staff. Among other achievements, Nicole developed a curriculum and trained three classes of WorkForce Center staff on the new MNWorks.net web site. She also runs a weekly customer workshop that focuses on creating effective job search strategies.

The experience has exposed Nicole to many people in the resource room, where she is often questioned about her job and is seen as a positive role model. The work also gives her exposure to other WorkForce Center staff and to persons with disabilities. Her counselor says, "Having Nicole in the resource room provides positive interactions for these staff in working with people with disabilities. It could increase the possibility of other agencies being more open to hiring these folks."

Nicole has no doubt that the work experience will be an invaluable one on her resume and help her develop her people skills. And it's a very big step toward attaining her goal of a career in social work.

Delawoe Bahtuoh, Wells Fargo, Roseville

In January 1996 Delawoe Bahtuoh applied for Vocational Rehabilitation services after a spinal cord injury left him with very limited mobility and no use of his arms and hands.

Delawoe was interested in pursuing a career in the financial services industry. It's where his interests, strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities and capabilities lie. But to get there was going to be a challenge. The list of VR services on his employment plan was substantial and the path was arduous.

Delawoe received assistance to attend Normandale Community College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, and the University of Minnesota. He got help with the costs of a short-term insurance course, certification, and an actuarial exam study guide. He needed a transportation allowance for his training and job search. He obtained computer training and got help in purchasing a new computer, printer, fax machine, phone and headset, desk for his home office, and a clothing allowance for his job interviews.



But after all that, he got there. In February 2006 Delawoe was offered a job as a retiree plan service associate at a Wells Fargo branch in Roseville, where he earns more than \$15 an hour.

Today Delawoe says he is satisfied and performing well on the job. And he is more than happy to acknowledge the role that counseling and assistance played in getting him to where he is now. "Without the assistance I received from Rehabilitation Services," he says, "I would not be successfully employed today."

THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STAFF

The State Rehabilitation Council stays in touch with the work of Vocational Rehabilitation staff in a variety of ways. The SRC meets annually at a WorkForce Center for the express purpose of meeting VR staff. New council members' orientation is hosted by a VR office. VR staff are encouraged to attend an SRC public forum, and discuss the unique characteristics of their part of the state.

SRC ADVOCATES FOR COMMENSURATE WAGES FOR VR STAFF

Due to staff retirement and staff leaving for higher paying jobs in the private sector, we will be facing a shortage of qualified applicants. The State Rehabilitation Council believes that an increase in pay is necessary in order to recruit and retain Rehabilitation Counselors.

—From an August 2007 letter from Steve Ditschler, SRC Chair, to Kim Peck, RS Director

In October 2007, Kim Peck informed the Council that a wage adjustment had been approved for Rehabilitation Counselors.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS:

About 9 percent of Minnesota's population either runs a business or is otherwise self-employed; among those obtaining employment through Vocational Rehabilitation, the number is just 1.7 percent. With the goal of increasing the number of VR participants pursuing self-employment, an SRC subcommittee examined VR's small business policies and practices and made the following recommendations:

- Endorse the agency's plans to increase funding for small business plans, provide self-employment training to VR counselors, and create a one-year staff position to provide small business development leadership.
- Authorize travel funds for SRC and VR staff to study Iowa's disability micro-finance fund.
- Expand the SRC self-employment subcommittee to include community experts.
- Authorize the funding of two planning workshops.

Thank you to the following community experts for meeting with the Council to discuss this complex issue:

Charles Schaffer, Director, DEED-Small Business Assistance Office

Rob Smolund, Enterprise Facilitator, Minneapolis Consortium of Community Developers

Gloria LaFriniere, Director of American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation, White Earth Reservation

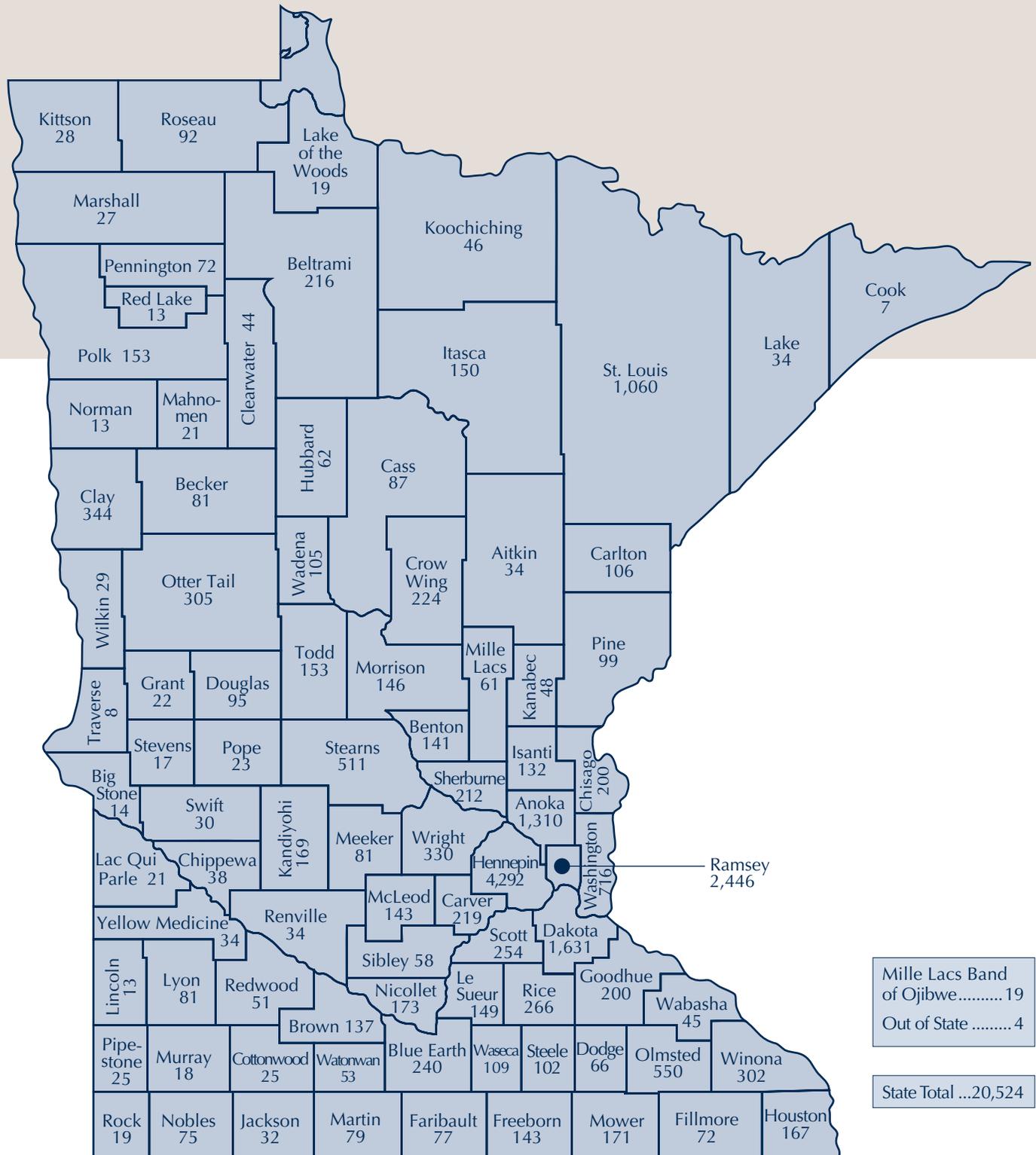
Mickey Kyler, Council Member and business planner for Independence Plus

Bob Harris, President of Harris Communications

Mark Felling, President of Broadened Horizons

NUMBER OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PARTICIPANTS

BY COUNTY



THE COUNCIL SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO LET THE COUNCIL KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS.

YOU CAN CALL:

Voice— 651-259-7364 or
1-800-328-9095

TTY— 651-296-3900 or
1-800-657-3973

Speech-to-speech telephone
re-voice—
1-877-627-3848

Minnesota Relay—
711
1-800-627-3529

YOU CAN WRITE:

Chair, State Rehabilitation Council
Department of Employment and
Economic Development
Rehabilitation Services
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1351

YOU CAN FAX:

651-297-5159

YOU CAN ATTEND A MEETING OR A PUBLIC FORUM:

All State Rehabilitation Council meetings and forums are public. Meetings are the fourth Wednesday of every month with the exception of July and a combined meeting in November and December. Forums are typically scheduled during meeting times.

Locations and time are in the Minnesota state register at a public library or on the Internet:

www.comm.media.state.mn.us/bookstore

www.positivelyminnesota.com/services.htm

THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL INVITES YOU TO APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP:

If you are interested in becoming a member of the State Rehabilitation Council, an application form can be obtained by calling 651-259-7364 (TTY 651-296-3900 or 1-800-657-3973) or on the Internet:

www.sos.state.mn.us