

Annual Report 2015
Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services
Employment is Our Business

2015 ANNUAL REPORT • A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past year was one of successful transition for the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). The remarkable programs and services of DORS touched the lives of more than 100,000 Marylanders with disabilities, helping them reach their dreams of employment, economic self-sufficiency, and independence in their communities. At the same time, DORS staff began the transition to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA places increased emphasis on providing services to students with disabilities while they are still in high school. DORS partnered with other divisions of MSDE, schools, and community rehabilitation programs to establish new services for these students. Pre-Employment Transition Services will ensure that high school students with disabilities have the services they need to achieve employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services, in partnership with consumers, staff, community programs, businesses, and Maryland schools enjoyed a tremendously productive year. We look forward to 2016 and the opportunities for success and innovation that it will bring to DORS programs.

DORS Director Sue Page & Maryland State Rehabilitation Council
Chair Jeff Moran

NO SMILE NECESSARY • SHELBY KENNEDY'S CHARM & ENTHUSIASM SHINE THROUGH!

Shelby Kennedy started her first (her words) “big girl job” in February of 2015 as an assistant production editor at Rowman & Littlefield in Lanham, Maryland. When asked about this position she explained: “I make books!” Working in the company’s academic division, Shelby used specialized software to edit and format manuscripts.

After graduating from Bollington State University in 2011, Shelby struggled to find gainful employment. Despite a college degree and a part-time work history that included working as an office assistant, tutor, and sales clerk, she was not able to find a full-time job. Shelby began working with DORS vocational rehabilitation counselor Seth Masley and her employment plan included working with DORS business relations specialist Nancy Forsythe.

“Once I met Nancy, I felt like all the pieces fell into place. [She arranged for me] to attend a Diversity and Inclusion event [which] reminded me that I could do this... I really felt like I was on my way to something great.”

Seth agrees that Shelby’s partnership with Nancy was key to her job search success. “Nancy taught her how to ‘own the room’ on an interview.”

Shelby’s disability is Moebius Syndrome, a rare neurological condition that affects the muscles that control facial expression and eye movement, and can include bone irregularities in the hands.

Shelby: “My face is paralyzed, so I can’t smile, so I wanted to disclose this affect at my interview. Nancy said ‘That’s fine, but spend a minute on it and move on.’”

Nancy thinks Shelby landed the job on her own merits. “Shelby is one of the most dynamic, talented people I know. [Her cover letter] balanced hard information on her background, skills, etc., with wit, charm and personality. This combination is what has made Shelby so remarkably successful.”

Shelby enjoyed working at Rowman & Littlefield, but continued to pursue her dream of a job with the federal government and was hired last fall by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS).

She now works as an Operations Specialist in the HHS division that handles Medicare Part D prescription coverage. Shelby says it was her connection with DORS that ultimately led her to this position. She and Nancy attended the Careers & the disAbled magazine’s Career Expo in November of 2014, where she met a number of people, including a human resources representative from HHS.

Shelby encourages other job seekers with disabilities to consider DORS. “DORS is a positive place to be! It was their guidance and encouragement that helped me to stay focused, set goals, and make connections that ultimately landed me my dream job.”

Of her new position Shelby says, “It’s amazing! When it comes to being treated as an equal part of the team, and having the same performance expected of you as any other employee, this is the place to be. I have never felt so respected or so equal!”

DORS' Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) funding is a federal/state partnership: 78.7% of DORS VR program funding comes from federal sources and the required match of 21.3% comes from State general revenue.

2014 – 15 SOURCE OF VR FUNDS

Federal Matching Funds: \$44,336,480.

Federal Non-Matching Funds: \$35,838,185.

State Funds: \$13,840,373.

Special Funds \$2,326,579.

Total VR Funds: \$96,341,617.

EXPENDITURE OF VR FUNDS

Disability Determination Services: \$32,564,914.

VR Client Services Program: \$22,137,090.

Case Services: \$19,775,469.

Workforce & Technology Center: \$12,716,804.

Administration: \$6,891,341.

Business Enterprise Program for the Blind: \$2,235,999.

Total Expenditure of VR Funds: \$96,341,617.

TYPE OF OCCUPATION AT CASE CLOSURE

Service: 1,584.

Clerical & Sales 383.

Professional, Technical & Managerial: 280.

Production, Construction, Operating & Materials Handling: 166.

Homemaker: 115.

Farming, Fishery & Forestry: 28.

Vending Operator/Worker: 3.

Total: 2,559.

DORS Served Nearly 10,000 Transitioning Youth with Disabilities.

DORS Served More Than 15,000 Adults with Disabilities.

87% of DORS Consumers will still be employed after 1 year!

1,355 different businesses hired a DORS consumer; 79% of those businesses hired more than one!

Maryland Disability Determination Services adjudicated 76,734 Social Security Disability claims and met the federal performance standards.

When first applying for services, 38.4% of DORS consumers claimed public benefits as their primary source of support, compared to 15.5% at closure. Personal income was the primary source of support for only 10.9% when first applying. At closure, 75.9% said it was their primary source of support. The anticipated first year revenue from taxes generated by these successfully employed consumers is \$3,805,162.00.

Larry Hogan, Governor

Guffrie M. Smith, Jr., President, Maryland State Board of Education

Jack R. Smith, Ph.D., Interim State Superintendent of Schools

Suzanne R. Page, Assistant State Superintendent in Rehabilitation Services

Maryland State Department of Education

Division of Rehabilitation Services

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DORS field and OBVS counselors are located in over 20 field offices throughout Maryland.

To find the nearest one, contact DORS headquarters or visit www.dors.maryland.gov.

Disability Determination Services

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