

Board of Vocational Rehabilitation
September 9/10, 2010
AmericInn, Ft. Pierre

Members present: Dan Rounds, Joe Rehurek, Lyle Cook, Nikki Darland, Brett Glirbas, Craig Eschenbaum, Cindy Koupal, Melissa Flor, Elaine Roberts, Grady Kickul, Kathy Hassebrook. Missing members: Carol Kirchgesler, Matt Cain, Leo Hallan and Robert Kean. Others present: Bernie Grimme, Rich Eschenbaum, Faith Ellis, and Colette Wagoner. Interpreters were: Julie Paluch and Ryan Strege.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Dan Rounds, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

OPENING ACTIONS: The meeting protocol was reviewed (attached to meeting agenda). The Chairperson asked if there any additions or changes on draft agenda. **MOTION MADE (M) TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, SECONDED (S), AND CARRIED (C). MOTION MADE TO APPROVE THE BOARD'S JUNE 22/23RD MEETING MINUTES – MSC.** The Chairperson asked if there were any corrections needed for the Executive Committee meeting minutes. **MOTION MADE TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 22ND, MSC.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: Elaine shared information about SD Parent Connection upcoming training sessions offered through the Dakota Digital Network (youth and sexuality, what to do with the first job, power of sharing personal story). The curriculum is nationally recognized. Information about upcoming trainings and the toolkits can be found at SD Parent Connections' website: <http://www.sdparent.org>.

Lyle reported that Pine Ridge, Standing Rock and Cheyenne River have each applied for a Native American 121 Vocational Rehabilitation grant. Lyle shared that his program (Cheyenne River) is not taking any new

applications this month; and they are referring individuals to the state agencies. Word is expected on the grant applications within 2 weeks.

Bernie handed out an article "A Smart Partnership: The State Rehabilitation Council & The State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency".

Nikki reported that CSD received a broadband training contract from National Telecommunications and Information Administration. This is a two-year contract to implement a nationwide marketing initiative, and to provide technology training and public access to videophones. CSD has named this project "Project Endeavor". A marketing representative has been hired and some of the person's duties will include working with the vocational rehabilitation offices and participate in trade shows.

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director's Comments: Grady welcomed new and reappointed members to the board and offered a thank you to the Governor for the timely appointments. He suggested new members network with members who have more time on the Board, they each have experiences to share and passionate about their position. He mentioned that a new member orientation would be scheduled in the future, which will most likely be held in conjunction with the next meeting. Grady spoke about the SD Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities as an organization, some of the activities they are involved with and the newsletter "Focus on Abilities". He asked if the Board would be interested in becoming an organizational member and possibly contributing to the Coalition Builder's Club. **MOTION MADE FOR THE BOARD TO BECOME AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER (\$35) AND CONTRIBUTE \$65.00 TO THE COALITION BUILDER'S CLUB FOR A TOTAL OF \$100.00 – MS.** A question was raised about available funds, and the response was that the Board could use their strategic planning line item to fund this activity. Another question was asked about doing this on an annual cycle. Staff was asked to note it on the Board's agenda next year - **MC.** Grady extended a "congratulations" to the Board's newly appointed Executive Committee, which consists of Dan

Rounds/Chairperson, Elaine Roberts/Vice Chairperson and Craig Eschenbaum/Member-At-Large.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): Grady explained one activity of the Board involves reviewing funding requests from different communities across the state to host NDEAM events. These activities are planned throughout the month of October and members should be receiving invitations to these events. He encouraged their attendance, and if any registration fees applied, staff can assist with this. Melissa asked for permission to share through the Office of Special Education network, which was highly encouraged.

Division's Budget: Grady reported that fiscal year 2010 was completed with approximately a \$23 million budget, which included: vocational rehabilitation services/\$10million; Disability Determination Services \$4 million; Activities of Daily Living Services Program/\$4 million; Telecommunication Relay Services/\$2 million. The monies were expended in each area except for vocational rehabilitation services. Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allowed the Division to carry forward some of the allotment funds. The Division was able to deliver all services and there were no waiting lists in any of the service areas. The Division is currently in the process of submitting next year's budget request in the amount of \$21.6 million. This amount is less than last year, and the Division is "giving back" some of the federal authority to spend the recovery funds. Grady explained that during the 2009 legislative session the Division had to obtain approval for the increased spending authority. The Division is satisfied with the submitted budget that will become effective July 1, 2011.

State Plan Submission: The Division submitted the State Plan in late June. Rehabilitation Services Administration had several questions and the Division made some minor changes; now the Division is anticipating approval with the re-submittal. The document can be viewed on the website or if anyone wants a print copy they can contact staff.

Rehabilitation Consulting for Employers: Grady explained that the Division had a long standing agreement in place known as the Business Leadership Network (BLN) in Sioux Falls. This contract was not renewed several years ago. The BLN steering committee approached the Division about the need for this service to continue and their willingness to work with the Division. The Division issued a Request for Proposal, which was listed under the Bureau of Administration. A total of three bids were received, one from each Pierre, Rapid City and Sioux Falls. The highest scoring request was from Sioux Falls, and it was awarded on September 1st in the amount of \$81,250. This group is currently in the process of reviewing applications for an executive director. The proposal speaks to conducting job fairs, mentoring, bringing in speakers and consultants, and working with the larger community of diversity, which includes the multi-cultural center. A suggestion was made to host the next Board meeting in Sioux Falls to meet with the new director and steering committee members. Another comment was to host a meeting in the spring allowing the new director time to get on board.

DD/VR Memorandum of Understanding: Bernie provided a handout "Policy on Joint Funding Sources – DRS & DDD" (see attached). Members of the Future's Initiative worked on re-drafting this policy along with Division of Developmental Disabilities staff. Further input will be sought from the Consumer Services Committee before finalizing this policy.

MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES: Bernie handed out the listing of the South Dakota Council of Mental Health Center Directors (Council), see attached. The next hand out was the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) "Vocational Rehabilitation/Mental Health Referral and Integrated Services Procedures" see attached. Bernie explained that he was working with Terry Dosch, Executive Director of the Council to develop this memorandum. Bernie spoke to the difficulty working with the eleven Mental Health Centers because each is a private, non-profit organization, thus the Division has to negotiate with each center. The Division was complimented for the work completed thus far, and working together on a "system of care". Bernie explained that members might hear about

paid work experience programs at tonight's meeting with the center directors. A comment was made about the flexibility of the Division to work with each center, which makes it successful for the consumer. The Consumer Services Committee was asked to review this MOU and provide input before finalizing it.

CONVERSATION AND EXPECTATIONS – SOCIAL WITH SOUTH DAKOTA COUNCIL OF MENTAL HEALTH CENTER DIRECTORS. The evening's format was discussed as well as the role of members, and notetakers. The time will be used to get acquainted, learn of each other, learn about vocational rehabilitation services as well as services provided by the mental health centers, what works, what could be changed, etc. This type of meeting is termed as a public listening session, which provides an opportunity to ask individuals what their experiences have been with vocational rehabilitation, how we can help, how they can help, etc. Staff will gather notes from the notetakers and compile the comments.

UPDATE ON JOINT CHAIRPERSON'S CONFERENCE CALL (Boards of Vocational Rehabilitation and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and Statewide Independent Living Council). Dan shared that he participated on a conference call with the two chairpersons, division directors, BVR and SILC staff. He agreed to approach the Board to see if they would be supportive of having a BSBVI and SILC representative join the committees, which review the National Disability Employment Awareness Month requests and the Governor's Awards. Grady informed members that the SILC had a member volunteer to serve as a reviewer for the Governor Awards (Shelly Schock). A suggestion was made that the Board develop timelines and ground rules. It seemed to be a timing issue, and that the BSBVI and SILC should be approached in September of each year to identify a member willing to serve on each review committee (Governor's Awards and NDEAM). **MOTION MADE THAT ON AN ANNUAL BASIS THE BOARD WILL INVITE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL AND THE BOARD OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND**

VISUALLY IMPAIRED TO SERVE ON THE NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH REVIEW COMMITTEE AND THE GOVERNOR'S AWARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE. Further discussion focused on language that staff could include to help clarify that they may identify one representative from each respective board/council to serve on both review committees or two individuals – one for the NDEAM review committee and one for the Governor's Awards review committee - **MSC**. Staff was asked to develop a timeline for each activity for the Executive Committee to review.

COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CSNA) UPDATE: Bernie reported that two individuals (Joe Matthews and Bob Jahner) were hired as consultants to assist the Division in conducting the required comprehensive statewide needs assessment. The consultants are reviewing existing data from various organizations as a starting point. Other aspects of the study will include a survey of the vocational rehabilitation counselors and a survey of the cases closed unsuccessfully e.g., individuals that have moved, unable to locate. There is an Executive Committee for the Statewide Needs Assessment, which includes the chairpersons of the BVR, BSBVI and SILC. One of the consultants will work with the Consumer Services Committee to develop the goals, strategies and action steps, which will be incorporated into the State Plan document.

Afternoon meeting was recessed.

Friday, September 10, 2010:

Dan Rounds, Chairperson, reconvened the meeting at 8:40 AM.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: The Chairperson asked everyone to introduce himself or herself.

DEBRIEFING – MEETING WITH SD COUNCIL OF MENTAL HEALTH CENTER DIRECTORS. The comments gathered from the evening

listening session are attached. Members shared what they heard and the consensus was the evening was very positive. The comments and feedback was very informative. Some expressed their satisfaction of hosting these types of “meet and greet” activities vs. the old way of advertising a meeting and expecting people to attend; hosting a group seems to be less formal, and more dialogue is generated.

INTRODUCTIONS OF EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES:

- **Employer Resource Network (ERN)**: A revised brochure was handed out. Kathy reported that the Terry Redlin Art Center has endorsed the project which provides national credibility. ERN was started under the Freedom to Work Project. Dan Rounds, Kathy Hassebrook, Ronda Williams and Kim Crossan have been working with this project for several years and it has provided an avenue to build relationships with employers and members of SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management). Dan and Ronda have been traveling across the state to help promote similar activities in other communities. Project Search evolved in Aberdeen due to the efforts of ERN. Kathy stated this project has brought VR together with employers; gained recognition across the state, and it is excelling in the Aberdeen area. The project looks at diversity as an overall theme, and includes disability. Now, staff is looking at “sustainability” in order for the work to continue. Kathy proposed a challenge to members – saying this is the perfect time to approach the Business Resource Network in Sioux Falls to take a model with all aspects of diversity and move forward: to sell it as a diversity package. She suggested pulling a team together to include ERN, BRN, VR, and other diversity aspects, to increase the level of communication between VR, employers, SHRM and providers. Grady stated this is the direction the Division is heading towards with the BRN and recruitment of a new director. A suggestion was made to host the Board’s December meeting with members of BRN and their new director. Grady suggested a meeting in the spring to provide the new leadership time to get on board. Kathy expressed her disappointment with the NDEAM invitations and coming from VR only, stating these

should have come from employers. She emphasized that it should have been promoted as a “business model” to entice more employers/human resource managers. Discussion continued of BRN and activities involving the multicultural center, and the possibility of offering a diversity conference, etc.

- **Project SEARCH:** Two handouts were provided, one an overview of Project SEARCH and the other “Info in the News” describing in detail the internship opportunities for students with disabilities (see attached). Two hosts are Avera St. Lukes in Aberdeen and Avera McKennan in Sioux Falls. Rapid City was discussed as a possible host site, with Elaine stating that a new school superintendant was recently hired. Cindy offered that she knows one of the chief legal councils on staff at the Rapid City Regional Hospital. Suggestion was made to write a piece for the paper, thanking the hospital, share what is going on in the community. Craig reported that Aberdeen is a week behind Sioux Falls, but students are working with job coaches, and two of the seven students are in their own apartments. A comment was made that other school districts are expressing an interest in the program.
- **Project Skills:** Bernie explained that this program provides up to 250 hours of paid work experience for high school students with disabilities. This program is a cooperative arrangement between the two vocational rehabilitation agencies and the local school districts. A comment was made which referred to the Office of Special Education’s study which identified students with disabilities working during high school, were doing better than their peers following graduation i.e., living independently, employment, post-secondary education.
- **Vocational Trade Program:** Dan reported that the Freedom to Work Project has funding which is being utilized to explore the feasibility of a developing a vocational trade program in our state. The study would look at factors including if there is a need for this type of educational program, who would utilize it, location, etc. More information will be shared at the next meeting.

- **Career Development Team:** Dan reported that several “teams” are working with individuals with disabilities seeking employment. So far, individuals who have expressed an interest and applied for the program live in Sioux Falls and Spearfish. The team may consist of representatives from VR, Department of Labor, job developer, service providers, a benefit specialist, friends and family members, along with the consumer. The team makeup is based upon the individual’s desires/needs. Dan shared one example, where the individual was working at Wal-Mart and wanted something different. Team members, the individual, along with acquaintances of the individual convened a meeting, talked about his interests, and he is now employed at Black Hills State University. Kathy suggested getting SHRM involved with a team in the Aberdeen area.
- **The Net:** Grady reported this has been an initiative of the Division for several years. State vocational rehabilitation agencies are involved at a national level with national chains to create a corporate approach of employing people with disabilities. Some of the national chains include Walgreens and Safeway. Ronda Williams, DRS staff, has been involved with this effort. It’s based upon building business or corporate relationships, and providing information on home-based jobs to consumers i.e., call centers, J Lodge.
- **Think Beyond the Label:** The Freedom to Work Project dedicated resources to a national marketing program which will create messages specific to our state. One of the commercials was shown, which was accessed online at <http://www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com>). Now the project is working with Media One, a Sioux Falls advertising agent, which will put up billboards, conduct an employer mailing and evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign.

FUTURE’S INITIATIVE PROJECT UPDATE: Bernie provided a handout (see attached) summarizing the Future’s Project, which included the vision statement, members, projects and initiatives taken on by

employees and other activities. It was started three years ago and five employees were selected in 2008. Three more individuals were added in 2009. Joe spoke to the benefits of being involved with the project, learning more about the VR system, having the ability to work with staff from other offices, and developing relationships with other providers. Staff will be meeting with agency staff from the North Dakota agency to work on "best practices" following the Fall Conference.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION – INCREASING THE NUMBER OF VR CONSUMERS UTILIZING PASS: Dan referenced the Freedom to Work Tips Compendium, December 2005 issue, noting the articles on PASS. Dan proposed focusing on this incentive more, addressing fear of losing benefits with consumers, and wanting the PASS to compliment the Plan for Employment. He suggested that in doing so, this would bring monies into the state, and would also encourage meetings between the consumer and the benefits planning specialists. He stated that if the number of individuals who are on a PASS increases, this would generate more money coming into the state through the Social Security Reimbursement system, which would free up vocational rehabilitation dollars to spend elsewhere. He suggested that a goal of increasing the number of those on PASS by 5%. Dan asked members to think about this until the next meeting, and then have further conversation about it.

STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL UPDATE: Grady reported that the next meeting of the Council would be held on October 14, 2010. He had nothing else to report at this time.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC) UPDATE: Grady stated that the SILC met on September 8th and 9th in Ft. Pierre. They had their election of officers, which included: Margot Burton/Chairperson; Larry Puthoff/Vice Chairperson and Monte Tschetter/Member-At-Large. Grady spoke of the report provided on the Disability Advocacy Network, which is hosted by the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities. Elaine Roberts offered to provide an update at the Board's next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: There was none at this time.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: Disability Advocacy Network Update, Fiscal Year End Update, have some Project SEARCH students attend and speak about their experiences with the program. Kathy suggested meeting with the new leadership of BRN on Monday morning, involve Kim Crossan, Dan Rounds, Kathy Hassebrook, Dan Simon, and Division staff. Staff will try to schedule a new member orientation to coincide with the Board meeting. Scheduling Next Meeting: First choice is December 6th and 7th in Sioux Falls. **MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 11:43 AM – MSC.**

**Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (Board)
Joint meeting with the
South Dakota Council of
Mental Health Center Directors (Council)**

September 9, 2010

Present: Council members: Terry Dosch, Joseph Manuel, Mike Forgy, Susan Sandgren, Duane Majeres, Michelle Carpenter, Dennis Pfrimmer, Alan Solano, Kris Graham, Chuck Sherman, Donna Brown, Tom Stanage, Laura Boone, and Lona Groos. Board members: Joe Rehurek, Nikki Darland, Brett Glirbas, Craig Eschenbaum, Cindy Koupal, Melissa Flor, Elaine Roberts, Grady Kickul, Dan Rounds. Others present: Bernie Grimme, Rich Eschenbaum, Colette Wagoner, and Faith Ellis.

Dan Rounds, BVR Chairperson, provided the welcome and asked everyone to introduce themselves, to include their role on the Board or Association, and where they were from. Bernie Grimme, Division of Rehabilitation Services, provided an overview of the Division and available services. He spoke to the number of individuals served on a yearly basis and about Supported Employment and providing services to those with the most significant disabilities. He spoke of services being time-limited; serving 5,000 consumers on an annual basis, approximately 1/3 of the caseload are individuals with mental illness, and individuals with a secondary disability of mental illness making up 20% of the caseload. Bernie provided an overview of the Board – which is the advisory component to the Division. He explained that there are fifteen individuals, who serve on the Board in varying capacities; a majority must be individuals with disabilities. He talked about one of the functions of the Board is providing input on the State Plan, goals and objectives of the Division. One means of providing input is hearing from consumers, family members, service providers and other interested persons at forums such as this.

Terry Dosch, Executive Director of the South Dakota Association of Mental Health Center Directors, provided an overview of the Council. He began

by thanking the Board and Division for this opportunity and the ability to “network”. He explained the Council shares a common goal/vision of serving individuals with disabilities. The centers provide comprehensive outpatient services based upon the individual’s needs. The philosophy of care is “community choice”. The bulk of services are provided to individuals with mental illness, serving adults with severe and persistent mental illness and children with serious emotional disorders. Children make almost 70% of the caseload. All the centers are private, non-profit centers (501(c) 3 organizations). Each center has its own board of directors, and is accredited by the Division of Mental Health. He spoke about the draft Memorandum of Understanding as a working document, addressing how to better collaborate and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

Gathered Comments:

- Little interaction with vocational rehabilitation office in Lemmon area (Three Rivers Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Center); and wanting staff of both agencies to meet.
- Dakota Counseling Institute staff in Mitchell have been meeting with VR staff regularly. There is good communication, and staff have demonstrated “thinking outside the box”. Human Service Agency staff in Watertown also stated they have an excellent working relationship with VR.
- Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services in Yankton has had a long history of Impact and VR office working well together.
- Consistency of staff, keeping job developer in place has been a struggle/living in rural area more difficult to place individual with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI).
- Rich Gardner, serving as a consultant to the Freedom to Work Project, will be identifying ways to improve services for those served jointly by VR and the MHCs.
- Economy downturn and lack of jobs; clients are in training programs longer (Watertown and Yankton were two communities most impacted by economy).

- Paid work experience - VR pays for workers compensation, is a program that is being utilized more. This program was expanded several years ago to include adults.
- Increased need for work readiness training (HSC had a lot of jobs available but these were eliminated last year).
- MHC staff work with the Centers for Independent Living when it is appropriate.
- There are individuals with co-occurring disorders being discharged from HSC – some being sent to Mitchell to live in a halfway house. (It was stated that 90% of the people coming out of the prison system have alcohol/drug issues).
- MHC staff are working with the school districts – but don't know to what degree (especially with the smaller school districts). Need more education and awareness on programs such as Project Skills.
- A challenge was expressed about being an Employer Network (EN), the reimbursement system and how it is structured. VR has been a big help with learning about being an EN.
- Talked about some of the center directors getting together to discuss healthcare (i.e., medications, mental health parity).
- MHCs need assistance with educating public to break down barriers (stigma).
- A statement: studies show that people with serious mental health issues live 25 years less than others.
- Issue of medications being prescribed, but no follow-up therapy to go along with it = need to pursue more collaborative approach with the medical side.
- MHC's provide statewide coverage, which includes a number of satellite offices.
- MHC's are working more with youth with severe emotional disturbances (SED).
- Work/employment is therapeutic for individuals, see a significant improvement with a person's well being.
- VR has offered to conduct intakes at the MHC offices. Some centers have office space that VR could utilize to meet with consumers and take applications.

- Mentoring was thought to be a great idea and center directors expressed an interest in doing this.
- Very little understanding of the VR system, what was available, etc, until the meetings involved with the MOU; looking at VR as an advocate, and wanting to learn more.
- Very positive to have meetings like these involving the board and council members.
- Knew little about Project Skills program, this is something that could be utilized to better engage students with disabilities.
- Self-employment now seen as an option.
- Extra office space at some of the centers – could be utilized for business space. Need information on business plans.
- Consumers/clients need information about going to work, easing the fear of losing benefits and prescription coverage.
- There is a need for job development and job coaches in some areas.
- Some discussion of starting with sheltered workshop/enclaves, and look at more inclusive work environments from there.
- Some center directors expressed “struggles” with identifying employers that would be good matches for clients.
- Overall, difficult to find employment options for individuals with mental health issues.
- An initiative with the federal government to increase the employment of people with disabilities should open doors – and benefit employers, consumers and service providers.
- Set up a project similar to Project SEARCH with state government.
- Agencies are partnering to increase success for consumers with co-occurring disorders (Division of Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol and Vocational Rehabilitation).
- It’s beneficial to spend time with each group, and to continue the relationships that have formed.