

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
September 30th and October 1st, 2009
AmericInn Lodge and Suites, Ft. Pierre

Members present: Beth Haug, Grady Kickul, Robert Kean, Matt Cain, Dan Rounds, Melissa Flor, Lyle Cook, Elaine Roberts, Cindy Koupal, and Craig Eschenbaum. Members absent: Mary l'atala, Kathy Hassebrook, Joe Rehurek, James Hayes and Chris Olson. Others present: Bernie Grimme, Shelly Pfaff, Colette Wagoner, Faith Ellis, Steven Almeida, Scott Kwasniewski, Andy Szilvasi, Brooke Lusk and Steven Rounds.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Beth Haug, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:45 PM following the public luncheon gathering which involved the Board, Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD) and the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Beth asked for introductions around the room, and extended a welcome to Matt Cain, newly appointed member. Beth highlighted aspects of the meeting protocol, which was disseminated with the draft meeting agenda. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA AS MAILED, MADE (M), SECONDED (S), AND CARRIED (C). MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE 11/12 MEETING MINUTES WITH CHANGES NOTED ON PAGES 2, 7, 8, AND 12 - MSC. MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES – MSC.**

TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: Shelly Pfaff, SD Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities was recognized by the Chair and thanked the Board for their work in support of people with disabilities. Second, she shared something she recently heard about choosing our language carefully when referring to 'employers'. She challenged all of us to refer to them as 'business people'. By doing so, instead of thinking about what employers can do for us, the focus becomes what we can do for them. Board staff shared that several attendees at the Governor's Awards ceremony sent thank yous and two published articles, and she passed these items around for members to review.

DISCUSSION/DEBRIEFING ON PUBLIC MEETING WITH CDD AND SILC: Going around the room, members shared what they heard from those sitting at their tables. There was consensus among members that hosting the luncheon was a viable means of gathering comments, a great opportunity to meet other board/council members, network and learn about the CDD and SILC, and to talk about vocational rehabilitation services. Notes will be compiled by staff and disseminated to all participants.

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Approved Minutes (December 16, 2009)

Director's Comments:

- Grady mentioned the public luncheon and thanked members for hosting it. He talked about the amount of information that was shared and affirmed that it was a great opportunity for board/council members to meet and learn from one another.
- He welcomed Matt Cain to the board, explaining his role in the field of independent living and how the two systems compliment one another.
- Grady stated that he and Bernie attended the ADA Anniversary Celebration held in Sioux Falls. The event was very well attended and received great community exposure.
- Grady mentioned a program in Minnesota utilizing ARRA funds, which was brought to his attention by Elaine Roberts. Project C3 (<http://www.c3online.org>) connects youth to communities and careers and it's a partnership among the Parent Training and Information Center, Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Department of Education, workforce centers and several high schools. This program also provides information about what recreational opportunities are available in the state. Elaine encouraged members to look at the website because it's an idea worth exploring.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA):

- A number of webinars have been held several times a week with Division staff, discussing the specific use of funds and reporting requirements. The funds are a one-time increment to be utilized for short-term investments that have the potential for long-term benefits. States were encouraged to utilize the funds to serve those on waiting lists if the state was on an order of selection, increasing services to eligible consumers and expanding services to traditionally unserved or underserved populations (i.e., transition students).
- The Division must submit their reports by October 1st, and then the public will have access to this information by October 11th.
- The Centers for Independent Living have not received any funding yet, so they most likely will have nothing to report.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month:

- Governor Rounds' Executive Proclamation proclaiming October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month was reviewed (copies were made available).
- Members were encouraged to attend an event in a nearby community, and reminded that their expenses could be reimbursed.

State Plan Submission:

- The State Plan was approved as of September 21, 2009.
- Copies of the approval letter from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) were handed out.
- Bernie Grimme mentioned that RSA also issued guidance on the Statewide Needs Assessment. This is a 200+ page document, and something the Consumer Services Committee will need to discuss in the future.

Business Leadership Network (BLN):

- The agreement to establish the BLN was in place for over nine years, with the intention that the project would become self-sustaining. This did not happen and the contract was not renewed.
- Grady and Bernie met with the BLN leadership in Sioux Falls. It's their desire to continue with a new direction, and create a 501(C) 3 status and continue with the successful projects. It is now called the Business Resource Network (BRN).
- Vicki Nelson, Division staff, has asked to work with this group as part of her role with the Future's Initiative.

Draft/Final Policies:

- Bernie stated that several staff members involved with the Future's Initiative are involved with reviewing two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). One is between Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Mental Health, and the second is between DRS and the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS – CONTINUED DISCUSSION:

- Grady reminded members that the 2009 MidWinter Conference was cancelled due to travel/budget restraints. The Board attempted to host a joint meeting with the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (B/SBVI) and Statewide Independent Living Council in Pierre to coincide with the Governor's Awards Luncheon.
- The luncheon was cancelled due to a blizzard and was rescheduled on July 21st in Pierre. It was held in the Rotunda of the Capitol. The Governor was available to present the awards to the recipients, and a luncheon was held after the ceremony at the Capitol Lake Visitor's Center.
- Grady stated that the Division recommends this practice become precedence for future award ceremonies. Host the event sometime between April – June, to ensure the availability of the Governor. **MOTION TO ENDORSE RESCHEDULING THE AWARDS CEREMONY TO ACCOMMODATE THE GOVERNOR'S SCHEDULE – MS.** Other

comments: Each recipient was allowed time during the luncheon to speak, and it was felt this was just as important as the presentation. Try to host a luncheon following the ceremony. If this is not possible, provide some type of social event afterwards (i.e., appetizers). **MOTION CARRIED.**

- Several members of the Board agreed to review the nomination categories. They suggested removing the Public Personnel Award since the Distinguished Service Award category was similar. They also suggested incorporating a new category "Transition Services", since so much has been done in the state for youth. Concerns were expressed about removing the category of Public Personnel stating that the Distinguished Service Award was too descriptive. As edits are incorporated, ensure language and questions are consistent throughout all the nomination forms. Another suggestion was to keep the same number of awards because time is always an issue with obtaining the Governor, reading speeches, presenting plaques, etc. **MOTION MADE TO COMBINE THE TWO CATEGORIES (REMOVE THE PUBLIC PERSONNEL AWARD, KEEP THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD) AND ADD THE TRANSITION SERVICES CATEGORY, REVIEW THE NOMINATIONS TO ENSURE WORDING AND CLARITY – MSC.** Matt offered to read through the draft nomination forms with the others: Joe, Lyle, Melissa, Craig, and Bernie.

CHAIRPERSONS OF BVR, SILC, AND B/SBVI MEETING UPDATE: Beth reported that a conference call was held on September 3rd with the three chairpersons - herself, Dave Miller, Chairperson/BSBVI and Ryan Green, Chairperson/SILC. Others participating were Gaye Mattke, Grady Kickul, Shelly Pfaff and Colette Wagoner. Discussion points included: having regular meetings of the chairpersons; reporting back to their respective board/council; possible collaborative efforts; and hosting a joint meeting June 2010. Staff was given the okay to begin looking for accommodations for the joint meeting the week of June 21st – 25th. The next conference call is scheduled for October 29th.

FUTURE'S INITIATIVE PROJECT UPDATE: Bernie stated the Future's Initiative was implemented to help staff grow and develop into supervisory positions, since the Division is looking at a high number of retirements. Three individuals were added to the existing number of staff involved in the project: Doris Lamb/Watertown, Laura Akkerman/Aberdeen and Kim Christensen/Yankton. Each individual identifies key leadership interest areas and develops a project plan. Projects worked on to date include: the VR brochure, service provider descriptions, independent living assessment, Ticket

to Work training and self-employment training. Future projects will include the Business Resource Network, career assessments, soft skills' assessment, Employer Resource Network and revising several Memorandums of Understanding. Staff is participating in interviewing, management training and learning about budget/coding. This initiative is allowing staff to use their talents in an area of preference.

STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (COUNCIL) UPDATE:

Grady reported that the Council met on July 9th. The Department of Labor (DOL) received \$2.9 million in ARRA funds to target youth wages, which employed six hundred forty-four youth. DOL is in the midst of rolling out the National Career Readiness Certificate program, which the Board will hear about directly by DOL staff in the morning. This will be a primary service provided by Career Learning Center staff across the state. The Council's next meeting is October 7th.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC) UPDATE:

Grady stated the SILC met yesterday and this morning. The SILC is re-defining their goals and steps on how to accomplish their goals. Their focus will be in the direction of advocacy and collaboration. The next meeting will be the week of December 7th, most likely in Pierre.

The meeting was concluded for the afternoon.

Beth Haug, Chairperson, reconvened the meeting at 8:15 AM Thursday, October 1st and welcomed everyone. She asked for individuals to introduce themselves again with several new faces in the room. Steven Almeida, Scott Kwasniewski and Andy Szilvasi, Department of Labor staff joined the meeting in addition to Brooke Lusk, Freedom to Work Project.

NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE (DOL):

Grady introduced the Department of Labor staff and told members he learned of this project through the State Workforce Development Council. Andy Szilvasi stated he has been with DOL for over 20 years and this is the most exciting program he has worked with. Andy introduced Scott and Steven, stating they were hired as labor specialists to promote and market this program across the state. The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is a portable, assessment-based credential used by employers across the United States (utilized in 42 other states) to verify an individual has core employability skills in three essential areas: Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information. NCRC utilizes the WorkKeys developed by ACT, Inc., a worldwide authority in educational measurement and research. The system includes a research

component that analyzes the critical tasks required by hundreds of occupations and identifies the WorkKey skills needed to perform those tasks. Certificates are awarded at four levels – platinum, gold, silver and bronze. The NCRC provides individuals, employers and businesses with an easily understood and universally valued approach to documenting the attainment of workplace skills that are relevant to the broadest range of jobs. (See attached PowerPoint handout). DOL is currently in the testing phase with their staff and will begin rolling it out soon. Testing will begin with Workforce Investment Act eligible consumers and then it will be opened to VR consumers in January. One member commented this would be a great match with the Department of Education, matching curriculum needs with the individuals' employment goals. VR could utilize this as career preparation. NCRC demonstrates skill level, not success on the job.

FREEDOM TO WORK PROJECT UPDATE & WORK INCENTIVES PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATES: Brooke Lusk discussed the accomplishments and outcomes of the Freedom to Work Project, including the following:

- Personal Assistance Services in the workplace;
- Medicaid Buy In (Medicaid Assistance for Workers with Disabilities) with 184 enrollees;
- Benefits and employment training – 2,390 people trained;
- Employer Resource Network in Aberdeen;
- Career Development Teams in Sioux Falls and Mitchell;
- Increase Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities to 198 enrollees, and include success stories in Tips Newsletter;
- By December 31, 2010, goals include:
 - Increase employment of people with disabilities in SD by 3%;
 - Increase by 300, the number of people with disabilities, family members, and service providers who receive employment and benefits training;
 - Complete a comprehensive evaluation of the FTW programs and activities;
 - Develop leadership capacity within the Leadership Council;
 - Provide 15 outreach events on available employment services and supports for people with disabilities;
 - Brochures handed out: Personal Assistance Services, Everybody Works, Everybody Wins! Employer Resource Network, Career Development Team, and Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities. New fact cards handed out: Looking for a Job, Knowing Your Rights, What is the Ticket Program, Work Incentives,

Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities, Self-Employment, Asset Development, and Taxes.

Brooke explained that the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program is funded by the Social Security Administration, and Black Hills Special Services Cooperative is the administrator of the project. The Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs) provide SSI and SSDI beneficiary's access to work incentives planning and assistance services. The goal of the program is maximizing earning potential and greater self-sufficiency through employment. WIPA services include having knowledge of SSA work incentives, Medicaid, Medicare and other public programs (TANF, food stamps); information and referral to other services; work incentives analysis and planning and long-term monitoring and follow-up services. Brooke left the new video "Everybody Works! Everybody Wins!" with staff, perhaps it could be viewed at the next meeting.

SDMYLIFE (CAREER CRUISING), DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Steven Rounds utilized the internet to "walk" members through this website. He explained this is a career guidance package for students, parents and guidance counselors, to be utilized for students in 7th through 12th grade. Information is available to every student (public school, BIA schools, homeschooled). The program offers weekly features for different careers, assessments, career searches, and information on universities or other post secondary education institutions in the state. Students will be required to create a personal learning plan through a course of study. Once this is completed the student will be given a password to obtain access to the website. Students can take the ability assessment and this is "crosswalked" with the interest inventory. Each week several careers are featured and students can learn what is required at the high school level and then what post secondary education facilities offer this type of program in South Dakota and surrounding states. Steven explained the next step with this program is to build in the business/industry component, which might include: available jobs, internships, and scholarship opportunities. Department of Education is willing to provide training on Career Cruising to any interested groups. Work is also being done to incorporate an adult aspect, which will provide access to the website and assessments.

EMPLOYER RESOURCE NETWORK UPDATE: Dan provided this update due to Kathy's absence. She sent her apologies to the Board for being absent and also explained that with job commitments increasing, less of her time could be committed to ERN. Kim Crossan, DRS Supervisor in the Aberdeen office, has been available to work with the ERN, to include the upcoming NDEAM event. Dan and Kim will also follow-up with a contact at the Terry Redlin Center, to

obtain information to be utilized in a brochure. Dan stated that it is Kathy's suggestion that a representative of the Division be utilized to keep the momentum going in the Aberdeen area (Future's Initiative project). The representatives from SHRM come and go, and if a staff person was assigned to this, it would provide the needed consistency and sustainability for the project. Grady asked the question if Kathy had an idea regarding a dollar amount for needed support, and if so, what is this figure? Grady explained that the Division and/or the Freedom to Work Project is willing to provide some financial assistance to keep the project moving forward. Continued dialogue is needed to identify possible solutions.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON CATEGORIES:

This agenda item was discussed and resolved earlier in the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: Beth discussed her attendance at the Disability Summit held during the summer. She reported that Terry Dosch, Executive Director of the South Dakota Council of Mental Health Centers, brought up the topic of individuals with disabilities "shopping" for services in other states. Beth shared that this has been on her mind, and asking herself what this could mean for vocational rehabilitation services in South Dakota. She asked that it be added to the next meetings' agenda as a discussion item. Staff reported that a few copies of the National Disability Employment Awareness Month posters were available to anyone that would like one, and flyers announcing the Mike Walling training sessions in October were made available.

CLOSING ACTIONS

- Future Agenda Items:
 - Dr. Cooch to present on the Office of Special Education's survey results of student one year out of high school;
 - Update on Project Search (Dan Rounds);
 - Freedom to Work video "Everybody Works, Everybody Wins!"; and
 - Beth's suggested topic of "shopping states for services".

- Schedule Next Meeting:
 - December 16/17th
 - 1st choice in Rapid City
 - 2nd choice in Pierre

- Adjournment: **MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 12:20 PM – MSC.**