

**Board of Vocational Rehabilitation
Sheraton Hotel (1211 N West Avenue)
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
December 6-7, 2010**

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

New Member Orientation was held the morning of December 6th. Members in attendance: Brett Glirbas, Carol Kirchengesler, Matt Cain and Elaine Roberts. Staff present: Bernie Grimme and Colette Wagoner. Robert Kean was also present from South Dakota Advocacy Services. The orientation outline is attached.

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MEETING

Members present: Grady Kickul, Robert Kean, Matt Cain, Kathy Hassebrook, Dan Rounds, Melissa Flor, Elaine Roberts, Cindy Koupal, Craig Eschenbaum, Joe Rehurek, Carol Kirchengesler, and Brett Glirbas. Members absent: Leo Hallan, Lyle Cook and Nikki Darland. Others present: Cindy Stewart, Vicki Nelson, Ann Fortin, Jennifer Trenhaile, Melanie Boetel, Bernie Grimme, Colette Wagoner, Keri Statema, Lisa Doyen, Rich Eschenbaum, Alan Spinar, and Raquel Navarette.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Dan Rounds, Chairperson, called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce him/herself.

PROJECT SEARCH: Dan initiated this item and explained that the Board decided to meet in Sioux Falls so students and others involved with Project SEARCH could come and talk about their experiences. Lisa Doyen, Transition Advantage (East Dakota Cooperative) introduced those in attendance. She talked about her involvement with the program, and touring the site in Cincinnati to learn about the program. Lisa introduced a video highlighting the program in Cincinnati. It addressed real life work experiences matched with students' skills and abilities, and the support services provided. Keri Statema (East Educational Cooperative) talked about the program in Sioux Falls, partners involved, schedule, internship rotation, and building career skills. An open house will be held on January 11, 5:00 – 7:00 pm. Alan (student) spoke about his work experience with lab screening and Raqual (student) spoke about her experience in Trayline. Both responded very positively when asked if they liked what they were doing. There are eight students involved in Sioux Falls and seven students in Aberdeen. A question was asked about other potential employers in the Sioux Falls area and it was stated that the city might be an option. A comment was made that to be successful, students, worksites and schools must be committed to the project. Currently, the Sioux Falls School District is not involved. Elaine stated she would like to promote this opportunity with families, and suggested thinking about students at a younger age to build the program. It was explained that students

receive a stipend of \$200 per month based upon attendance and participation. Vicki Nelson (VR Counselor) explained her role and the roles of job coaches and teachers. Members thanked those who came to provide a better explanation of the program.

FUTURE'S UPDATE: Bernie provided a handout (see attached) explaining the Future's Initiative. He introduced the five original members (Melanie Boetel, Vicki Nelson, Joe Rehurek, Jennifer Trenhaile, and Ann Fortin) and invited them to talk about the activities they were involved in. Items included: attended supervisor's meetings and Bureau of Personnel trainings, redesigned the VR brochure and Independent Living assessment, revised mental health and developmental disabilities agreements, developed career assessment tools and training, and planned training for mental health providers. Staff spoke about the opportunities to network with others across the state, and opportunities to attend trainings. Bernie presented each member with a plaque for their leadership, time commitment and contributions made to the Division. Members commended the Division for their vision with implementing this program for succession planning and ultimately strengthening services for consumers. Comments were also directed to the five for going above and beyond the call of duty and applying for this initiative. Cindy thanked staff and commented that their efforts make an impact that changes people's lives. Melissa raised the question whether the staff finishing with this project, will be involved somehow with future activities. Staff would be available as mentors to other staff. Grady stated that a lot of the credit goes to Bernie for his commitment and time dedicated to this initiative, and how proud he is of the staff in the vocational rehabilitation agency. Dan thanked the staff for coming. He asked the question whether an employer brochure would be developed and the suggestion was made that Jennifer and Joe could mentor new staff on this project.

OPENING ACTIONS: After a short break, Dan reconvened the meeting. He reminded members of meeting protocol, noted procedures regarding voting, and reminded members that the protocol is attached to the agenda. He asked for a motion to approve the September meeting minutes. **MOTION MADE (M) TO APPROVE THE BOARD'S SEPTEMBER 9-10, 2010 MEETING MINUTES – SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C). MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 18, 2010, MSC. MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, MSC.**

TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: Elaine expressed her appreciation to Dan, Grady and Robert for writing letters of support for South Dakota Parent Connection's grant application. She also announced that South Dakota Parent Connection (SDPC) was one of six national parent training and information

centers chosen for a grant award “How to Use Technology to Connect Families and Others”. Grady encouraged their use of DakotaLink’s staff and expertise (DakotaLink is South Dakota’s Technology Project). A question was asked regarding the length of the award, and it’s a one-year award.

DIVISION DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Director’s Comments: Grady explained that Governor-elect Dennis Daugaard will be sworn in January 8th. Daugaard’s transition team has been named and they are meeting regularly. He is renewing the majority of executive positions, but Secretary Hofer will not be continuing on with the Department of Human Services. Grady explained that the new governor would have an executive committee comprised of six members reporting to him rather than each department head. The Departments of Health, Human Services and Social Services will now report directly to Deb Bowman. Tomorrow, Governor Rounds will provide his final budget address for the next fiscal year, with Daugaard providing the State of the State address on January 11th. In response to a question regarding budget, the appropriations committee, and procedures, Grady replied that as staff within the Department of Human Services - the plan is to continue in the same manner as previous years - with each division director presenting their budget. A question was asked whether to expect DHS to have more budget cuts. Grady responded that it’s his understanding that there are no across the board cuts, but it is the expectation that every program will look at cost savings within programs. Grady was asked if he could share information about any Department bills. Grady replied that he could, but he wasn’t prepared to do so, however, he recalled bills pending from the Division’s of Drug and Alcohol, Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health.

Division’s Budget Update: Grady reported that the Division’s budget was fine through the end of June due to the stimulus funding that was received. He reported that at this time, he doesn’t feel the cuts will be substantial enough to impact vocational rehabilitation services. He offered the suggestion of advising the constituency to pay attention and be ready to act. He emphasized that during recessions, employment is the key.

Business Resource Network (BRN) Update: Grady explained that Julie Briggs was hired as the Executive Director of the Sioux Falls Business Resource Network with a start date of December 1st. Due to the timing of her start date, it wasn’t timely to meet her now, as a few members requested at the last meeting. A meeting will be scheduled in the future involving Division staff, Board members, and perhaps some of her board members. Ms. Briggs will have an office at the South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (in-kind).

JOINT MEETING OF BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION/BOARD OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING:

Dan explained the chairs of the three boards/council met during the Fall Conference to discuss the status of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). Others involved on this conference call included the consultants, staff of both divisions, and BVR and SILC staff. The consultants discussed the background of the needs assessment, where they were at in the process of gathering information and what the next stage of the process would be. The consultants will begin developing the goals/priorities and strategies for the respective agencies with assistance from board/council members. Dan stated that 8 to 10 key individuals were identified as possibilities for the consultants to conduct structured interviews with. The next meeting involving the consultants, board/council chairpersons, and related staff will be scheduled in January or early February.

COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE:

Grady continued on this subject sharing that he felt the project is on target with the timelines, and he appreciated the involvement of the chairpersons. It was explained that the information gathering stage is almost complete and there are a couple of more interviews to complete. Bernie thought that Bob Jahner (one of the consultants) should be in attendance at the next meeting to review information in more detail with the Board. Bob will also work with the Consumer Services Committee to assist with developing the goals of the agency, which are incorporated in the State Plan document. Grady spoke of the changing diversity of population in Sioux Falls and other areas, which may impact the scope of the goals and strategies as outlined in the State Plan. Dan encouraged members to be in touch with him if there were other issues or information that they would like shared or discussed with the other board and council.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF INCREASING THE NUMBER OF VR CONSUMERS UTILIZING PLAN FOR ACHIEVING SELF-SUPPORT (PASS):

Dan reminded members that he introduced this subject at the last meeting and wanted the discussion to continue. He would like to see more consumers who are working with vocational rehabilitation take advantage of available work incentives as a goal. He provided a handout outlining a case example (see attached). He walked members through a scenario of an individual being a dual beneficiary (receiving both SSI and SSDI) and working with a benefit specialist. The individual was interested in employment and working with the benefit specialist. The example demonstrated how the individual could realize a cost savings each month with no impact to her total financial income and the ability to reduce the amount of financial support provided by vocational rehabilitation agency. Questions were asked about how to entice consumers as beneficiaries to see

employment as a viable option. Craig spoke of the fear that many individuals with disabilities have about losing benefits when entering employment, and Joe referenced other barriers that people face. Brett spoke about his PASS, how it has been successful, but he had assistance developing his plan. Grady reported that he met with Brooke Lusk and Shelly Pfaff, as Freedom to Work Project (FTW) staff last week on sustainability issues, which is directly related to this discussion. He spoke about project staff attending “train the trainer” and how they are starting to provide this training across the state (different modules e.g., SSI, SSDI, and Medicaid). A suggestion was made that an abbreviated version of a training module could be presented at a future BVR meeting.

PROJECT ENDEAVOR UPDATE (agenda item was moved forward): Nikki Darland forwarded information to Board staff last week to share with members. A Project Endeavor flyer was handed out (see attached). The project’s goals include providing high-speed internet connections and training for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. The program offers discounted high-speed internet, technology training and video-capable notebook computers to eligible consumers. Goals include giving priority to vocational rehabilitation and transition consumers to create jobs; partnering with local agencies to augment existing resources, and increase employment opportunities for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind people. Holly Elkins is the contact person with CSD. A comment was made about the lack of broadband services available in our state and questioned how this impacts this project. These questions would have to be asked of Nikki when she returns. Members expressed interest in hearing more about this program at a future meeting.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED FOR THE EVENING.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2010

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: Dan Rounds, Chairperson, reconvened the meeting at 8:30 am and asked for introductions. Grady reported that Governor Rounds will provide his budget address at 1:00 pm today, and it will broadcast on public radio. Robert stated that the Governor-elect will have until the 10th legislative day to bring forward his budget.

REVIEW OF DIVISION’S FISCAL YEAR END DATA: Bernie provided members with a handout with the FFY 2010 Year End Data. The year-end report contains a summary of all cases, successful closures, supported employment, project skills, Social Security Reimbursement, Ticket To Work, fiscal analysis, and evaluation standards. He had a PowerPoint presentation comparing the data for the past ten years and some points highlighted were: self-referrals are now at 27% compared

to 18% in 2000; SSI recipients decreased 10% over ten years (SSDI is about the same); Project Skills cases increased 12% last year and 25% increase in costs; increase in applicants 13% in FFY09 and another 5% in FFY 2010; 18% increase in applicants as compared to 2 years ago; last year was a record year for applicants at 2,641; the oldest and youngest consumers have shown the greatest increase in growth. He also addressed stimulus funding, staffing patterns, standards and indicators, and consumer satisfaction survey results. There was discussion on predicting future trends, which the data reflects cases increasing as well as costs per consumer. Grady expressed concerns with the trends implying that the Division would have to implement an Order of Selection if we continue in this direction. A question was raised regarding the ability to look at information by region or by office, to determine if “something” had an impact (i.e., BLN in Sioux Falls, Project Skills in Watertown). Bernie responded that the data could be broken out by office, counselor, etc. However, he noted that other issues impact data e.g., staff turnover, a plant closing in a specific community.

STAFF UPDATES: Annual Report: Staff handed out a draft copy of the Board’s annual report, and it was noted that the year end data (pages 11-16) must be updated prior to submittal. At this point, members of the Executive Committee have reviewed it and provided edits. Staff asked for members’ edits by December 24th because the report must be submitted to the Governor and the Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner by the end of December. National Disability Employment Awareness Month: Staff reported that a majority of the evaluations and bills have been submitted for 2010 NDEAM events. Expenses received to date total \$11,868.79 and the communities have until the end of December to submit remaining bills. A booklet was handed around the room which contained the evaluations, flyers, and newspaper articles for the 2010 events. Booklets were also made and shared with the BSBVI and SILC. Staff reviewed the steps to prepare for NDEAM 2011: joint committee (BVR, SILC and BSBVI members) will review the draft Request For Funding (RFF) by late December early January; disseminate the RFF by mid-January with a due date of mid-February; joint committee will review the RFFs and present their funding recommendations to the BVR at the March meeting; and local communities will be notified of awards by the end of March. Governor’s Awards: The draft nomination forms have been sent to the joint committee for review and comment; nomination forms will be finalized and disseminated in early January with a due date in early February; the joint committee will review nominations and forward their recommendations to the Executive Committee, DHS and finally to the Governor’s Office for final review and selection; the awards ceremony will be coordinated and scheduled with Governor’s Office (which means it may be subject to change).

CONSUMER SERVICES COMMITTEE UPDATE: Dan, Elaine, and Robert spoke about the committee meeting held several weeks ago to review two draft Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). It was explained that the MOU with the two vocational rehabilitation agencies and the Division of Developmental Disabilities was a re-write, the original dated back to 1996. The MOU was updated to identify the services provided by each agency, adding descriptions of services, and how the divisions can fund services jointly. The second MOU is with the two vocational rehabilitation agencies and the community mental health centers. Terry Dosch, Executive Director of the SD Council of Mental Health Centers, Inc. (Council) has been involved with drafting language for this MOU. This MOU focuses on employment and how to best coordinate services to meet the needs of individuals diagnosed with severe mental illness. A thank you was extended to staff for their work on the documents, including Future's Initiative staff. Grady also thanked members for initiating the meeting with the Board, Division and Council, which is a starting point for open dialogue and building relationships. Bernie asked members to forward further comment regarding the two draft documents by December 24th.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC) UPDATE: Grady reported that the SILC, and Divisions have to submit a three year State Plan for Independent Living to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) for approval. This year there were many submissions and conference calls with RSA staff, and it was finally approved. The main issue was how the stimulus funds would be dispersed among the Centers for Independent Living, of which there are four in the state. The distribution of funds became extremely complicated because it could ultimately impact future allotments. Grady explained the difference between funding streams as awarded to the Centers - Part B (state funds) and Part C (federal funds). The stimulus funds were targeted to keep the Home Modifications and Assistive Devices Program alive (state funds were cut from the program two years ago). The SILC will be meeting tomorrow December 8th and 9th in Ft. Pierre. Grady shared that the Centers serve approximately 2,400 South Dakotans each year.

FREEDOM TO WORK PROJECT (FTW) UPDATE: Grady spoke how the project was designed to remove disincentives within the Social Security system. This project will be entering its last year because funding has not been authorized after 2011. In anticipating the final year of funding, staff are looking at how to sustain certain aspects of the project. Grady spoke about the Medicaid Buy In, as approved in the Department of Social Services State Plan, with the Division continuing with costs associated with this program. The Medicaid Buy In has assisted approximately 260 individuals go to work and obtain healthcare coverage through Medicaid. The benefit specialists, trainings and employment initiatives will

continue. Staff was asked to add “Freedom to Work Sustainability Update” to the Board’s May/June meeting agenda.

STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (COUNCIL) UPDATE:

Grady explained that during the Executive Committee’s conference call he was asked to provide information on the Council and it’s relationship with the Division and Board. He spoke about the Workforce Investment Act and how the Rehabilitation Act was rolled into it when regulations regarding jobs/employment related programs were being combined. Vocational rehabilitation was kept as a separate title and maintained its separate identity. The Workforce Investment Act required certain initiatives including the creation of the Workforce Development Council. Grady (as director of a vocational rehabilitation agency) was appointed to serve on it. The Council meets quarterly, two-hour increments, via the Dakota Digital Network. The next meeting will be held January 6th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Grady provided a handout including membership listing and minutes of the Council (see attached). These are public meetings. If anyone is interested in attending, please let staff know, and they will be in touch with Grady.

DISABILITY ADVOCACY NETWORK UPDATE: Elaine updated members on the Network, which was started by the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities three years ago. The Network is a group of disability-based organizations committed to strengthening and broadening efforts on behalf of people with disabilities. The Network has provided an opportunity to educate others on issues they may not be aware, as well as the opportunity to strategize how they might work together. Some network members include: South Dakota Advocacy Services, SD Parent Connection, Council of Mental Health Center Directors, Council on DD, Statewide Independent Living Council, and Board of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Network strengthens outreach capacity, broadens grassroots support, reduces duplication of efforts, allows for more creative, multi-level solutions to complex problems, and results in having more clout with officials when advocating on behalf of a larger constituency.

OTHER UPDATES: Employer Resource Network (ERN): Kathy reported that ERN is going very strong in Aberdeen. Kim Crossan, vocational rehabilitation staff in that area, is very involved with the organization. She reported that the Brookings ERN is also doing very well, and has an event planned tomorrow. Brookings invited the Aberdeen ERN to attend. She talked about an event being planned in Aberdeen in March and they are bringing in the “Attitude Doctor”. This is being offered as a thank you for Project SEARCH and will be held at Avera Hospital. Kathy continued by stating she is excited to work with the Business Research Network and to continue the discussion regarding sustainability and having a statewide presence. Vocational Trade Program: Dan reported that the

Freedom to Work contracted with an entity to conduct a statewide needs assessment to determine if there was a need for a development program for students coming out of high school (i.e., soft skills training). Dan suggested having Gloria Plummer report on the studies findings at a future meeting. The survey targeted students, parents, and post secondary education disability coordinators. The Net: Grady reported that the Net is a national organization of state vocational rehabilitation directors. The Net provides businesses direct access to qualified candidates and support services provided by state VR agencies on a national level; provides VR consumers access to national employment opportunities and career development resources; and it provides state VR agencies a system for sharing employment resources, best practices and business connections.

OTHER BUSINESS: Melissa asked about the Fall Conference and if this was a missing agenda item. Bernie offered the following: approximately 150 people were in attendance; it was held in Deadwood at The Lodge; evaluations reflect that the speakers were well liked. Sessions offered: Angry Young Adults, Ethics, Ticket to Work, Job Performance, PASS, Customer Service, Job Development, and motivational speakers. Bernie reported that next year the Fall Conference would be held in Sioux Falls at the Ramkota on October 25-27th, 2011. The Divisions will partner with the Office of Special Education and run concurrent sessions. Kathy raised a question about the Department of Labor's Navigator positions, are they still available, and if so, how can we partner with them on Aberdeen activities. Grady offered to visit with DOL staff and find out more information, and possibly have DOL staff come and present to the Board.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: Invite Julie Briggs to come and meet members; invite Dr. Greg Cooch to present on post high school outcomes (Office of Special Education's Indicator 14); have Bob Jahner present on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment; update on Project Endeavor; invite Gloria Plummer to present on the Vocational Trade Program study findings; have DOL staff provide an update on the navigator positions. Grady asked if members would be comfortable with the Executive Committee determining the need for specific agenda items. In some instances there may be nothing to report. Members were comfortable with receiving a written update on some of the items, or have the agenda item listed and noting "nothing to report". Schedule Next Meeting: Members identified March 14-15, 2011 in Pierre for the next meeting. Adjournment: **MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 11:45 AM – MSC.**