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SUMMER 2014

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Director's Comments by Gaye Mattke

Summer is winding down which is a good reminder to publish the summer 2014 edition of the VISIONS newsletter and there have been a number of developments since our last edition of VISIONS that I would like to share. On July 22nd the President signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act last occurred in 1998, and changes have been long anticipated. The most obvious changes to Title IV of the WIOA (Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) include:

- Increase services for transition aged youth;
- Job-driven vocational rehabilitation with an emphasis on employer engagement and matching employers with skilled individuals with disabilities;
- Emphasis on competitive integrated employment;
- Transfer of independent living to the Department of Health and Human Services;

- Repeal of In-Service Training, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program, Recreational Programs and Projects with Industry.

In general, the Act takes effect on July 1, 2015, the first full program year after enactment, unless otherwise noted. The State Unified Plans and Common Performance Accountability provisions take effect July 1, 2016. Regulations will dictate implementation of WIOA and are expected to be published in the next two years.

Keep in mind that this is a simplified explanation of a complicated federal law. For more information on the WIOA go the Department of Labor website at: <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>. There will be more to come as we await release of regulations and implementation.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has entered the world of social media with the launch of a Facebook page and Twitter account. Visit the DHS website at <http://dhs.sd.gov/> for more information. Other DHS news includes the Person Centered Thinking Training being offered to DHS staff on a statewide basis. The training sessions are being conducted by consultants from The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices in late August and early September in Aberdeen, Rapid City and Pierre.

Watch for new devices and services available through the DHS Telecommunication Equipment Distribution and Telecommunication Adaptive Device programs. Draft rules have been published and timelines are in place for adopting the rules. We will be sharing information once the new rules and program policies are in place. For more information go to: <https://rules.sd.gov/detail.aspx?Id=138>

The Board of SBVI meets on September 19th in Sioux Falls and we'll have a new, but familiar face at the meeting. Tim Neyhart was recently appointed as the Client Assistance Program representative replacing Robert Kean who retired. Tim was formerly on the Board so brings a great deal of knowledge and experience to his position. In addition, Julie Briggs and Bruce Micheel were both reappointed for a second term on the Board. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your service to citizens who are blind or visually impaired.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the SBVI Board meeting and the SD Association of the Blind convention this September. Until then, enjoy what's left of our nice warm summer weather!

Argus Leader Publishes In-Depth Article on SDRC

The Argus Leader newspaper published an in-depth article featuring the South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind in Sioux Falls on June 13. The link to the entire article is available on the Department of Human Services homepage and on the SBVI webpage under the South Dakota Rehabilitation Center at the following link: <http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/sdrc.aspx>

Wind Beneath Our Wings Outstanding Performance Award

Julaine Arient-Rollman, SBVI Senior Rehabilitation Counselor, was awarded the Wind Beneath Our Wings Outstanding Performance Award by the Rapid City Chamber of Commerce on June 9th. This prestigious award is designed to recognize people who have made a significant contribution to the health and human services fields through outstanding service to their organizations, community and profession. The award recognizes those whose service and contributions include: Superior service in the health and human services fields, enhancement of existing programs, dedication to clientele, service as a positive role model to others and exceptional volunteer work.

Congratulations for this well-deserved honor Julaine!

SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) Update

The SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) is offering classes to assist people to learn the newest assistive technology for computers and mobile devices. Classes are held one Saturday each month at SDRC in Sioux Falls. The most requested topic is to learn to use VoiceOver, the accessibility option for the iPad and iPhone. Therefore, several classes are being devoted to this topic. Classes are available to South Dakota residents and are limited in size. To register for a class, call the SDRC at 1-800-658-5441. A limited number of iPads are available for use during the class, but it is recommended to bring your own so you can set up your device during the class. The September class will be in conjunction with the SD Association of the Blind convention, September 20 at the Holiday Inn City Centre. In October the class will be held on October 25th from 9:30 a.m. until 12:00 noon. On November 15th a new topic will include ZoomText screen enlargement software. SDRC has also set aside the first Friday afternoon of each month for people to walk-in and ask assistive technology computer questions. JoMarie Laughlin will be available between 1:00-4:00 p.m. You can also contact JoMarie by telephone or email. To contact SDRC: call 605-367-5260 or toll free 1-800-658-5441.

In recent months there have been a number of staff changes at SDRC. It started with the resignation of Sandy Emery who decided to move back to be with family in Arizona. As a result, Lori Kwasniewski was promoted from Employment Specialist to Program Specialist. Lori will be responsible for the Transition Youth Summer Work Program, Transition Week, and weekend and evening activities for students in training. Ron Gehrts, former Home Management instructor, decided to use his talents in the area of job placement replacing Lori. Ron isn't a stranger to job placement, he was originally hired as an employment specialist and spent his first 5 years in that position. Mary Carrell accepted the Home Management instructor position beginning August 18th. Some of you may remember Mary as she previously worked for the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind as the Communications Instructor. Interviews are currently being conducted to replace the Rehabilitation Program Specialist which was opened with the

resignation of Ardell Fiedler who accepted an orientation and mobility instructor position for the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

SDRC's annual Transition Week was held June 16-20, 2014. Five boys attended ranging in age from 16-19. Four of the students were from South Dakota and one was from North Dakota. The students toured several Sioux Falls businesses to observe a variety of jobs and learn about career possibilities. They had an opportunity to use VoiceOver, a speech program for the iPad and iPhone. They also learned about JAWS and ZoomText assistive technology options for computer users who are blind or have low vision. Students experienced the home mechanics area and learned some wood working techniques while making a wooden peg game. The last day, breakfast was prepared and members of the SBVI Board were invited to meet the students. During the breakfast students presented speeches about themselves including their experience with vision loss, interests and future career goals. In return, the Board members provided the students with names of possible mentors who could provide them with encouragement and advice to reach their career goals.

2014 SBVI Public Meetings

Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired appreciates input from the public across the state to assist with developing priorities and goals for the upcoming year. In 2014, Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired held several public meetings which included a DDN on Thursday April 10th. Participants in Aberdeen, Sioux Falls & Pierre sites were connected with a total of 31 people involved including students from the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Aberdeen, students attending the South Dakota Rehabilitation Center in Sioux Falls and one peer support leader. There was good discussion on various topics including issues related to IPE for students, how to disclose your disability to a prospective employer, and ongoing activities to support the peer support groups located in 10 communities across South Dakota.

There were 26 people present during an SBVI sponsored public meeting held on April 25th in Rapid City in conjunction with National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota annual convention. Discussion from the participants centered on technology and communication access needs of citizens with vision loss who are not currently served by SBVI.

For the past few years, SBVI has taken their public meeting forum on the road to receive input from people by holding at least one event annually on a Native American Reservation. Other entities are included in these events which provide an opportunity for residents to learn about services while service providers learn of needs of the citizens. This year's event was planned for April 29th at Sinte Gleska University. Unfortunately the meeting had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

New Rapid City District Rehabilitation Counselor

Gary Frentz began his role with Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired on March 10, 2014. Gary was born and raised in Watertown, South Dakota. He was awarded his Bachelor's Degree from Northern State University and his Master's Degree from Montana State University. Some of you may know Gary as he has worked in the rehabilitation field for more than twenty years. He recently transferred from the Division of Rehabilitation Services Watertown office to serve as a Senior Rehabilitation Counselor at the Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired office in Rapid City. Prior to his service with the State of South Dakota, Gary was employed in higher education as Director of Financial Aid and was self-employed for many years. When not at work, Gary enjoys hunting, fishing, spending time with family, and 4-wheeling in the hills.

New Pierre Area Rehabilitation Counselor

Dorothy Adams started with Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired in the Pierre area Office on February 24, 2014. Dorothy grew up and went to school in Pierre. She received a Bachelor's of Science Degree from Black Hills State University and her Masters of Science Degree from South Dakota State University. Dorothy formerly worked more than 10 years in the field of Independent Living with a non-profit agency. Dorothy and her husband of 42 years, Jim, have two grown children. When not working, Dorothy enjoys spending time with her family, fishing, kayaking, sewing and reading.

Peer Support Groups

Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired has a small network of peer support groups for older citizens who have vision loss. These groups meet on a monthly basis with volunteer leaders and participants who have common experiences to share due to their vision loss. Through peer support group meetings, members are able to share their individual experiences of vision loss, knowledge, and practical help with one another. Recently, a "Spring Fling" indoor picnic was held in Mitchell by the peer support group. This was organized by the volunteer leader Kay Miller along with several other group members who assisted with table arrangements, pick-up and delivery of food. Group members wore sunhats and summer attire and tables were decorated with a picnic theme. There were twenty-four people in attendance who enjoyed guitar music and singing performed by staff member Chelle Hart and Lerae Olson. Lerae Olson participated as the President of the South Dakota Association of the Blind (SDAB). SDAB collaborated with SBVI in sponsoring the picnic for the seniors.

Resources for Peer Support Groups

Macular Degeneration Support, known more simply as MD Support, is a world-wide non-profit public service organization founded by retired educator Dan Roberts. Its mission since 1995 has been to provide information and support for people who are affected by macular degeneration and similar retinal diseases. Although information from MD Support is generally obtained via access to the Internet; they also offer a

public awareness program called International Low Vision Support Group (ILVSG) TeleSupport which is designed to reach people who have low vision and no internet access. International Low Vision Support Group (ILVSG) TeleSupport is a year-round program of monthly group support sessions held over the telephone. It is designed for seniors with low vision anywhere in the world who have no access to the internet or cannot attend a live support group. A session typically includes a brief update on recent research and developments, followed by listening to and discussing the current month's recorded ILVSG presentation. Previously recorded sessions vary in length but are usually 20 to 50 minutes long.

The archived monthly presentations are also available to ILVSG participants and include topics such as:

- “Overcoming the Emotional Barrier of Blindness” Michael Hingson tells how he and his guide dog survived the Twin Towers attack on 9/11. An inspirational talk about courage and insight.
- “Twenty Things Eye Doctors Probably Don’t Tell You (But Would Like You to Know)” Sometimes doctors are better off just not saying anything, but here is what they could very well be thinking. A revealing and often humorous peek into the minds of those who care for us.

South Dakota’s Peer Support Group Leaders and SBVI staff members can become affiliate members and share the information directly with local group members simply by signing up. It’s all free and there is no additional advertisement involved by sharing your name. Affiliate members receive copies of the monthly newsletter from MD Support which contains the latest news in research and treatment options for eye disease.

Talking Prescription Label

Three national pharmacy chains in the United States now offer talking prescription information for blind customers: Walmart, Walgreens, and CVS. All three companies worked on their talking prescription programs with the American Council of the Blind (ACB) and ACB affiliates. The American Foundation for the Blind was involved with the CVS and Walmart negotiations.

Walmart offers Scriptalk talking labels from Envision America. Envision America provides the ScripTalk reader free of charge to Walmart pharmacy customers. ScripTalk talking labels are available through Walmart’s mail order pharmacy and at a limited number of Walmart stores. You can contact the Walmart mail order pharmacy by calling toll-free to 1-888-227-3403. For questions about ScripTalk and other Envision America products and services contact the company toll-free at 1-855-773-2579.

CVS provides ScripTalk talking labels through CVS.com mail order to customers across the United States. Blind CVS.com pharmacy customers can call 1-888-862-

4363 to order their prescription medications with the ScripTalk labels. CVS is also providing prescription information in large print. Envision America is providing the ScripTalk reader free of charge to CVS.com pharmacy customers. Envision American can be reached toll-free at 1-853-773-2579.

In June, Walgreens announced it is providing talking pill bottles free of charge to Walgreen pharmacy customers with visual impairments. A new device will be provided with each prescription and prescription refill. The devices are available at every Walgreens store in the United States and through mail order. The device was developed by Walgreens and adheres to any prescription container. Pharmacy staff records the prescription information and the customer can play it back with the press of a button. Staff has been trained to allow customers to listen to the recording in the store to assure the recording is clear and understandable. Walgreens also offers large print prescription information. Customers can reach Walgreens at 1-800-925-4744, extension 4.

From Disability Rights Legal Advocacy <http://illegal.com/2014/07/talking-prescription-labels/#wal>

U.S. Currency Reader Program

As an interim measure in advance of issuing tactile-enhanced Federal Reserve notes, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) is providing currency readers, free of charge, to eligible blind and visually impaired individuals.

The BEP recently announced its distribution plans for the U.S. Currency Reader Program. The U.S. Currency Reader Program will launch in two phases:

Pilot: Beginning September 2, 2014, in partnership with the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, (NLS) the BEP will initiate a four-month pilot where NLS patrons can pre-order a currency reader. The pilot program allows the government to test its ordering and distribution processes and gauge demand for currency readers. To receive a currency reader, eligible individuals who are currently patrons of NLS need only call 1-888-NLS-READ; the account will be noted and a currency reader will be delivered to the address on file.

National Rollout: Currency readers will be widely available to all U.S. citizens, or persons legally residing in the U.S. who are blind or visually impaired, starting January 2, 2015. Individuals who are not NLS patrons must submit an application, signed by a competent authority who can certify eligibility. Applications will be available on the website below and processed for non-patrons of NLS beginning January 2, 2015.

<http://www.moneyfactory.gov/uscurrencyreaderpgm.html> From Bureau of Engraving and Printing press release July 3, 2014

Announcements

- Telecommunication Equipment Distribution and Telecommunication Adaptive Device Rules Hearing – September 16th, Room 414 Capitol Building, Pierre
- Board of SBVI meeting, Sioux Falls at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, September 19, 2014
- SD Association of the Blind Convention, Sioux Falls at the Holiday Inn City Centre, September 19 – 21, 2014
- Business Enterprise Program Annual Vendors Meeting, Pierre, October 4, 2014
- RehabAction Fall Conference, Aberdeen, October 7-9, 2014
- White Cane March, October 18th, Sioux Falls
- Governor's Awards Recognizing Employment of People with Disabilities, October 20, Capitol Building, Pierre
- Statewide Independent Living Council meeting, December 3rd, Pierre

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