

Colorado State Rehabilitation Council
Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



Bridging business and ability.



Colorado Department of Human Services
people who help people

09

ANNUAL REPORT | 2010 CALENDAR

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Our report covers the year that ended June 30, 2009. The SRC and the staff of DVR are proud of the accomplishments reflected herein. The State Rehabilitation Council works in partnership with DVR to accomplish goals important to both entities.

DVR met with the SRC to continue analyzing some of the data received through the comprehensive statewide needs assessment accomplished during state fiscal year 2008. The result of these activities is to concrete recommendations for DVR about ways in which DVR services can be improved for our customers statewide. These recommendations have been, wherever possible, incorporated into its State Plan to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

DVR survived a very difficult year in terms of State fiscal constraints and a State government hiring freeze that effectively reduced our counseling staff by more than two dozen people. Our Business Outreach Specialists were enlisted in the task of helping to place our clients in jobs in a declining economy. The relationships they developed in the previous year with groups of employers have been beneficial in finding jobs for DVR clients.

Last year's Cost Containment Plan resulted in increased awareness on the part of all staff about the justification for expenditures. Staff has seen this as a positive move that increased communication and made all of them feel like they were helping DVR remain solvent and able to serve clients. Although Cost Containment allowed DVR to continue to serve current clients, we had to activate an Order of Selection. At its worst, the wait list contained just over three thousand people. This is the largest wait list in DVR's history.

Our goal continues to be to find the balance point in the DVR budget. Balance is difficult to find given that a large portion of DVR's funding comes from two uncertain sources: state and federal government. If the current fiscal reality continues for several years, as we expect, we will need to carefully manage within our means.

The arrival of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds has helped Colorado. Through the next two years it will allow us to take people off the wait list and serve them much more quickly than would have been possible without ARRA funds. DVR anticipates that it will be able to eliminate the wait list by the end of ARRA funding in September 2011.

An additional benefit of ARRA dollars is that it will allow DVR to invest in several activities designed to build DVR's ability to serve clients far into the future. The largest project is the implementation of case management software product that will allow staff to serve clients much more effectively and efficiently. DVR will also be able to add a Business Outreach Specialist who will work only with placements in federal jobs. Denver and the surrounding state has many federal opportunities and the SRC felt that this area needs to be a focus for DVR. The remainder of the ARRA funding will allow DVR to upgrade and update equipment in our accessible technology lab as well as laptops used by the Rehabilitation Teachers.

The strong belief of both the SRC and DVR in the power of partnerships has helped us to weather the current fiscal storms. We have made sure that our customers have remained informed about the status of DVR's budget and wait list. We greatly appreciate the support and patience of all of our partners including service providers, advocates, sister divisions, workforce, education department representatives, school district partners, and employers. Through partnerships we are able to extend the reach and the resources of the agency to serve more people in Colorado.

The SRC and DVR cannot do the work of the agency alone. It takes many different kinds of entities to bring people the service they need to get to work and live their dreams. We have joined with all of our partners to creatively and carefully use our limited resources for the benefit of everyone served by DVR, both clients and employers.

Sincerely,



Nancy Smith

Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



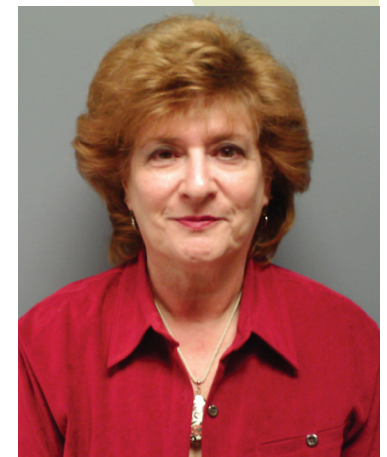
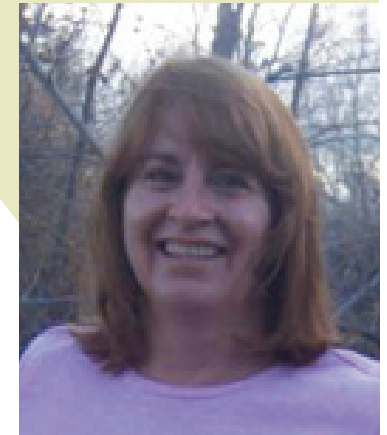
Gina Luby

Co-Chair, State Rehabilitation Council



Judi Stein Stutman

Co-Chair, State Rehabilitation Council



VISION

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes that individuals with disabilities are essential to the success of Colorado's workforce.

MISSION

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation assists individuals whose disabilities result in barriers to employment to succeed at work and live independently.

DVR's GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes that treating our employees with dignity and respect results in the highest quality outcomes for our consumers.
- Our employees strive to assist our consumers in developing the knowledge, skills and tools necessary for them to become independent in their employment endeavors.
- Any action taken or service provided by our employees to our consumers will have a direct impact on their employment success.

Nancy Smith

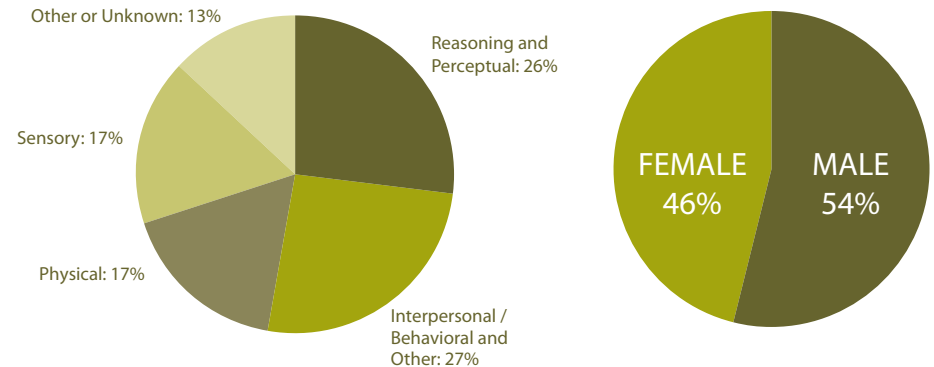
Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

FACTS at a GLANCE

Total Individuals Served	19,090
Successful Employment Outcomes Achieved	2,415
Consumers Working in a Competitive Setting	2,201
Average Hourly Wage	\$11.98
Average Hours Worked Per Week	30.2
Total Earnings of These Employees in the First Year	\$43.28 million
Average Weekly Salary	\$378
Average Annual Salary	\$19,665
Additional Dollars to Colorado's Tax Base	\$29.45 million
Additional Federal and State Taxes Paid in First Year (estimated)	\$2.24 million

OUR CUSTOMERS

All Data provided was collected from the GGCC Database on September 14th, 2009.



OCCUPATIONS of our CUSTOMERS

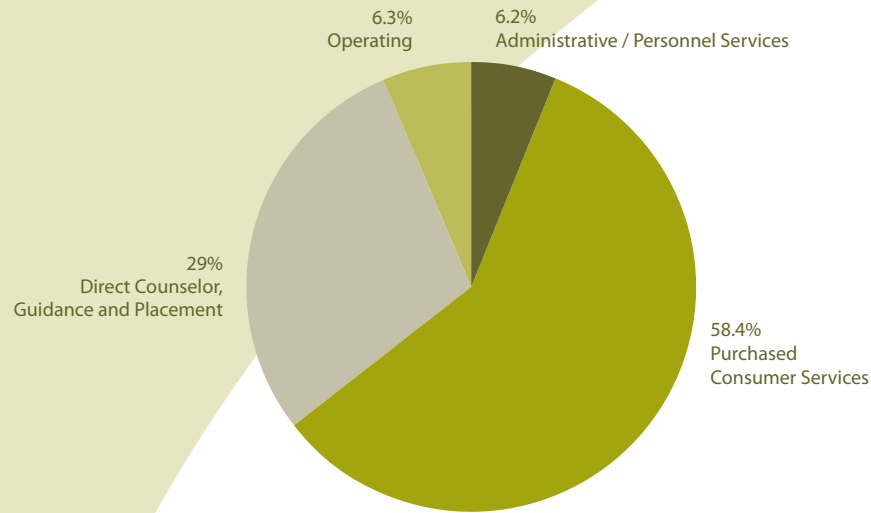
Office / Administrative Support	449	Construction	187
Sales and Related	253	Production	135
Transportation	230	Healthcare	101
Food Services	216	Business Management and Financial	83
Personal Care and Social Services	198	Education and Training	73
Building and Maintenance	193	Computer, Architecture, and Engineering	49

WORKLOAD STATISTICS

Successful Employment Outcomes Achieved	2,415
Individualized Plans for Employment Written	2,157
New Applications Processed	6,554
New Cases Determined Eligible	5,640
Total Individuals Served	19,090

Field Services

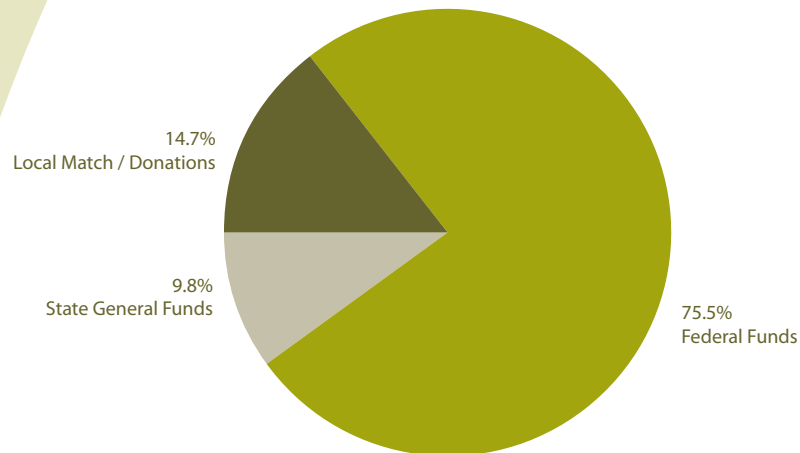
SFY 2009: DVR Expenditures by Type



Colorado's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) conducts its business through 35 field offices and satellite locations throughout the state, each serving individuals with all types of physical and mental disabilities.

DVR's staff is highly committed to assisting consumers to obtain vocational success and independence through evaluation, planning, provision of services necessary to be successful in employment, and comprehensive support during the process. Colorado employs approximately 125 extensively trained vocational rehabilitation counselors. Rehabilitation counselors are required to meet stringent standards put forth by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. In order to meet the needs of a variety of consumers, DVR has ensured that there are "specialist counselors" throughout the state. There are also counselors who are fluent in Spanish and American Sign Language in each region, as well as an individual who speaks Dutch.

SFY 2009: DVR Sources of Funding



Each of the field offices has a supervisor who, in addition to providing leadership and guidance to the staff, takes the lead in developing partnerships with area employers, workforce centers, schools, and other public and private service agencies within the community. DVR works in partnership with the business community to provide services to employers such as disability awareness training, on-site job assessments, referral and support of qualified employees, and professional consultation.

I would not be where I am today without DVR. – DVR client

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY:

Robert Huska Hitting Rock Bottom: A Wake-Up Call

Robert Huska doesn't shy away from talking about how much he used to drink. Friends told him they thought he was going to die drunk, and his doctors did too. "I don't remember most of the 1990s," Robert says.

He was beginning to have seizures, and doctors believed the alcoholism was a contributing factor. His downward spiral finally hit rock bottom in 2006 when he woke up in a hospital in Phoenix after suffering a head injury while drunk.

"They found me beside a bridge. I didn't know what happened and still don't," he says.

When Robert was discharged he went back to Grand Junction but was still having problems. He went to a doctor in Grand Junction who performed a CT scan on Robert's head and found a subdural hematoma (blood clot) on his brain.

The clot was removed successfully, but Robert knew this was the wake-up call he needed to change his life. He did not have a job, so his doctors told him about DVR and he was referred to counselor Amy Shearrow in the Grand Junction office.

He began treatment for his alcoholism, and at the same time started to explore his career options. He had always had an interest in cooking, so Amy helped him to get enrolled in the culinary arts program on the campus of Western Colorado Community College. He graduated in 2009 with his Associates of Science Degree in Culinary Arts, and with the help of Business Outreach Specialist Kristi Courter, got hired as a cook at the Coal Creek Café in the newly-build Holiday Inn in Grand Junction.

Robert says he doesn't have a preference on what he cooks but rather likes "to do a little bit of everything," although his co-workers say he makes great pastries. He hopes to one day work in a classic restaurant where he can develop his own menu and create delicious entrees. He is proud of his accomplishments in his new career, but even more proud of how far he has come since that fateful day when he last took a drink in 2006.

"Amy asked me what I wanted to do in life, and I hadn't really thought about that before."

- Robert Huska, DVR client



January

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: Self-Employment

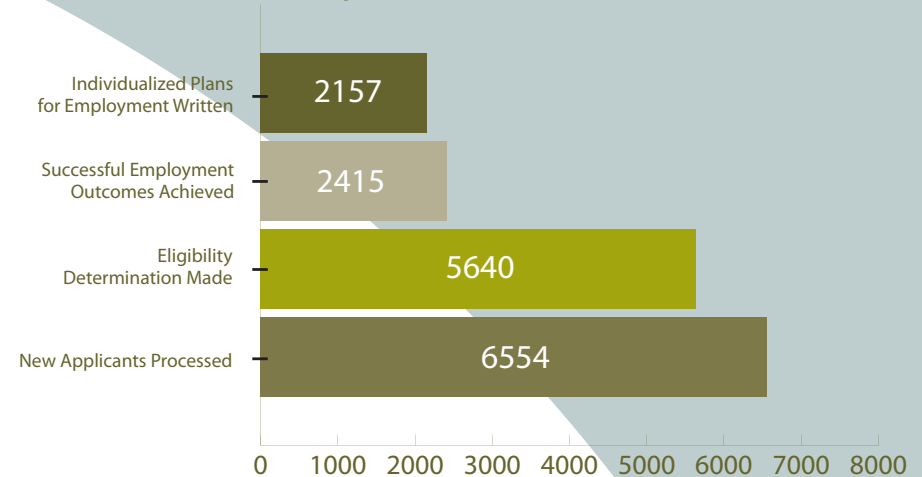
For the entrepreneurs among us, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) offers a wealth of resources through a group of well trained and talented staff known as Rehabilitation Counselors for Entrepreneurship (RCEs). These “RCEs” apply specialized self-employment skills and knowledge designed to assist our diverse consumers in succeeding in the challenging environment of today’s business world.

Additionally, our consumers will benefit greatly from a professional vendor network, made up of seasoned business experts, all of whom are united for the purpose of offering their collective expertise to aid and assist our new entrepreneurs with “real-world” knowledge and training.

For our consumers already fortunate enough to be experienced business owners, DVR offers existing business intervention assistance with professional advice and resources that will propel our entrepreneurs to new levels of business success. That business success and associated rewards for outstanding business achievement offer our entrepreneurs the opportunity to excel well beyond the barriers related to any disability.

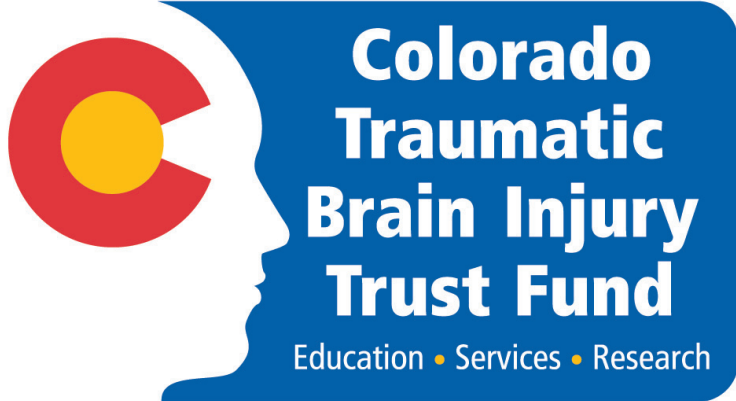
This approach is well illustrated by our collaborative work with the Colorado AgrAbility Project, a partnership between Colorado State University Cooperative Extension and Easter Seals Colorado. AgrAbility locates farmers and ranchers at risk of losing their careers in agriculture due to injury or disability. Through DVR financial assistance and support, farmers and ranchers obtain equipment modifications or other adaptive devices that help them sustain their work. The Division’s Self-Employment Program partners with the Colorado Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade and a myriad of other similarly charged organizations, each of whom are dedicated to the goal of preparing entrepreneurs to succeed in today’s tricky unpredictable business environment.

SFY 2009: What we accomplished



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COLORADO

Traumatic Brain Injury Program

The Traumatic Brain Injury Program, housed within the DVR, strives to develop a system of care in the state of Colorado to address the needs of individuals with brain injury. The TBI Program is meeting this challenge through two primary programmatic areas: grant funds from the Health and Rehabilitation Services Administration (HRSA) and the Colorado Traumatic Brain Injury Trust Fund Program (CTBITF).

The TBI Program obtained HRSA grant funds in 2006. The focus of this grant is to increase the capacity of service providers to effectively address the needs of individuals with TBI who are veterans, Latinos, or individuals residing in rural areas of the state and to increase access to mental health services for individuals with TBI. To achieve this goal the TBI Program has contracted with the Brain Injury Association of Colorado to develop networks of professionals across the state. In addition, a comprehensive needs and resource assessment has been conducted resulting in the development of a five year State Action Plan on Brain Injury addressing the identified needs.

The CTBITF was created by Colorado statute in 2002. The TBI Trust Fund strives to support all people in Colorado affected by TBI through services, research and education. Revenue is generated from surcharges assessed for DUI, DWAI, speeding ticket and tickets for individuals 18 and under riding a motor cycle without a helmet. By statute the funds are divided in the following three areas; a minimum of 55% for services, 25% for research and 5% for education.

Finally, The TBI Program was responsible for implementing an Executive Order on TBI signed by Governor Ritter in December 2008. As a result of the Executive Order a work group was convened comprised of representatives from 13 different State Departments. This work group is responsible for developing a comprehensive report to the governor outlining recommendations related to the effective care and treatment of individuals with TBI and their family members. This report is due to the Governor on December 1, 2009.

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provides specialized services to individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to assist them in achieving vocational success. Support services provided through DVR address the unique communication and cultural aspects of Deafness that are required to ensure the full and active participation of customers in the rehabilitation process.

DVR counselors that are Deaf or fluent in American Sign Language are staffed in appropriate offices throughout Colorado. Their knowledge of deafness and ability to facilitate effective, culturally-sensitive communication is vital to the collaborative and highly interactive vocational rehabilitation process.

DVR continues to keep current with technological advancements and Assistive Technology that promote communicative independence and self-reliance. DVR uses Video Phone technology in several offices throughout the state, which have significantly enhanced communication and heightened the level of cultural immersion with the Deaf community. An effort is being made to provide this device in most DVR offices. To further enhance communication, quality certified interpreters are made available to all individuals who require interpreting service. In fact, DVR field offices set aside a portion of the operating funds in order to ensure that DVR has adequate resources available for interpreting services, when needed. Improved service delivery, advanced communication technology, and effective counseling practice have been key components to increasing the accessibility and support of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing throughout the State of Colorado. The commitment of DVR to the vocational success of persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing is clearly reflected in the fulfilling experiences shared by DVR customers and the number of employment outcomes achieved this year. DVR looks forward with hopeful anticipation to the new fiscal year, sure to be filled with exciting improvements and deeper insight into effectively addressing the needs

The contacts that were introduced to me turned out to be very dedicated employees and assets to my business. The DVR staff's assistance with orientation and communication was invaluable. – Doc Watters Wine Cellars, Inc.

April						
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CLIENT SUCCESS STORY: Maggie Boden

Most people would not count having a stroke as a blessing, but for Maggie Boden, the event that happened four years ago led her on a path to a happier life and a more fulfilling career.

Before Jan. 15, 2006 Maggie had been working as an x-ray technician – a good job with a good paycheck. But, on that day, Maggie’s stroke left her with a loss of vision in her right eye and problems with her short term memory. She could no longer perform the duties required of her as a technician and, in addition to months of physical rehabilitation, she was also faced with having to find a new career.

Maggie soon began training as an Occupational Therapist and working at the hospital part time, but life dealt her another blow when she was informed that she would no longer be able to work part time at her position. Still recovering from her stroke, she was unable to work full-time and was laid off.

“It was difficult because I always envisioned working into my 70s, and here was another job I was not able to do,” Maggie said. “But I knew I needed to do something because I just couldn’t sit.”

That’s when one of her rehabilitation therapists suggested that DVR might be able to help. She began working with DVR counselor Nani McPherson out of the Boulder office, and together they realized that Maggie might be best suited to pursue training in massage therapy, an occupation that would allow her to use her previous medical experience, yet keep flexible hours.

She began classes at Healing Spirits Massage Training Program in Boulder with the help from DVR, and, upon graduating, her ideal career finally started to fall into place. She set up a massage therapy room in her home and takes appointments throughout the week, and a volunteer job that she took on as part of her rehabilitation ended up paying dividends too.

“Part of my rehab was to get a volunteer job to see if I could work,” Maggie said. “So, I started volunteering at Golden West Senior Living Facility. After I finished my schooling Golden West gave me a rent-free room to work out of if I give massage to the residents at a discounted rate.”

Maggie now enjoys her work and the flexibility it allows, and considers herself fortunate to have had people supporting her along the way and for the event that turned her life in a different direction in 2006.



May						
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“Whatever part isn’t broken, I try to keep those parts moving,” Carol says.

“If you let the symptoms get to you, you will let them win.”

Carol Carrington, DVR Client



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY: Carol Carrington

Mule Helps Rancher Maintain

When Carol Carrington was first diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at the age of 30, her doctor told her to start looking for a one-level house that was easily accessible. So, Carol set out house shopping and the following year settled on a nice, quaint 880-acre fully-operational cattle ranch in Jefferson.

That was more than 20 years ago. Today, Carol takes care of more than 100 head Highland Cattle, more than 30 horses, and Tabitha, her bottle-fed calf that has her up early every morning combing 800-plus acres to make sure she gets her bottle of breakfast.

Although her daughter and son-in-law are in the process of building a house on the ranch and will soon be a great help to her, she has pretty much run the entire operation by herself since 1987, all while working to manage her MS. She said she views her disability more as a “temporary inconvenience,” and prefers to focus on what she has rather than what she does not.

Thus far, the symptoms have not won, but they have put up a good fight. In 2004, Carol’s vision deteriorated to the point where she could no longer drive a car, and she had already begun experiencing difficulty reaching areas of her ranch that were not accessible by a car or truck because it was physically laboring for her to walk long distances and over rough terrain.

That’s when she contacted the Easter Seals Agribility program which, in turn, referred Carol to DVR and counselor Mary Chacho in the Golden office. The two agencies coordinated resources to purchase a specially-equipped Kawasaki Mule utility vehicle which allows Carol to drive safely over any terrain on her ranch year round.

“When I got it, it changed my whole life,” she says of the UTV which features a dump bed and a heated, enclosed cab. “The ranch is two miles long, and half of it is bushes and wetlands, and this thing can go right through it.”

Because she can only drive on the ranch, she tends to spend a lot of time there. But, if you ask Carol, that’s just fine with her.

“A friend of mine came by and said ‘Carol, where have you been?’, and I said ‘you know, just over to Buffy’s Pond’,” she says with a chuckle. “But you know, it’s a pretty good place to be.”

June

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DVR BUSINESS OUTREACH INITIATIVE:

Bridging business and ability

We are DVR. The best candidates. The best support. We strive to make the best match, so our employer partners get the right candidate for the job.

The DVR Business Outreach Initiative's vision is to develop long-term working relationships with private businesses and public organizations that result in successful employment outcomes for DVR job seekers. Thanks to all DVR staff, DVR is Colorado's leading placement organization for people with disabilities.

The business outreach team assists DVR staff by providing a bridge between employers and talented job seekers, helping both connect and succeed. In addition to educating businesses about the benefits of using DVR as a recruitment resource, the business outreach team prepares and delivers valuable disability awareness training to assist employers in learning about hiring and employing persons with disabilities, proper disability etiquette, and how these can positively impact the business' bottom line.

We are excited about the development of a disability awareness training toolkit that contains presentations, activities, DVD's, and handouts about various disability awareness training topics. The business outreach team, along with many other DVR staff, is eager to deliver this training to businesses and organizations.

Other services to employers include information and guidance about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and job accommodations; consultative services such as job retention, job analysis, and adaptive technology. Finally, we can provide information about possible DVR financial incentives and tax credits a business may receive for hiring a person with a disability.

During 2009, Colorado DVR officially launched its marketing plan and rolled out several marketing tools to the field. Those marketing tools include new business cards, letterhead, employer-focused brochure, standardized DVR electronic signature, e-Blast template, PowerPoint template, marketing folders, event kits, and a new DVR web site. We will be using these tools to promote DVR and our services.

WHAT WE DO

The rehabilitation process begins when an individual applies for services from DVR. An application form is completed and an intake interview is held to explore the individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services. Further assessment of the individual's employment barriers is conducted when necessary to establish eligibility for services. Once eligibility is established, the participant and his/her vocational rehabilitation counselor work together to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This plan describes the services that will be needed so that the individual can reach his/her employment goal. Each participant's program is individually tailored to assure that the services necessary to achieve his/her goals are provided. Follow-up services are provided by the rehabilitation counselor to assure that the individual's employment is stable and satisfactory. Customers may avail themselves of the Client Assistance Program when they have a dispute with the vocational rehabilitation counselor's decision regarding customer services.

The services provided to any eligible individual are determined by his/her unique employment barriers, his/her chosen employment goal, and his/her individual circumstances. Examples of services available from DVR include:

SERVICES AVAILABLE

DVR provides a variety of services to eligible individuals to help them obtain their employment goals. The eligible individual and the vocational rehabilitation counselor work together to determine which services are necessary, appropriate and at the least possible cost for the consumer's identified employment goal.

The services provided to any eligible individual are determined by his/her unique employment barriers, his/her chosen employment goal, and his/her individual circumstances. Examples of services available from DVR include:

- Evaluation and diagnostic services;
- Vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance;
- Physical and mental restoration services;
- Training services;
- Specialized services for individuals who are blind, deaf, and deaf-blind;
- Rehabilitation technology services;
- Placement services are provided directly by vocational rehabilitation counselors and our Business Outreach Specialists before consideration is given to outsourcing this service;
- Supportive services;

In addition, post-employment services may be provided to previously rehabilitated individuals when needed to maintain or regain suitable employment.

State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

MISSION:

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has had a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for over twenty-three years. The SRC mission statement is:

SRC provides individuals with disabilities a strong substantive role in shaping the programs and services established to support their employment goals and aspirations and to provide consumers of vocational rehabilitation services a mechanism to influence at the systemic and policy level the direction of vocational rehabilitation programming.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

The Colorado State Rehabilitation Council

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Web:
http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/dvr/hm_councils.htm

SRC Staff Member: Rebecca Johnson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Gina Luby

*Co-Chair,
State Rehabilitation Council
Parent of Child with Disability*

Judi Stein Stutman

*Co-Chair,
State Rehabilitation Council
Public at Large*

Joyce Schlose

*Chair Elect
Community Rehabilitation
Service Provider*

Todd Coffey

*Treasurer
DD Planning Council*

James Crowe

VR Counselor (Ex-officio)

Francisco Cordova

VR Consumer representative

Joe Garrity

VR Consumer representative

Dave DeLay

Mental Health representative

Booker T. Graves

Workforce Investment Board

Mary Leonard

121 Project

Chuck Musso

Business, Industry, and Labor

Lynne Neese

Business, Industry, and Labor

Larry Williams

VR Consumer representative

Todd Nielsen

Public at Large

Barbara Palmer

State Education Agency

Geoff Peterson

Client Assistance Program

Karen Rutledge

Peak Parent Center

Nancy Smith

*Director, Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation (Ex-Officio)*

Joe Sims

Disability Advocacy Groups

Rebecca Swiney

Disability Advocacy Groups

David Thomas

VR Consumer representative

I think they really care about the people they assist. They are really professional, all-around good people. – DVR client

RECOMMENDATIONS

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) made the following recommendations to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR):

- Using the ARRA Funds to Dedicate a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to Work solely on Schedule A Hiring of Consumers.
- Use the ARRA Funds to purchase a Case Management System.
- Using ARRA Funds to eliminate the Consumer Waiting List

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL:

Goals for 2009 and Outcomes

Membership Committee Goal

- Fill all mandated slots and increase membership by five members by May 2009.
 - Increased membership by five members. Progress was made toward the goal of filling all mandated slots. The Council continues its recruitment of prospective business members.

Executive Committee Goal

- Co-Chairs of SRC will communicate to the full council essential information to support DVR in accomplishing its objectives and SRC mandated responsibilities.
 - The Co-Chairs began and continue this practice through full Council meetings and email communications.

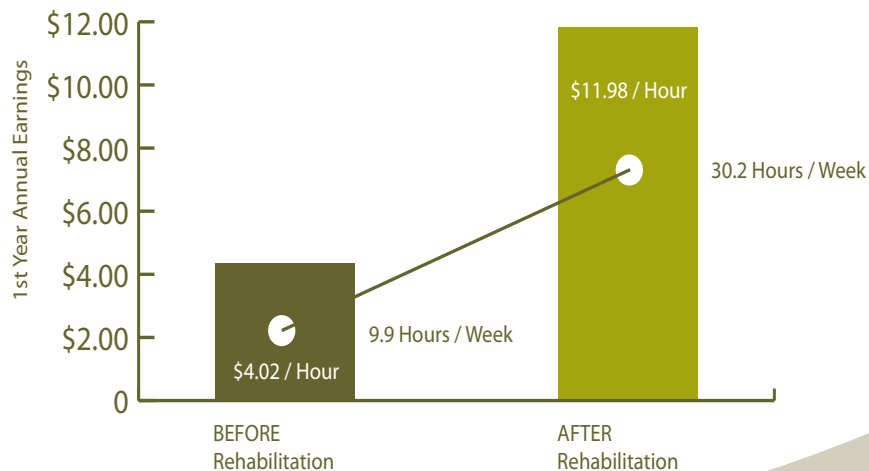
Full Council Goal/ Coordinator

- By July 1, 2009, the SRC website pages will be updated to include membership, minutes, meeting dates, and general information and at least 10 disability partners' web pages will have links to the SRC website.
 - SRC website pages were updated with membership, minutes, and meeting dates.

Legislative Committee Goal

- By July 1, 2009, the SRC will meet face-to-face with the Governor and lead legislators to report on SRC needs, goals, and accomplishments.
 - No progress was made on this goal as the Committee rethought its educational strategies.

SFY 2009: Increased Earnings and Hours Worked for Competitively Employed Consumers



"My experience with DVR has been a great pleasure. The contacts that were introduced to me turned out to be very dedicated employees and assets to my business. The professionalism demonstrated by the DVR staff was a very pleasant experience. Their assistance with orientation and communication was invaluable." -

Doc Watters, Doc Watters Wine Cellars, Inc

"The consumer has been a great addition to our staff and DVR did an excellent job matching his skills and abilities to the position we had available. DVR was easy to work with in terms of adaptive equipment we needed in order to accommodate his driving responsibilities." - Nikki Benning, Vocational Supervisor at Mesa Developmental Services

Thanks

"We used an On the Job Training agreement through DVR to offset the cost of initial training. The process was easy to use and we would definitely consider using DVR again." - Chris Boyd, owner of No Coast Sushi



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Business Enterprise Program

Business Enterprise Program (BEP), mandated by the Federal Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1936, trains legally blind individuals and helps them establish, maintain, and manage food service locations in State and Federal government buildings and other facilities.

The operations include large and small cafeterias, military dining halls, snack bars, convenience stores, and vending machine concessions in these buildings as well as State parks, rest areas, ports of entry, welcome centers, and youth corrections. The mission of BEP is to provide individuals who are legally blind with remunerative employment, ever-enlarging business opportunities, and ongoing empowerment with a greater effort toward self-sufficiency, and a commitment to mutual cooperation, excellence, and positive public image. As of July 2008, 32 business enterprises were operating on Federal and State properties in Colorado. The Program receives no general fund money and is funded from an allotment of Federal funds authorized by Title I of the United States Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 110), cash funds, and cash funds exempt. One of the primary sources of the Program's cash fund is derived from the blind operators and their assessments. The Licensed Blind Operators act as independent contractors to the State Licensing Agency (SLA). Blind operators are individual business entrepreneurs, using profits earned as their livelihood income.

DVR opened so many doors for me ... they really helped me to regain my independence and move forward in my life. – DVR client



Ed Hodenpel, a counselor at the Greenwood Village DVR office shakes the hand of consumer Michael De Herrera who successfully became Self-Employed through DVR services.

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CLIENT SUCCESS STORY:

Kathy Santaus

Adaptive Technology and Belief Help DVR Client Succeed

Most would agree that believing in one's self is an important ingredient to finding employment in today's economy.

But for those individuals who happen to have a disability that requires an accommodation, believing in themselves may not be enough. They also need a willing employer who also believes it can work.

DVR client Kathy Santaus was faced with such a challenge two years ago when her former employer made a change to its computer system that no longer would work with the software she needed as a blind computer operator. Knowing how difficult it is to find an employer who is open to making the right accommodations, Kathy worried that her job search was going to be an uphill battle. But that's when she ran into a former coworker who said Staples was a great company to work for.

"She said I should apply at Staples," Kathy says. "When I went to the interview I met with an interviewer who just happened to work with a blind person at a previous job and she knew that it could be successful."

The interviewer, Laura Sears, went to Staples management with some ideas. They then coordinated with Kathy's DVR counselor Julia Zanon, out of the Denver Metro DVR office, who started working with an adaptive technology specialist to help Kathy navigate within Staples' complex computer system.

"Kathy is super skilled with adaptive technology," says Zanon. "She is one of those clients who didn't need a lot of help because she has such a great work ethic and always puts in the extra effort to make things work for her."

Kathy now works with customers who may have problems with an existing order. And that lady who believed in her at the interview, Laura Sears, is now her supervisor, who Kathy refers to as her "mentor and coach."

The technology continues to change as Staples updates existing programs or adds new ones, but Kathy says that working for a company that offers the assistance and support she needs always helps her to push through the problem to find the right solution



"As they add new programs, it's always a new experience," she says. "But Staples is very supportive of me and it's comfortable to work here. I am very lucky!" - Kathy

Santaus, DVR Client

August

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: Youth Unit

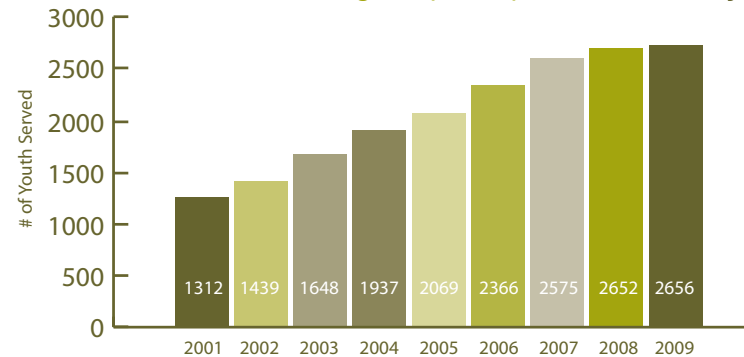
Thank you Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for helping me attain things I never even dreamed of. – DVR client

The DVR Youth Unit assures that quality transition services are provided to Colorado's youth and young adults with disabilities. The Youth Unit ensures that DVR counselors understand and successfully implement transition services so students with disabilities do not encounter gaps as they leave the school setting and begin participating in activities leading to successful employment.

To this end, Colorado DVR counselors provide consultation and technical assistance to educators early in the transition process. Staff also facilitate referrals, determine eligibility, assist students with the selection of suitable employment outcomes, and provide services as appropriate to the individual needs of students. Additionally, the Youth Unit is responsible for the implementation of Colorado's School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP). SWAP is a partnership with more than 140 local school districts and the Colorado Department of Education. SWAP involves collaboration with multiple community-based agencies. Each year, SWAP provides year-round transition services, including community-based assessment, career exploration, career development, community-based work experiences and job placement to more than 3,000 youth between the ages of 16 and 25.

September						
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School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP): Youth Served by State FY



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY: Katie Sivak

Confidence Key to Managing Disability

Finding the right job is a difficult task for just about everyone, but for those with hidden disabilities there are additional challenges of deciding whether or not to disclose a disability and how to go about it if they do.

Katie Sivak has been faced with such challenges most of her life. As someone who has dealt with an anxiety disorder and a learning disability, Katie always worried about consequences of disclosing her disabilities - either having to face the stigma of coworkers or backlash from managers who did not understand or support the accommodations she might need.

Early on she chose not to disclose, however she would inevitably find herself in a situation that sparked her anxiety, and Katie would make the choice to quit rather than let her supervisors or coworkers learn about her disabilities.

“It was a real struggle,” Katie says. “It’s always been a challenge with my disability because I present well and people don’t know I have a disability. I wouldn’t say anything and then something would happen or it would become too stressful and I would get frustrated and just leave the job. That was becoming an upsetting pattern for me.”

At the time Katie was in the School to Work Alliance Program, and her DVR counselor Mary Ellen Gooding from the Greenwood Village office saw the difficulty Katie was having and suggested she get some specialized job readiness training through the STAR Reach Clubhouse in Littleton.

Katie hooked up with STAR Reach job coach Deidre Sage who first took the time to identify jobs at which Katie is most likely to be successful. She then began teaching Katie to be confident enough to advocate for herself at the workplace.

Katie currently works at Rue 21, a retail fashion store, and says that because her supervisor and coworkers are aware of her disabilities she is now able to step away and do exercises to diffuse the anxiety rather than just quit the job.

“I now have the confidence to disclose my disability because I feel I have the support I need.” – Katie Sivak, DVR client



October

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CLIENT SUCCESS STORY: Robert Rowe

Problem Solver Has Unique Mind

Most of us know those people who manage to find ways to fix tough problems. Their brains seem to always be working on a solution, coming up with ideas that only they could dream up.

Maybe it's due to a never-say-quit attitude, or possible they just have no fear of failure. But, maybe it's that their brain works differently than others. When it comes to Robert Rowe, that just might be the case.

Robert was born with a tumor on the left side of his brain. At the age of four, it caused him to develop epilepsy, although his doctors at the time did not discover the tumor. He lived with that tumor until age 13 when it was discovered with an MRI and removed along with most of his upper left temporal lobe which had basically been dormant since birth.

November

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That is the part of the brain that processes speech, and although Robert speaks a little slower than most, he has no problems communicating. So, how is he able to speak and communicate when that part of his brain was effectively dead since birth and later removed? According to Robert's doctors his brain started fixing itself as soon as he was born, using part of the right side of his brain that the majority of most humans never use.

Like many DVR clients, Robert turned to the agency after becoming frustrated at not being able to find work. He worked with counselor Jason Carter and Business Outreach Specialist Melody Babbitt.

"I talk kind of slow and I'm heavy set, which made it hard to find a job," Robert said. "With DVR, I got connected with (businesses) that were more understanding."

One of those businesses was Platte River Industries which hired Robert to do custodial work at a youth center and gymnasium on Fort Carson Army Base. The work is fairly routine and structured, but Robert enjoys the occasional opportunity to use those creative skills he has had since he was a kid working on his 1973 Dodge pickup or his family's dragster.

Like the time he made a contraption out of pvc pipe so the vacuum could reach up around the vaulted ceiling, or when he showed the shuttle driver a low-cost way to fix a headlight to avoid another warning from the military police, Robert likes to wrap his unique brain around the problem until he comes up with a solution.

"I've always been interested being a mechanic and those ideas – I can't explain it – they just automatically come to mind when something needs to be fixed, I just find ways to do things."

– Robert Rowe, DVR client



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Independent Living Programs

Our independent living partners, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the Older Individuals who are Blind program (OIB), experienced a rise in requests for services as the national economy caused cutbacks in many programs supporting low income individuals and people with disabilities. Fortunately, during this reporting period, our partners were able to meet that challenge because of their extensive knowledge of community resources.

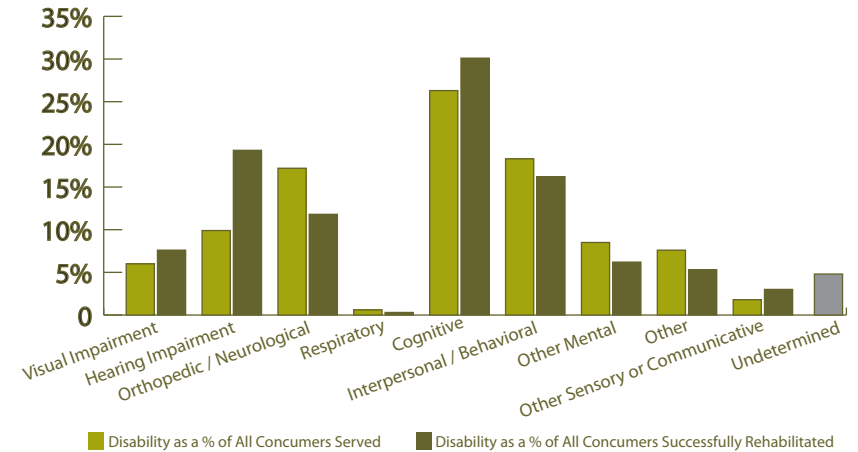
The ten Colorado CILs have stepped up their systems advocacy efforts to meet the basic needs of people with disabilities for affordable accessible housing, long-term care services, public transportation, and access to healthcare. The CILs provided input on the use of Title VII Part C, Part B, and OIB ARRA funds. The primary targeted areas for IL funds are capacity building, nursing home transition services, and access to employment for people with disabilities.

The OIB program is designed for people who are at least 55 years old and experiencing low vision or blindness. Through extensive outreach efforts, this program has grown significantly and has expanded services into previously unserved counties. The OIB program, through its services and supports, is teaching people that losing eyesight does not have to mean losing independence.

The SILC has continued to implement the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL), meeting the majority of the second year goals of the plan. Most significantly, the SILC has initiated Colorado's first Independent Living Needs Assessment, which will identify unserved and underserved populations, and provide the CILs with information helpful in targeting their programs and services to the primary needs of their communities.

SFY 2009:

Disabilities of Consumers Served and Successfully Rehabilitated



December

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Personal Adjustment Training

Personal Adjustment Training Program for Blind / Visually-Impaired Individuals

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's Personal Adjustment Training (PAT) program witnessed additional employee separations during the past year. However, the program is in the midst of filling three "Mobility and Orientation" (O&M) Instructors and Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (VRT) positions, which will return the program to "full staff" status. Additionally, the PAT program seeks to hire a qualified Assistive Technology Specialist for statewide service delivery to individuals with a variety of disabilities. During this time of unprecedented staff vacancies, our two itinerant teachers, Mary Grace Roaquin and Jadwiga Brown, demonstrate flexibility and professionalism as they continue providing the same high quality services to people in the field, as they perform double-duty in the center-based program.

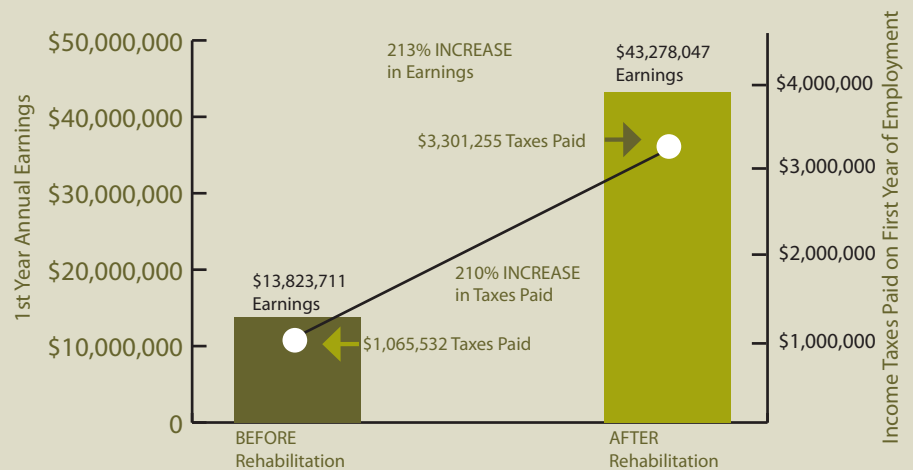
In conjunction with Ms. Roaquin and Ms. Brown, the remaining PAT staff, Ken Neve, Jason Fayre & Jacqueline Geib, created a comprehensive evaluation / training curriculum, which fortifies the program. With this curriculum, PAT students will have a well lit path that figuratively will show them "where they've been" (accomplishments) and "where they are going" (objectives), all the while improving the teacher's ability to forecast student's remaining "train time". The curriculum has a prominent role in the orientation / training of new PAT staff and underpins program consistency.

In addition to the inaugural curriculum, PAT staff re-organized the physical layout of the mobility, communication, low-vision, and assistive technology areas. The re-design accomplishes multiple goals, but most importantly the contemporary design provides students with recognizable and intuitively consistent orientation cues from room-to-room. Derived from the new infrastructure, a major secondary gain - "space", accommodates the eagerly anticipated arrival of 10 new wireless desktop training stations. With the addition of 10 new training stations, the PAT program's training capacity increases to 22 students; thereby, nearly doubling the potential success stories of individuals with disabilities. Not only did ARRA funds allow for the

purchase of these training computers, but also targeted the upgrade of training equipment across all PAT areas.

The PAT program remains optimistic and prepared to tackle challenges that are a by-product of the current economy. The staff continue to assist individuals, who are blind or visually-impaired, as well as individuals with orthopedic, traumatic brain-injury, and organic brain conditions that result in significant limitations, in achieving greater independence and meaningful employment.

DVR: Economic Benefit to the State of Colorado



IN SFY 2009:

2,201 Coloradoans with disabilities were successfully employed in a competitive job

65% of these new workers were unemployed when they became involved with DVR

Average annual salary for these workers rose from **\$6,281** prior to DVR's involvement to **\$19,665** after rehabilitation

These new workers will add **\$29.45 million** to Colorado's tax base after the first twelve months following rehabilitation

DVR Offices and Contact Information

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
 Colorado Department of Human Services
 1575 Sherman Street, 4th Floor
 Denver, Colorado 80203

Voice/TTY: 303.866.4150
 Toll Free: 1.866.870.4595
 FAX: 303.866.4905
 Web: <http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/dvr/>
 Email: Voc.Rehab@state.co.us

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Manager, Organizational Development

Sue Schierkolk
Supervisor, Transition and Youth Unit

Sandy Pratt
Manager, Central Support Services

Vacant
Manager, Provider Relations

Gale Klingman
Manager, Program Performance and Information Management Services

FIELD OFFICES:

Office	Phone	TTY
Alamosa	719.589.5158	719.589.5150
Aurora	303.337.4610	
Boulder	303.444.2816	303.444.8136
Cañon City	719.275.2318 x3076	
Colorado Springs	719.635.3585	719.635.0529
Craig	970.824.9671	
Delta	970.874.5781 x12	
Denver Metro	303.866.2500	303.866.3984
	303.866.3100	303.866.3980
Durango	970.247.3161	970.247.7940
Edwards	970.926.1515	
Fort Collins	970.223.9823	970.223.9823
Fort Morgan	970.542.9376	
Frisco	970.668.5360	
Glenwood Springs	970.945.9174	970.945.9174
Golden	303.866.4121	303.866.4125
Grand Junction	970.248.7103	970.248.7103
Greeley	970.353.5409	
Greenwood Village	303.221.2089	303.221.3099
Lamar	719.336.7712	719.336.7712
Limon	719.775.8819	719.775.8819
Longmont	303.776.6878	303.776.7783
Montrose	970.249.4468	970.249.4468
Northglenn	303.866.2110	303.866.2120
Pueblo	719.544.1406	719.546.0968
Rocky Ford	719.254.3358	
Salida	719.539.9670	719.539.9670
Steamboat Springs	970.620.0418	
Sterling	970.522.3737	970.522.3737
Trinidad	888.734.2211	

Community-centered Board Location Offices:

Colorado Blue Sky Enterprises	719.546.0574
Denver Options	303.636.5979
Development Disabilities Resource Center	303.462.6688
Imagine	303.665.7789
Foot Hills Gateway	970.266.5436
Mountain Valley Developmental Services	970.210.5893
	970.945.2306
The Resource Exchange	719.785.6405
Starpoint	719.276.1616

Other Facilities Providing DVR Services:

Adams County DHS	303.227.2677
Denver Project to End Homelessness	720.944.3858
El Paso DHS	719.444.8115
Grand Junction Career Center	970.778.0790
Pikes Peak Workforce Center	719.667.3796

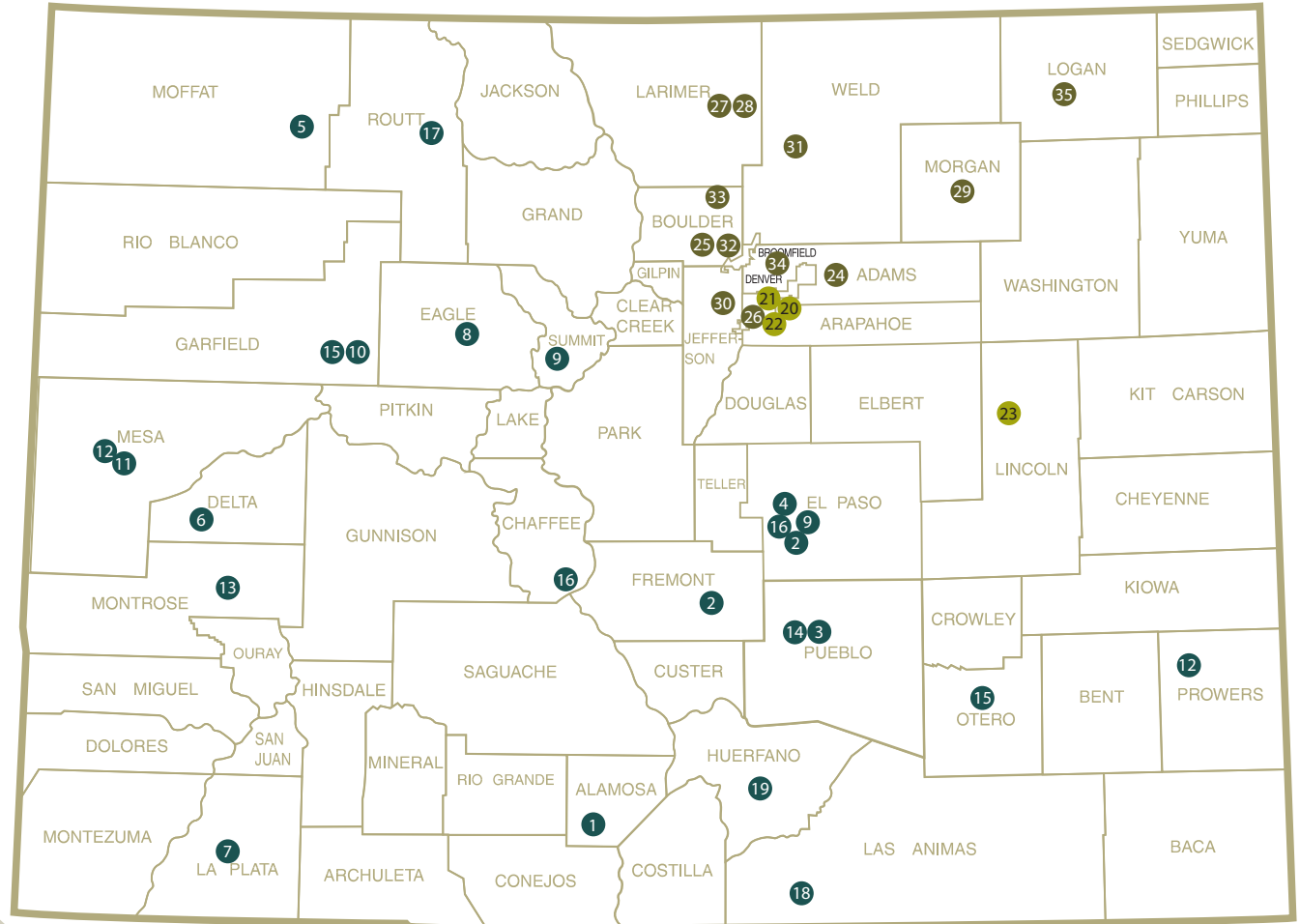
Other Programs:

Statewide Teacher for the Blind Program	303.866.2500
Business Enterprise Program	
Dan Whalen, Manager	303.866.3485
Traumatic Brain Injury Program	
Judy Dettmer, Director, DVR	303.866.4085

REGION I: ●

Ken Reynolds, *Supervisor*
719.482.7970

- 1 Alamosa
- 2 Cañon City
- 3 The Resource Exchange (CCB)
- 4 Colorado Springs
- 5 Craig
- 6 Delta
- 7 Durango
- 8 Edwards
- 9 Frisco
- 10 Glenwood Springs
- 11 Grand Junction
- 12 Lamar
- 13 Montrose
- 14 Pueblo
- 15 Rocky Ford
- 16 Salida
- 17 Steamboat Springs
- 18 Trinidad
- 19 Walsenburg



REGION II: ●

Marilyn Carmichael, *Supervisor*
303.866.3111

- 20 Aurora
- 21 Denver Metro
- 22 Greenwood Village
- 23 Limon

REGION III: ●

Candy Leathers, *Supervisor*
303.866.2708

- 24 Adams Country DHS
- 25 Boulder
- 26 Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (CCB)
- 27 Foot Hills Gateway (CCB)
- 28 Fort Collins
- 29 Fort Morgan
- 30 Golden
- 31 Greeley
- 32 Imagine (CCB)
- 33 Longmont
- 34 Northglenn
- 35 Sterling

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