

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council  
Workforce & Technology Center  
February 4, 2015

**Members – Present**

Andrew Cohen  
Laurie Elinoff, Vice Chair  
Tom Laverty  
Jeff Moran, Chair  
Sue Page  
Barry Shaw  
Michael Whitehill

**Members Unable to Attend**

Christopher Conklin  
Paulette Epps  
Anil Lewis  
Matt Rice  
William Stocker  
Zosia Zaks

**Support Staff – Present**

Polly Huston  
Donna Lippa

**DORS Liaisons to Council - Present**

Kimberlee Schultz, Policy and Planning  
Susan Schaffer, Blindness & Vision Services  
Donna Lettow, Quality Assurance

**Candidates for Membership in Attendance**

Joseph Barrett, MSRC Candidate for Membership  
Cindy LaBon, MSRC Candidate for Membership  
Diane Pabich, MSRC Candidate for Membership  
Christy Stuart, MSRC Candidate for Membership

**Guests**

Amanda Conn, MSDE  
Jessica Hawes, ELI  
Anna Kim, ELI  
Beneda Jackson, ELI  
Beth Mathis, Benedictine Adult Services Director  
Toni March, DORS  
Katja Fort-Rhoden, MD Statewide Independent Living Council  
Melissa Serra, ELI  
Sandra Sturiale, ELI  
Amy Weitzel, ELI

**Introduction and Approval of Minutes**

The Chair, Jeff Moran and Vice Chair, Laurie Elinoff, welcomed guests and members to the Council meeting and asked that everyone introduce themselves. The minutes from the November 19, 2014 meeting were approved as written.

### **Discussion of Visits with Legislators and Legislative Issues**

There were many new faces in Annapolis today after the November 2014 elections. There were 68 face-to-face appointments made with legislators today. The DORS Executive Leadership Institute staff (ELI) were present today to assist in this activity. Many of them accompanied members and staff to their meetings and also distributed literature to offices that were not being visited today. The meeting was held in the Miller Senate Building and was sponsored by Senator Jim Brochin.

#### Christy Stuart

Christy Stuart was accompanied by Melissa Serra, ELI. Delegate Sid Saab had many questions i.e. the number of people working for DORS, area in the state with the most consumers with a breakdown of age, disability and outcome, and questions about the 80/20 split between federal and state funding.

Delegate Tony McConkey asked for assistance in the letter from his constituents on the potential closing of Blind Industries and Services of Maryland. Christy and Melissa shared this letter with Sue Schaffer, Director, Blindness and Vision Services.

Delegate Vitale has been appointed to Judge and they have no replacement for her. She is frantically trying to get bills sent to the floor for passage or consideration.

#### Diane Pabich

Delegate Hayes requested the following information i.e. total residents served, how many were from Baltimore, how many locations does DORS have across the State, and, where are they located.

#### Cindy LaBon/Toni March

Delegate Platt was not available so information was left with his staff person. The reason for the visit was explained to his staff person.

All offices visited asked Ms. LaBon for a business card. Only one of her delegates knew about DORS and its mission. Two out of the four legislators visited commented that, when it comes to funding for persons with disabilities, funding is usually never reduced. Cindy's response was to consider increasing the funding.

### Mike Whitehill

Senator Steve Hershey was in a rush, but his legislative aide spent 30 minutes reviewing the data and he assured me, as the Senator did, that they would support DORS.

Delegate Jay Jacobs is perhaps our greatest potential ally in the house. His daughter Anna is a DORS counselor in Salisbury and she keeps him in the loop. He promised to help us where and when we need it.

Delegate Steve Arentz was very receptive and is very supportive and will help ensure level funding through the upcoming Department of Education cuts, if any.

Delegate Jeff Ghrist was not in, nor was his aide.

### Sue Page

Sue Page was accompanied by Council member Joe Barrett. They were not able to meet with Delegate Kathy Szeliga, Delegate Rick Impallaria or Delegate Pat McDonough, but spoke with their aides. Sue Page explained the mission of DORS and Joe Barrett shared his personal story as a former DORS success story/consumer.

Sue Page and Joe Barrett met with Senator Jennings for about 15 minutes. They shared statistics about DORS and the impact that the VR program makes in the lives of individuals with disabilities in the adjustment process and in going to work – as well as maintaining employment.

Senator Jennings seemed very supportive of DORS and transitioning individuals from government assistance to becoming taxpayers. He mentioned knowing C. David Ward (who is on the Board at the IMAGE Center). In addition, Joe Barrett shared his experience as a consumer of DORS services and the meaningful impact the agency has made on his life and career.

### Andrew Cohen

Andrew Cohen met with 4 of his representatives today. The legislators were interested in the statistics and numbers that were given out today. Mr. Cohen spoke to them about the deaf/deaf-blind programs in Maryland and transportation issues. They all seemed to be motivated and in support of the DORS program.

### Laurie Elinoff

Laurie met with all new legislators this year because she has moved in the past year. Sandy Sturiale, ELI, who also works for the Disability Determination Services (DDS), accompanied Laurie and spoke to the legislators about the DDS. All the legislators appeared to be interested in the information presented and in favor of supporting the current funding.

### Tom Laverty

Tom Laverty met one of his delegates personally and staff of the other offices. They appeared interested in the program and wanted more information on the budget.

### Barry Shaw

Barry Shaw met with Delegate Adrienne Jones who was very happy to see him again. They talked a great deal about DORS and the services DORS provides. Barry shared what DORS has done for him and other consumers.

Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam was not available but he was able to speak to her assistant.

Delegate Benjamin Brooks and Barry had a nice conversation. He was very interested in the services that DORS provides and has a family member with disabilities.

Delegate Jay Jalisi gave Mr. Shaw a business card and asked to be placed on an email list to contact him and invite him to attend future Council activities.

**ACTION: Staff will develop a thank you letter which will be reviewed and approved by the Chair and Vice Chair and will be sent to all members of the legislator that were visited today.**

### Chairperson's Report

2015 Spring CSAVR/NCSAB Conference, April 18-22, Bethesda, MD – Chair Jeff Moran stated that the Council will be providing representation at this conference

Region III SRC Community Meeting, May 2015 – This meeting was attended last fall by Chair Jeff Moran and Council member Andrew Cohen. The next meeting is scheduled for this May and we will be looking for a representative from the MD SRC to attend. This yearly meeting will no longer be hosted by George

Washington University TACE Center. Ellen McHenny, Virginia SRC Chair and Liz Smith, Policy and Planning Director, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, have agreed to host the next meeting in May in Northern Virginia.

Statistics on DORS Transitioning Youth in Terms of Outcomes

Chair, Jeff Moran requested that DORS provide the latest statistics on Transitioning Youth who have completed DORS training in terms of outcomes i.e. how many find employment, what that employment looks like, full time vs. part time and how long are they employed and any other relevant information and statistics. John Stem, DORS Staff Specialist, provided the following information:

- In FY 14, DORS rehabilitated 2,545 consumers.
- 32% (815) of those rehabilitated were transition youth, defined as less than age 22 at application.
- Of those TY rehabilitated 49% (400) received some form of training during their case.
- Details regarding the employment outcomes of the 400 TY consumers who received training services are provided in the tables below.

Table 1:  
The numbers of Transition Youth rehabilitated in FY 14 after receiving some form of "training" services.

| Row Labels  | Count      | Avg Hours Per Week | Avg Hourly Wage |
|---|------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Employment in Integrated Setting</b>           | <b>394</b> | <b>27.41</b>       | <b>\$9.54</b>   |
| Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing and Related       | 9          | 30.56              | \$10.09         |
| Clerical and Administrative Support               | 17         | 27.88              | \$9.46          |
| Community and Social Service Occupations          | 1          | 25.00              | \$7.75          |
| Managerial and Administrative                     | 3          | 37.33              | \$15.70         |
| Prod, Const, Operating, Maint & Material Handling | 25         | 32.28              | \$9.45          |
| Production Occupations                            | 1          | 40.00              | \$9.65          |
| Professional, Paraprofessional and Technical      | 41         | 34.95              | \$14.32         |
| Sales and Related Occupations                     | 22         | 26.32              | \$8.67          |
| Service Occupations                               | 275        | 25.66              | \$8.84          |
| <b>Homemaker</b>                                  | <b>5</b>   | <b>0.00</b>        |                 |
| RSA Special Occupations and Miscellaneous         | 5          | 0.00               |                 |
| <b>Vending Stand Operator</b>                     | <b>1</b>   | <b>40.00</b>       | <b>\$12.07</b>  |
| RSA Special Occupations and Miscellaneous         | 1          | 40.00              | \$12.07         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                | <b>400</b> | <b>27.10</b>       | <b>\$9.55</b>   |

Table 2:

The Top five training services appearing most frequently in the cases of TY consumers rehabilitated in FY 14.

| Top 5 Most Frequently Provided Training Services | Count | Cost         | Avg PP Cost |
|--|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Job Readiness Training                           | 146   | \$349,344.81 | \$2,392.77  |
| Pre-Vocational Services Training                 | 95    | \$238,162.18 | \$2,506.97  |
| College/University Training                      | 77    | \$729,394.58 | \$9,472.66  |
| WTC Career and Technology Training               | 76    | \$209,812.00 | \$2,760.68  |
| Vocational and Occupational Skills Training      | 66    | \$180,580.66 | \$2,736.07  |

**Director’s Report** – Sue Page

State Legislative Budget – The Board of Public Works has approved a reduction in State workforce of 1,000 positions which should be accomplished through attrition and retirements. The Governor’s Budget for 2016 is currently being worked on.

DORS Waiting List – The waiting list to date is a little over 2,000 with an approximate 12 month waiting period for services. Last year at this time the waiting list was over 3,000 individuals.

PROMISE Grant – Maryland PROMISE provides services at no-cost to youth ages 14-16 who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits and their families. The goal of these services is to help youth and their families get an education or training, find work, and access other resources to reach their goals. Maryland PROMISE helps youth to: (1) find a job that matches their interests and skills, (2) complete high school and receive a diploma, (3) connect with support services to help them become more independent, (4) enroll in postsecondary education and training, and (5) make more money.

Maryland Minimum Wage – The minimum wage in Maryland increased to \$8.00 effective January 1, 2015. This means that for DORS consumers in employment status who are currently earning minimum wage, their earnings should increase. Certain individuals in supported employment whose positions are covered by the Fair Labor Standards may be legally paid less than the state minimum wage. DORS is working to decrease the number of consumers successfully closed earning sub-minimum wages.

DORS Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) – DORS has begun its third rotation of the Executive Leadership Institute. Coordinated by DORS Executive Staff in collaboration with the DORS Human Resource Development Office, the purpose

of this leadership experience include: (1) diversified senior leadership experience, (2) support and build upon the commitment of participants to the agency, (3) provide a systems overview of the Division, community partners and other state agencies, (4) assist participants in developing expanded networks, and (5) have the DORS Executive Staff gain from the participants' perspectives.

Program Manager II for Business Relations – The Division is pleased to announce that Darlene Perego has been promoted to Program Manager II for Business Relations. In this role, Ms. Perego will lead the newly created Business Relations Branch.

Governor's Summer 2015 QUEST Internships for DORS Consumers – The Maryland Department of Budget & Management and DORS are pleased to announce that the Governor is sponsoring another QUEST Internship Program for persons with disabilities for summer 2015. QUEST has been an important rehabilitation service for many DORS consumers, enabling participants to develop work skills, build networks and enhance their resumes. Nearly 300 consumers have participated in QUEST internships; many of them have been closed as successfully employed.

DORS has gone GOOGLE – DORS has now gone GOOGLE. The new website address for DORS is [www.dors.maryland.gov](http://www.dors.maryland.gov).

## **Committee Reports**

Policy and Planning Committee, Tom Laverty

The committee had a teleconference meeting on January 21, 2015. The committee members discussed the following:

- **Agencies quality assurance project**, is in pilot status. This project involves a review of the case work performed and case management and counseling practices of the Office of Field Services and Office of Blindness and Vision Services management and counseling staff.
- **Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act** – The biggest impact for DORS will be that there is no exception for transitioning students in the timeframe for the IPE, unless an exception process is utilized. Previously, the IPE for students with disabilities needed to be finalized before the student left secondary school. The 90-day requirement for IPE development includes transitioning students.

- **Case Interrupted Status by the Division** – This status is used when an individual is unable to proceed, for a period of time, with the services outlined on their IPE. There will be more discussion on this issue.
- Given the delay in the issuance of regulations from RSA, the Division has decided that the DORS Planning Meeting, usually held in April, will be placed on hold pending issuance of draft regulations and hopefully final regulations.
- It has been recommended that DORS have one teleconference public meeting this year due to pending issuance of draft regulations.

Public Relations and Quality Assurance Committee  
Committee report is not available at this meeting.

Membership and Resource Committee, Laurie Elinoff  
James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D. is the new Secretary of Appointments for Governor Larry Hogan's administration.

We have forwarded a membership packet to the Appointments Office including the following:

- Reappointments – Sue Page, Anil Lewis and Michael Whitehill
- New Appointments –
- Cindy LaBon, replacing Charlie Crawford as a representative of the American Council of the Blind;
- Jani Willis, a representative of Business & Industry and employee of the US Business Leadership Network;
- Christy Stuart, representing the Maryland State Department of Education, Special Education and Early Intervention Services;
- Diane Pabich, representing the Maryland State Workforce Investment Board; and
- Joseph Barrett, former recipient of VR services; currently employed by the IMAGE Center, a Center for Independent Living in Central Maryland.

An orientation will be planned once we hear about the appointments.



Employment/Career Development Committee, Paulette Epps  
Committee report not available at this meeting.

Blindness and Vision Services Committee, Anil Lewis

The committee met on October 22, 2014 and Anil Lewis was elected as Chair of the committee replacing Charles Crawford whose term on the Council was completed.

The committee received an update about Transitioning Services in the Office for Blindness and Vision Services by Toni March, VR Supervisor. The committee also received updates from the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind and Blind Industries and Services of Maryland.

The new meeting calendar was developed for 2015. The first meeting in 2015 will be held at WTC on February 25<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. All Council members are welcome to attend.

The next full Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 2015, Workforce & Technology Center, Baltimore.

Respectfully submitted.

Donna Lippa  
MSRC Staff Support