

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

Maryland's Advocates For Public Vocational Rehabilitation

2012 Annual Report

The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

To the Citizens of Maryland:

The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC) serves as the people's collective champion for employment for disabled Marylanders, for enhanced awareness of the capabilities of disabled people, and for promotion of State and national policies that support those goals. Accordingly, the Council, in compliance with Federal law, monitors and oversees Maryland's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), the State agency that provides public vocational rehabilitation (VR) services and is responsible for helping disabled people to find and retain jobs. As the chairman of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council, I am keen to preside over the work of a transparent, responsive, and active MSRC that is dedicated to strengthening services to disabled Marylanders looking for employment and that is genuinely engaged with agency management to shape the future of Maryland's rehabilitation program. I believe that these objectives can be best accomplished through a close, collaborative, and substantive relationship between the members of the MSRC and the management and staff of DORS. Drawing on the Council's diverse membership, I believe that we can provide agency management and staff with a fair representation of the perspectives that program consumers and other stakeholders possess. Consistent with our Federal and State mandate, the MSRC will be involved with agency policy oversight and development, dedicated to informing DORS programs and practices with the empowered perspective of program stakeholders, and committed to profiling the compelling purposes of DORS to State and Federal leaders.

I, along with the other members of the MSRC, invite people to communicate with us about their interactions with DORS (positive or negative) so that we can be of optimal service to individual Marylanders and to the VR program. During this last year, we have formalized the practice of inviting public comment at each of our quarterly MSRC meetings, and I invite people to take full advantage of this opportunity to share perspectives with us via this regular forum. Thank you for reading this year's annual report and for working with the MSRC to help us achieve our goals.

Sincerely,
Daniel B. Frye, Chairman
Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

Who are we?

The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC) is made up of individuals interested in the success of Maryland's public vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs. Members are appointed by the Governor and include representatives from education, rehabilitation, employment, industry and consumer advocacy groups. A majority of Council members are persons with a disability.

Belief Statement

The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC) believes that employment is critical to the quality of citizenship of people with disabilities in Maryland. The MSRC advocates in Maryland for:

- Increased employment for people with disabilities.
- Increased awareness of individuals with disabilities and their employment capabilities.
- State policies that encourage and support employment.

What do we do?

The MSRC takes an active and visible role in how Maryland's public VR program is administered:

- We review, analyze and advise DORS regarding performance of its responsibilities and quality of services.
- We ensure that the needs of individuals with disabilities are identified and addressed by state and federal legislators, service providers, employers and the community.
- We collaborate with organizations and other state councils to promote services to underserved and unserved populations.
- We develop and review State goals and priorities, and assist in the preparation of Maryland's annual State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation.

For more information about the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council, please visit: www.md-src.org

DORS VR Programs

What is vocational rehabilitation?

VR prepares people with disabilities to go to work, stay on the job and remain independent in their homes and communities. In Maryland, public VR is provided by the State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS).

DORS statewide rehabilitation counselors provide for services that may include career counseling, assistive technology, vocational training and job placement. DORS provides personalized support and employment services so individuals with disabilities can plan a path to a successful career and independent living.

What were DORS outcomes for fiscal year 2012?

- DORS matched 2,506 qualified individuals to job openings in Maryland businesses, an increase of 3% over the previous year. These new workers contributed \$35 million to the State's economy.
- DORS assisted 75 Maryland businesses with worksite reviews so they could hire new employees or keep valued ones.
- 173 blind or visually impaired individuals found employment, with an average wage of \$16.39/hour.
- DORS served 9,350 students with disabilities to prepare them to move from high school to employment, higher education or career training. Students represent 39% of DORS open caseload.
- DORS helped 1,119 people with significant disabilities move off public benefits and become taxpayers.
- After taking part in career training and rehabilitation technology programs at DORS Workforce & Technology Center (WTC) in Baltimore, 534 individuals went to work.
- WTC served 935 transitioning youths with specialized residential and day programs designed to help high school students with disabilities reach their work and independent living goals.
- Despite the Federal hiring freeze, 62 DORS consumers were newly hired or able to retain their jobs in Federal agencies in positions ranging from clerical to engineering.
- 21 individuals with traumatic brain injuries achieved employment as part of the Governor's Employment Program for Persons with Acquired Brain Injuries.
- 288 high school students with disabilities earned work experience in paid summer employment programs in partnership with businesses throughout the state.
- 17 DORS consumers completed the annual Governor's QUEST Internship Program for Persons with Disabilities, which provides three-month work experiences in State government.

- 261 consumers took part in expanded employment services for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals at WTC, including a very successful customized on-the-job training program.
- For FY 2012, the Maryland public VR program exceeded the Federal performance standards for both employment outcomes and minority access to services.

What is VR's return on investment?

- If DORS past record is any indication, of the 2,506 DORS participants who went to work in 2012, 84% will still be working a year from now – the highest retention rate of any Maryland workforce program. These new workers will contribute over \$35 million to Maryland's economy in their first year of work.
- The average cost for a person with disabilities to achieve successful employment with DORS is \$4,811. This cost is paid back through taxes and reduced reliance on public benefits in just two to four years.
- At the time of application, only 12% of DORS consumers list “wages” as their primary source of income. After receiving services from DORS, nearly 83% report that wages are their primary source of income.
- The Social Security Administration estimates that when disability benefits recipients go to work, they generate a savings to the Federal treasury and Social Security of \$7 for every \$1 spent on VR services.

For more information about DORS and vocational rehabilitation in Maryland, please visit: www.md-dors.org/report

The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

- Thomas Barkley, Division of Special Education, MSDE
- Michael Bullis, Executive Director, The IMAGE Center
- Earl Cooper, Public Advocate
- Charles Crawford, American Council of the Blind
- Tim Daly, Business/Industry Representative
- Laurie Elinoff, Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council
- Paulette Epps, Director of VR Services Division, Alliance, Inc.
- Dan Frye, National Federation of the Blind; MSRC Chair
- Tom Laverty, Director, Client Assistance Program
- Carol Lewis, Rehabilitation Counselor, DORS
- Kali Mallik, Business/Industry Representative
- Mary Manzoni, Vocational Services Director, Humanim, Inc.
- Suzanne R. Page, Assistant State Superintendent in Rehabilitation Services, DORS
- Anne Rea, Director of Employment Services, Way Station
- Barry Shaw, Public Advocate
- Alfred Sonnenstrahl, Public Advocate
- Josie Thomas, Executive Director, Parents' Place of Maryland, Inc.; MSRC Vice Chair
- Michael Whitehill, Business/Industry Representative
- Zosia Zaks, Public Advocate

2013 Meeting Schedule

- February 6, 2013 Legislative Event, Annapolis, Maryland
- April 2013 Statewide Public Meetings
- May 8, 2013 Workforce & Technology Center, Baltimore, Maryland, 4:00-7:00 pm
- August 2013 Executive Committee Planning Meeting
- September 11, 2013 Workforce & Technology Center, Baltimore, Maryland, 4:00-7:00 pm

- November 13, 2013 Workforce & Technology Center,
Baltimore, Maryland, 4:00-7:00 pm

The public is welcome to attend and give comments at every MSRC meeting. Dates are subject to change. Please check MSRC website at www.md-src.org.

For more information about the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council, its meetings and activities, or if you would like to be considered for membership:

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council
2301 Argonne Drive, Baltimore MD 21218
410-554-9437 • TTY 410-554-9411
Fax: 410-554-9384 • Toll Free: 1-888-554-0334
www.md-src.org