

## **Attachment 4.2(c): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit (DSU), and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations**

### **(c) Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit (DSU), and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations**

Nevada's State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) provides input to the Designated State Unit (DSU) in the following ways:

- Recommendations from the annual report of the council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), were received during two public meetings of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) on May 30 and November 14, 2008. The Council determined to include information from the General Participant and the Transition Student Satisfaction Survey Instruments, New State Plan Goals, Populations Served and various demographic charts as well as participant "success stories."
- The review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), was conducted by the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Center for Research Design and Analysis and Nevada Center for Health Statistics and Informatics. Two Consumer Satisfaction Survey Instruments were utilized: The General Participant and Transition Student Satisfaction Survey. The two survey instruments captured vocational rehabilitation participant and transition student satisfaction through a mixed-mode telephone and web-based survey. The NSRC met on September 19, 2008 to obtain the results of these Survey's and to obtain information on recommendations from UNR. The NSRC and DSU jointly requested UNR to begin a multiple year, longitudinal study of Consumer Satisfaction Survey results in order to determine if significant statistical trends develop. Major Points of the FFY 2009 Surveys include:

#### **General Participant Survey Results:**

- 79% would recommend the Vocational Rehabilitation program to others.
- 78% felt the counselors understood their needs.
- 74% said counselors were easy to contact.
- 84% felt the counselors treated them with respect.
- 72% of all participants were somewhat or very satisfied with the overall quality of the program's service.
- 70% were satisfied with the timeliness of services.
- 58% were satisfied with the ability of the program to help participants get or keep a job.
- 55% were satisfied with the choice between providers.
- 67% felt they were able to choose the services they received.

### **Transition Student Survey Results:**

- 89.3% of the students were satisfied with the training and most of the responding students participated in on-the-job training.
  - 62% of the students that completed high school received an adjusted diploma.
  - 28% of those surveyed received a standard diploma.
  - 78.8% of the students were satisfied with the program.
  - 73.1% of the students were satisfied with the services and over half of the students received job placement and job coaching services.
  - 34.5% of the student survey group received paid vacations from employment.
  - 48.2% of the students receive health insurance from employment.
  - 31.3% of the survey group receive paid sick leave from employment.
  - 29.8% of the students obtained a retirement plan from their employer.
  - 24.7% of the student survey group received meals as a benefit of employment.
  - 7.7% of those students surveyed work where daycare facilities are present.
  - 91.3% of the students who received mobility, grooming and hospitality training were satisfied with the program.
- Consistent with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended in 1998, the NSRC, in partnership with the DSU, has developed, agreed to and reviewed state goals and applied corresponding strategies with measurable indicators. The NSRC and DSU met three times in public meetings to design valuable goals consistent with the recommendations and data analysis revealed in the Needs Assessment Summary Report and Consumer Satisfaction Surveys. The third and final meeting was conducted in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2009, to ratify the State Plan by majority vote. The NSRC publicly noticed the opportunity to review the proposed amendments to the State Plan. A public meeting was held on May 14, 2009; no public comments were made.
  - The NSRC and the DSU jointly determined to award a contract to San Diego State, Interwork Institute to conduct a comprehensive, statewide Needs Assessment beginning in FFY 2008. The Needs Assessment was comprised of focus groups consisting of current and past program participants, Program Services staff, vocational counselors group, service providers, advocacy groups and other programs and agencies that interact with the DSU's vocational rehabilitation programs. A thorough analysis of the DSU's program electronic case file data was conducted as part of the Needs Assessment in order to determine trends and recommendations.

A comparative analysis was also performed to reflect Nevada's demographics against states with similar size and population (Colorado, Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming, and New Mexico), as well as national trends. The Needs Assessment prompted the DSU and NSRC to develop a Strategic Plan focused on four major areas that indicated potential un-served and underserved populations. The NSRC and DSU utilized information from the 2008 Needs Assessment as well as the Consumer Satisfaction Survey Instruments to Develop State Plan Goals for FFY 2010.

- A major issue discussed during NSRC meetings in FFY 2009 included State Plan revisions. The NSRC State Plan Committee significantly revised the goals with corresponding strategies and measurable indicators to align them with the recommendations and information revealed through the comprehensive, statewide Needs Assessment and sentiments expressed in NSRC meetings. The State Plan Goals and Priorities are cited with corresponding Strategies and Indicators below:

Goal #1:

Emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities, and improve transition from school to work and school to post-secondary education.

Strategies:

- Serve more transition students by developing referral mechanisms with elementary and post-secondary institutions.
- Creative marketing to schools and students.
- Provide Statewide “Transition Connect” Expansion Project.
- Counselor phone calls with follow-up.
- Increased communication between VR counselor/special education teachers.
- Counselors to participate with parent/teacher conferences.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by transition students in the Program Services of the Division. This will be measured by comparison to states with similar population and demographics, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Needs Assessment. The Division’s performance regarding increased enrollment in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
- Increase competitive employment outcomes for transition students. The Division’s performance regarding increased competitive employment outcomes in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
- Increase post-secondary educational services for transition students. The Division’s performance regarding increased post-secondary educational services in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.

Goal #2:

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically, eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities.

Strategies:

- Increase marketing efforts with mental health hospitals and physicians.
- Partner with Special Olympics.
- Partner with residential providers and Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC’s).
- Partner with groups concerned with autism.
- Partner with advocacy groups.
- Partner with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disability Services for statewide autism workshops in order to gain referrals.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by eligible individuals with autism and mental health disabilities. The Division's performance to increase enrollment by eligible individuals with autism and mental health disabilities in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.

Goal #3:

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically minority populations, represented in Nevada's workforce.

Strategies:

- Recruit Spanish-speaking staff.
- Public Service Announcements in ethnic media.
- Utilize "other language" brochures.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by minority populations representative of Nevada's minority workforce. The Division's performance regarding increased enrollment by minority populations in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.

Goal #4:

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, increased retention of competitive employment, self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services and opportunities to all consumers who need supported employment services.

Strategies:

- Communicate with consumers, advocates, service providers, education authorities, disability service delivery system providers and Division staff to foster a cultural shift that emphasizes the value of employment rather than benefits as the avenue to self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion, economic quality and integration into society.
- Emphasize both the potential of people with disabilities and the perspective of employment as the avenue to self-sufficiency in all staff training.
- Work with youth with disabilities, the Nevada Department of Education, local education authorities, parent organizations and families to encourage early discussions with students about the expectations of employment and their skills, abilities, and talents that will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Support peer mentoring of people with disabilities that encourages employment and empowers individuals to risk leaving the benefits system.
- Support assistive technology services that enhance employability.
- Identify and support best practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.
- In conjunction with the Community Mental Health Centers, Community Development Disability Organizations and affiliates, coordinate services to increase the number of individuals with disabilities that are interested and willing to pursue employment by overcoming real or perceived barriers to employment.

- The DSU and the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council will examine Consumer Satisfaction Survey instruments to determine if opportunities for improvement exist (example: improve definition for “Other Disabilities” category).
- Include Nevada State Rehabilitation Council attendance during the Division’s yearly staff in-service training seminar.
- Obtain annual input from the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council regarding counselor recruitment/retention.
- Conduct a Needs Assessment a minimum of every three years with presentations and reports to the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council.
- Conduct annual meetings of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council’s State Plan Committee to draft goals.

Indicators:

- The Division’s performance regarding the numbers of individuals rehabilitated who achieve competitive employment in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
  - Increase the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully, earning at least the federal minimum wage. The Division’s performance regarding an increase in the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
  - Increase the number of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) for supported employment participants. The Division’s performance regarding an increase in the number of supported employment participants with an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
  - Nevadans with disabilities will achieve quality employment and self-sufficiency through an increase in successful retention of employment. The Division’s performance regarding Nevadans with disabilities achieving quality employment and self-sufficiency through an increase in successful retention of employment in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels. Also, assistive technology services will be tracked and reported.
- In FFY 2009 the DSU and NSRC jointly developed, implemented and accepted revisions to the Participant Services Policies and Procedures Manual (P & P Manual), which contains policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provisions of Vocational Rehabilitation services.
  - The NSRC received multiple presentations on the P & P Manual. Revisions were made to Policies and Procedures regarding Assessment of Eligibility/Certificate of Eligibility and/or Extension of Eligibility, Home Modifications, and Assistive Technology.

The NSRC provided enhancements to the P & P Manual and became more informed about vocational rehabilitation programmatic policies, practices and services.

- The NSRC reported in the FFY 2009 Annual Report:

... “As the year has unfolded, the NSRC has grappled with the distressing issues of the loss of state revenues and staffing vacancies. These issues are particularly disheartening when the need for services to individuals with disabilities is growing at a rapid pace.

This year the NSRC has gained many new and energetic Council members, and we look forward to their participation as we jointly seek to meet Nevada’s vocational rehabilitation (VR) program challenges. Notwithstanding our challenges, the Council and Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue its partnership, working together as a team to provide needed services to the disabled community of the State. The Council also expresses sincere appreciation to those Council members who have during the year completed their service on the Council.

As we have in the past, the NSRC will continue its commitment to serving as a strong partner with the State of Nevada to meet the far reaching needs of the VR program.”

- The NSRC Vice Chair, one NSRC member and the NSRC liaison attended the training for the Western Region hosted by San Diego State University, Interwork Institute and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Topics of discussion:
  - Rehab Net On-line Training Courses for State Rehabilitation Council Members and Staff regarding the History of Rehabilitation Programs and the Rehabilitation Act, and The State Plan .
  - Resources including Budget and Support Staff for State Rehabilitation Councils.
  - Roundtables regarding meeting formats, current SRC issues, training and resources.
- There were two new NSRC members in FFY 2009. The new members were provided training manuals in FFY 2009 on the following subjects:
  - NSRC Member Roles and Responsibilities
  - Overview of By-laws
  - Robert’s Rules of Order
  - Nevada Open Meeting Law
  - Rehab Net Online Training Courses: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the History of Rehabilitation Programs, and The State Plan.
- The DSU’s Vocational Rehabilitation employees and the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council members gathered in Reno for a two-day in-service training session in FFY 2009. The DSU offers continuing education opportunities for its professional and para-professional staff members. NSRC Members are also encouraged to attend. The training was funded primarily through the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) In-Service Training Grant. The training was well received and the NSRC went away from the training with new information that will assist them to better understand programs, policies and procedures.
- In FFY 2009 the NSRC and DSU continued to explore concerns regarding the National Issue of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Retention and Recruitment. The NSRC explored publications promoted by CSAVR on this topic and the DSU formed statewide Retention

Recruitment Teams to explore ways of improving morale, culture and work processes. On May 14, 2009, the NSRC invited the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Division Administrator, Charlene Dwyer to provide a training presentation on this topic. The DSU also held an in-service training for counselor supervisors and administration regarding VR counselor retention, recruitment, team based approaches, culture change and improving morale.

The DSU concurred with the SRC recommendations outlined above.

## **Attachment 4.8: Cooperation, Collaboration and Coordination**

### **(b) (1)-(4) Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities**

#### **(1) Cooperation with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System**

The DSU has developed cooperative agreements with agencies external to the Workforce Investment System that are involved in serving people with disabilities. These cooperative agreements are designed to:

- Remove barriers affecting the delivery of mutually beneficial services,
- Increase the availability of resources,
- Eliminate duplication of services, and
- Facilitate the development of programs and competencies.

The cooperative agreements include the DSU's formal agreements with the Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) and the Nevada Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services (MHDS). The DSU also holds cooperative agreements with the Section 121 Native American agencies known as the Moapa Band of Paiutes and Fort Mojave Indian Tribe.

The DWSS cooperative agreement refers Welfare recipients to VR programs for completion of vocational testing and assessment. The MHDS agreement defines the procedures for timely cross-referrals and information sharing. The agreement with MHDS also defines methods for the development of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) through multi-disciplinary teams, funding of job placement and job coaching services, and the provision of extended follow-along services for people whose cases are closed with supported employment outcomes. Beyond these formal agreements, the DSU pursues cooperative efforts to extend the capacity of the DSU to reach and meet the needs of its diverse clientele.

In 2005, the Nevada State Legislature amended NRS 334.025 to place the responsibility for management and promotion of the "State Use Program" within the Rehabilitation Division. The "State Use Program" allows a state and local governmental purchasing agent to bypass the bidding process to contract with "Organizations for Training and Employment of Mental or Physically Disabled Persons" for the purchase of commodities and/or services. Nevada refers to these organizations as Community Training Centers (CTC). Presently, seventeen Community Training Centers are authorized for the program. The following are highlights of Nevada's State Use Program, known as the "Preferred Purchase Program."

The Division changed the formal name of the State Use Program to the "Preferred Purchase Program." The goals are:

- Provide competitive employment, at or above minimum wage.
- Provide integrated employment settings, i.e. workers with disabilities are mainstreamed with those without disabilities in community based settings.

- Provide a career path or opportunity for advancement that is available to all workers.
- Provide customized employment and job carving as integral strategies for projects under this Program.

In 2008 the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 334 was amended in order to:

- Provide certain requirements for contracts relating to the Program.
- Provide for the appeal of decisions by the Division to deny or withdraw its approval of such contracts.
- Revise provisions governing registration of organizations that enter into contracts.

Nevada's economic downturn and State budget concerns have negatively impacted employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the State's Vocational Rehabilitation and State Use Programs. In answer to this negative impact, pilot programs were developed in order to increase job placements for program services participants as well as CTC participants. The pilot programs focus on the following areas:

- Innovative approaches to State Use contracts: the following innovative approaches design business models to employ individuals with disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities, as well as those without disabilities, within integrated settings at competitive wages, while establishing career opportunities for training and advancement.
  - A document management pilot project utilizing Supported Employment funds will begin in FFY-2010. This project affords training and employment opportunities, creating electronic digitalized media services. The project will initiate in Southern Nevada, with a plan to expand statewide.
  - A dog park pilot project will be initiated, in order to develop the landscape and conduct ongoing park maintenance. The Dog Park will be located in rural Nevada and serve as a model for statewide opportunities.
  - Currently an electronic recycling program is located in Las Vegas. The Program is developing a plan to expand both training and employment opportunities statewide.
- Eco-friendly "green" niche marketing: the following projects increased employment opportunities in 2008.
  - Computer recycling, "e-waste" and secure document destruction/recycling remain as popular services. These programs provide employment, although the return on recycled material fell drastically in 2008. This fall made it difficult to meet costs for these projects. The electronic recycling project described above is in response to this downturn and to attempt to keep the existing thirty job placements in addition to expanding employment and services statewide.
  - A high quality re-manufactured toner cartridge pilot project began in 2008, offering the first State Use product in Nevada. The statewide launch of this product is anticipated in calendar year 2009, with the assistance of Nevada's Department of Administration – Purchasing Division.

- It is anticipated that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Stimulus funding under the Green Jobs Initiative and Community Block Grants will provide employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the areas of manufacturing, assembly and installation of various programs including solar, wind and housing weatherization.

The DSU has no programs with the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture.

## **(2) Coordination with Education Officials**

The coordination of services for students with disabilities is achieved through a variety of cooperative efforts. The DSU utilizes inter-local contracts and participates in statewide and local transition technical and career education activities.

In FFY 2008, the DSU continued its collaborative efforts by updating its Interagency Cooperative Agreement with the Nevada Department of Education (NDOE) in conformance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended 1998. The NDOE is Nevada's State Lead Educational Agency (LEA). The DSU considers the NDOE as the cornerstone for statewide collaboration, facilitating participation in local school transition activities. Coordination with students, parents and representatives is achieved through involving staff in consumer organizations and the participation of consumers in the DSU programs. Staff of the DSU work with local school transition teams and conduct informational presentations at the schools, for parents and teacher assemblages, job fairs and other school-related events. The DSU is also represented at the statewide technical and career education planning sessions.

Parents of students with disabilities and representatives of the Nevada Parents Educating Parents organization have representation on the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council.

The DSU has agreements with all of Nevada's 17 school districts. All of the agreements were updated in FFY-2008 and went into effect July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2012. They reflect the intent of the NDOE cooperative agreement for coordination of services designed to meet the educational, vocational and independent living needs of students with disabilities. The DSU has identified that the development of individualized relationships between rehabilitation and education staff is critical to the delivery of comprehensive services. Statewide, rehabilitation counselors and technicians have been identified to serve as designated liaisons with the individual high school programs. DSU staff members actively participate in Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings and are available to provide other consultation, outreach and IEP development assistance and informational support.

An Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is jointly developed either in consultation with the Special Education Team or directly with the consumer and/or their parent or guardian depending on the individual's preference. The IPE is agreed to and signed before the student leaves the school by the rehabilitation counselor and the student, or the parent or guardian if the student is not of the Age of Majority.

The DSU's Bureau of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) collaborated with the Clark County School District in the assessment of assistive technologies specific to the needs of visually impaired students. BSBVI Staff participate in transition workshops to provide group and individual training of students with visual impairments.

In 2006, the DSU in agreement with the Clark County School District entered into a contract with Easter Seals, Southern Nevada to provide Transition Service Coordinators or liaisons between the school district professionals, rehabilitation counselors, parents and students. The program has been named "Transition Connect." The coordinators have been working under the guidance of the rehabilitation counselor to identify and encourage students to apply for services, assist with implementation of Individual Plans for Employment and job readiness. Linkages between school professionals and vocational rehabilitation counselors have been strengthened. The DSU developed and advertised a statewide transition Request for Proposal (RFP) in May 2008 and negotiated contracts with ASAP Services, Inc. for Southern Nevada and Easter Seals Sierra Nevada for Northern and Rural Nevada. The contracts are in effect from September 2008 through September 30, 2010, with an option to extend for two (2) additional years upon mutual agreement of all parties. DSU management and transition staff coordinated kick-off meetings with each School District in order to introduce the "Transition Connect" program and contract staff. In partnership with each school district, DSU management staff developed a plan to conduct routine communication in the form of conference calls and meetings, in order to discuss any participant-specific need or program issue.

The Southern District has three full-time rehabilitation counselors, one part-time rehabilitation counselor and two rehabilitation technicians dedicated to coordinating transition services. The Northern District, which covers four counties, has identified twelve rehabilitation counselors who work with transition students in addition to carrying a caseload of VR clients. The DSU's Rural District currently has inter-local agreements with the twelve school districts it serves. Each of the four rural rehabilitation counselors is assigned to a specific geographical area that serves all school districts within their designated area in addition to carrying a caseload of VR clients. In summary, there are twenty vocational rehabilitation counselors statewide who provide outreach and vocational rehabilitation services to transition students.

In February 2006, the DSU entered into an inter-local agreement with the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), a state-sponsored higher education system composed of the University of Nevada, Reno; University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Nevada State College; College of Southern Nevada; Great Basin College; Truckee Meadows Community College; and Western Nevada College.

The agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the DSU and NSHE when providing mutual services to Transition Students. The agreement also establishes the provision of services

by each entity and reimbursement to the DSU for services rendered. The process for resolving disputes regarding which entity is responsible for payment has been included. This agreement has been updated and is in effect from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2010.

### **(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers**

The DSU utilizes cooperative agreements and direct purchase methods to coordinate the provision of consultative, evaluative and rehabilitation services. Direct purchase arrangements for consultative, evaluative and rehabilitation services are based on a comparison of available service provider expertise to identify potential vendors. The DSU then negotiates an hourly rate of payment roughly based on the Medicare reimbursement schedule.

The DSU directly purchases most job placement and job coaching services on a structured fee for services basis. The fee-for-service arrangements require eligible participants to meet the terms of a standard agreement for service provision, and insurance and licensing requirements. The fee-for-service payment for job development is outcome-based, wherein contractors are only paid for attaining employment objectives for each consumer assigned to them. The largest benchmark payment for job development is for attaining a 90-day competitive employment.

In FFY 2008 such agreements included:

- Action Career Services - Job development and placement in Washoe County
- American Rehabilitation Corp – Job development and placement in Clark County
- ASAP Services - Selective job development and placement in Clark County
- Career Builders of Southern Nevada – Job development, job placement and job coaching in Clark County
- Career Coach - Ormsby Association for Retarded Citizens - Job development and placement in Carson City
- Churchill Association of Retarded Citizens, Fallon Industries - Job development and placement in Churchill, Humboldt, Lyon, Mineral and Pershing Counties
- Clanton, Karen - Job development and placement in Elko County
- Damaza Business Support Services LLC – Job development and placement in Statewide Nevada
- Educare Community Living Corp ResCare - Job development and placement in Carson City
- Excel Job Services - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Goodwill Industries of Southern Nevada - Job development, job placement and job coaching in Clark County
- Grade A Tutoring - Job development and placement in White Pine County
- Gustavson Disability Placement - Job development and placement in Washoe County
- Haugen & Keck Employment Consulting - Job development and placement in Carson City and Douglas County
- Hayden Services – Job development and placement in Clark County
- Himmelreich Rehab Services - Job development and placement Statewide Nevada

- Humboldt Human Development Services – Job development and placement in Humboldt, Pershing, Lander, Elko, and Churchill Counties
- Independent Minds – Job development and placement in Clark County and the City of Henderson
- Izykowski, Kelley - Job development and placement in Washoe County
- Kelly, Louis - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Life Coaching Service - Job development and placement in Washoe County
- Lindsay, Sandra R. - Job development and placement in Washoe County
- Jessica Lomboy – Job development and placement in Clark County
- Nevada Learning Programs - Job development and placement in Clark County
- NV Community Enrichment Program - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Pioneer Health Resources, Inc. – Job development and placement in Washoe, Lyon, Storey, Churchill, Elko Counties and Carson City
- Preston, Barnard - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Progressive Choices - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Rebuilding All Goals Efficiently (RAGE) - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Rehabilitation and Vocational Associates - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Sillik, Debra - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Special Employment Services Inc. – Job development and placement in Clark County
- ST Gregg & Associates – Job development and placement in Clark County
- T & K Consultants, LLC - Job development and placement in Carson City
- Transitions - T & K Consultants, LLC - Job development and placement in Carson City
- Useful Skills LLC – Job development and placement in Washoe County
- Wendy C. Wasula - Ormsby Association for Retarded Citizens - Job development and placement in Carson City
- Westview - Job development and placement in Clark County
- WINDS - Job development and placement in Clark County
- Workable Choices - Job development and placement in Clark, Elko, Esmeralda, Humboldt, Lincoln, Mineral, and Nye Counties

In FFY08, the DSU created a cooperative agreement with the University of Nevada, Reno, Research and Educational Planning Center, University Center for Excellence in Disabilities (NV UCED) to provide assistive technology (AT) services to individuals with disabilities. Vocational rehabilitation and independent living participants are referred to the NV UCED laboratory for assistive technology needs assessments, training, demonstrations and hands-on trial services. The DSU provides AT equipment based on participant need after receiving recommendations from NV UCED. This is a two year Adaptive Resources Grant funded through the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The DSU will continue to provide computer hardware and software needed to perform AT assessments and training for individuals with disabilities. An assistive technology lab with the newest AT equipment is currently being assembled in the DSU's Reno Vocational Rehabilitation Office. Staff will continue training to develop internal expertise in the field of assistive

technology. The goal is to continue assessing the needs of and providing AT equipment to vocational rehabilitation and independent living participants. Arrangements are being made for assessments and training of assistive technology for rural Nevada vocational rehabilitation participants.

The DSU also refers Older Blind Independent Living clients and Life Skills clients to NV UCED for assessment and training under a fee for service arrangement.

#### **(4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services**

The DSU has long-standing relationships with many partners both within and without the workforce system that are designed to effectively identify eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities and to achieve the maximum success in assisting individuals with most significant disabilities into successful employment outcomes. Current efforts are focused in building more effective partnerships and relationships with entities throughout the state that support efforts to provide the most effective outreach to identify individuals with the most significant disabilities who may need to benefit from supported employment services and to expand the employment opportunities.

Supported employment services are arranged with entities (i.e. individual employers) that provide support via on-the-job co-workers or job coaches. Natural supports are encouraged and monitored by the supported employment provider. Most supported employment programs are found in our larger counties: Clark and Washoe. Supported employment opportunities in our rural counties come largely from individual employers.

The DSU continues to review, revise and expand cooperative agreements with agencies and entities such as community mental health centers, resource centers that work with individuals with developmental disabilities, and community rehabilitation services providers.

The DSU currently collaborates with all State of Nevada Community Mental Health and Resource Centers for supported employment service provision to participants with the most significant disabilities. Both formal and informal agreements have been developed at the local level with service providers who utilize state of Nevada Mental Health and Developmental Services (MHDS) funding as the primary source of long-term support. Services consist of assessments, job selection, job development and stabilization services. Agreements are developed at the local level with service providers who utilize MHDS funding as the primary source of long-term support.

The DSU will continue to work collaboratively with the MHDS and the three ARC's of Nevada to provide quality training via Interwork Institute at San Diego State University on fundamentals of supported employment. There currently is no certification process for supported employment service providers. The training provided is essential in assuring that personnel who provide supported employment services have the necessary skills, values, and tools to deliver effective services.

Other sources of potential funding sources for supported employment have been identified. They are:

- Social Security Work Incentives-Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) and Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE).
- Natural Supports.

Currently there are several agencies within the community that provide the needed long term support to our participants that have been identified and meet the criteria as a supported employment. Depending on the participant's physical or mental disability they would be referred to one of three community agencies for this service.

1. Desert Regional Center, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Sierra Regional Center, Reno, Nevada  
Rural Regional Centers: Carson City, Gardnerville, Fallon, Winnemucca, Elko, Nevada

If a participant has a diagnosis of a developmental disability, the agencies listed above would provide long term follow along for eligible DSU participants. They receive community training funds, which allow them to open cases and provide long term, follow along services for as long as the qualifying individual requires. Rehabilitation counselors coordinate services with their case managers to ensure that this connection is made before the participant's case is closed as successfully employed.

2. Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, Reno, Nevada  
Rural Clinics Community Mental Health Centers: Carson City, Gardnerville, Silver Springs, Fallon, Elko, Ely, Battle Mountain, Lovelock, Caliente and Winnemucca, Nevada

When mental illness has been identified as the disability and it is determined that the rehabilitation participant meets the criteria for supported employment, the rehabilitation counselor will coordinate services with one of the mental health centers. Long-term supported services can be provided by either a mental health service coordinator or through the rehabilitation counselors working in the Psych-Social Rehabilitation Program (PSR). DSU rehabilitation counselors work closely with the PSR program and often coordinate services for mutual participants.

3. Nevada Community Enrichment Program (NCEP), Las Vegas, Nevada

Participants with a diagnosis of traumatic brain injury who also meet the criteria for supported employment are referred to NCEP to receive follow along services once their rehabilitation case is closed as successfully employed. NCEP often refers individuals with a disability to the DSU for placement services. The DSU and NCEP staffs coordinate services; once a job placement is made, NCEP case managers will provide the long-term follow up.

#### 4. Natural Supports

When supported employment participants do not meet the eligibility requirements for one of the above community resources for long-term support, rehabilitation counselors will identify other natural supports that can be utilized. Often family members, such as parents, siblings or spouses can assist. Also, members of various advocacy groups may serve as a natural support. Counselors may work closely with the employer to identify a coworker who can provide the long term follow along and supportive services that an individual may require to retain successful employment.

**Attachment 4.10: Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (Section 101 (a)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.18)**

The Rehabilitation Division, as the DSU, has established the following procedures and activities setting forth the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), which will ensure an adequate supply of qualified rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals for the operation of the vocational rehabilitation programs. The CSPD is coordinated by the Administrator of the DSU with the participation of: the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC); Human Resources staff of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR); and staff of the Bureaus of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) and Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI).

**(a) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development**

DETR’s personnel records enable an annual analysis of the numbers and types of rehabilitation personnel. Through the State of Nevada Personnel Department database, information on budgeted positions, duration of vacancy for each position and vacancy rates are available through a data warehouse system. In addition, a personnel log is maintained at the agency level, delineating the location, type of position and date vacated, in order to provide current tracking of vacancies including the status of each vacant position. This tracking mechanism has proved successful in reducing the vacancy rate and the amount of time that each position is vacant. All the sources of information are used to track and forecast the DSU’s personnel needs.

**(1) Qualified Personnel Needs**

(A) The number of qualified personnel for VR is allocated in biennial legislative sessions based on the projected needs of the DSU and available funding. In FFY 2008 there were 136 positions (including vacancies) within the DSU to provide support, administration and vocational rehabilitation services with the following breakdown:

<b>REHABILITATION DIVISION</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION OFFICE</b>	
Administrator	1
Administrative Assistant IV	1
Administrative Assistant II	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>OPERATIONS BVR &amp; BSBVI in Carson City</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
Deputy Administrator	1
Business Process Analyst II	1
Business Process Analyst I	1
Management Analyst III	1
Management Analyst II	1
Management Analyst I	1
Administrative Assistant IV	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>7</b>

<b>REHABILITATION DIVISION</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
<b>PROGRAM SERVICES BVR &amp; BSBVI</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
Deputy Administrator	1
Chief	1
Administrative Assistant III	2
Administrative Assistant I	1 (1/2 time)
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Northern District</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
Rehabilitation Manager II	1
Rehabilitation Supervisor	3
Rehabilitation Counselor III	8
Rehabilitation Counselor II	7
Rehabilitation Technician II	9
Administrative Assistant III	1
Administrative Assistant II	3
Administrative Assistant I	3
Therapeutic Recreation Specialist II	1*
Vocational Evaluator II	3*
Accounting Assistant III	1
Accounting Assistant II	1
Accounting Assistant I	1
Orientation & Adjustment Instructor II	1
Orientation & Mobility Instructor II	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Rural</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
Rehabilitation Supervisor	1
Rehabilitation Counselor III	4
Rehabilitation Counselor II	1
Rehabilitation Technician II	5*
Accounting Assistant III	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total Northern District and Rural</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Southern District</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
Rehabilitation Manager II	1
Rehabilitation Supervisor	4
Rehabilitation Counselor III	12*
Rehabilitation Counselor II	14
Rehabilitation Technician II	16
Administrative Assistant III	1
Administrative Assistant II	1
Administrative Assistant I	2
Vocational Evaluator II	5
Accounting Assistant III	1
Accounting Assistant II	1
Accounting Assistant I	2
Rehabilitation Instructor	3
Orientation & Mobility Instructor II	2

<b>REHABILITATION DIVISION</b>	<b># POSITIONS</b>
<b>Total Southern District</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>

\* Italic above indicates vacant positions due to budget cuts. The following positions will remain vacant until the DSU receives permission to fill: 2 Rehabilitation Counselor III, 1 Rehabilitation Technician II, 1 Vocational Evaluator II, and 1 Therapeutic Recreation Therapist II.

(B) The DSU had 6,267 applications and eligible individuals with disabilities (this number includes carry-overs) in FFY 2008, including individuals with significant disabilities. The ratio of authorized rehabilitation counselor positions serving the vocational rehabilitation program (45 FTEs) in Nevada was 1 to 129 program participants. This ratio of rehabilitation counselor to participants is in the mid-range as compared to other VR agencies. The current caseload average statewide is 61 participants per counselor. The current staffing levels are sufficient for the number of participants seeking services, as evidenced by the low average caseload and the fact that the DSU passed 6 of the 7 RSA performance indicators for FFY 2008.

The following projection for personnel needs is based on the projected population increase for Nevada, applying that same increase to the vocational rehabilitation participant numbers served, as depicted in the following chart:

<b>Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Population Increase *</b>	<b>Determined Eligible (By Year)</b>	<b>Application and Eligible Individuals (Including Carry-Overs)</b>	<b>Projection of Number of VR Counselors Needed Based on a Ratio of 1 Counselor to 129 Participants</b>	<b>Projection of the Number of VR Technicians Needed Based on a Ratio of 1 Technician to 2 Counselors</b>
<b>FFY 2008 (Actual)</b>		3,042	6,267	49	25
<b>FFY 2009 (Projected)</b>	3.2%	3,139	6,468	51	26
<b>FFY 2010 (Projected)</b>	3.0%	3,233	6,662	53	27
<b>FFY 2011 (Projected)</b>	2.7%	3,320	6,842	54	27
<b>FFY 2012 (Projected)</b>	2.7%	3,410	7,027	55	28
<b>FFY 2013 (Projected)</b>	2.1%	3,482	7,175	56	28

\*Based on data obtained from the State Demographer's Office (Population Projections for Nevada's Counties 2008 – 2028).

### **(C) Projections of the Number and Type of Personnel Needed in 5 Years**

Currently the DSU has 4 vacant Rehabilitation Counselor positions statewide.

Using the above projections and assuming an overall vacancy rate (for all reasons) for rehabilitation counselors and technicians of 10%, the DSU will need to hire a total of 12 additional vocational rehabilitation counselors in the next five years and replace 22 vacated positions. Although the current staffing level for rehabilitation technicians is sufficient for the next 5 years, it is projected that 13 additional rehabilitation technicians will be needed to replace vacated positions. These projections for the next five years will be sufficient to provide services to all individuals with disabilities including those with the most significant disabilities.

Currently there are 8 vocational rehabilitation supervisors, each of whom can supervise up to 8 direct reports. With the increase in vocational rehabilitation counselors, 8 supervisors will be sufficient to provide the oversight necessary to ensure quality services to individuals with disabilities. Current staffing levels for account clerks, administrative assistants, rehabilitation instructors, vocational evaluators and central office administrative staff will not require an increase in the next 5 years.

### **(2) Personnel Development**

**(A)** Historically, none of Nevada's institutions of higher education have offered Council On Rehabilitation Education (CORE)-accredited programs for vocational rehabilitation professionals. Currently, all DSU rehabilitation counselors have Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credentials or are eligible to sit for the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) national examination, with the exception of four counselors, who are enrolled in a CORE-accredited Master's degree program. These four rehabilitation counselors have 36 months from the date of hire to meet the standards. The following provides information regarding the status of the number of staff completing their certifications:

- Newly hired Counselor I (September 8, 2008) applied with San Diego State to complete the required coursework for eligibility for CRC. Once accepted into the program, she will begin the class work by summer 2009.
- Counselor obtained approval to sit for the CRC exam. She has been promoted to a Rehabilitation Counselor II as of July 2008.
- San Diego State did not offer the class on Community Resources that was needed by Counselor to complete CRCC requirements. Counselor is taking the class Summer 2009 through the University of Kentucky. She will

complete all required classes by September 2009 and will then apply for CRC. The estimated completion date is December 2009.

- Counselor working with San Diego State to complete coursework for eligibility to sit for the CRCC exam and complete three additional classes. The estimated completion date is August 2010.
- Counselor completed all course work and internship to sit for the CRC. She has successfully passed the CRC test and is now a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.
- Counselor began on line training program at Texas Tech University in November 2008 with an estimated completion date of December 2011.
- Counselor began an on-line training program at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock in November of 2008. Estimated completion date is December 2011.

### **(b) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel**

Since 1994, the DSU and San Diego State University (SDSU) have collaborated on Nevada's CSPD. Nevada's CSPD applies an integrated human resources systems approach which is described below in the sections on personnel standards and personnel development. The DSU has also strengthened recruitment efforts through contact and discussion with SDSU and other CORE-accredited universities and colleges that provide Masters' degrees in rehabilitation counseling, resulting in improvement of Nevada's access to qualified rehabilitation professionals. The DSU and SDSU have also built on this foundation by offering distance education opportunities to rehabilitation counselors for continuing education credits.

The DSU works closely with Nevada Department of Personnel and the DSU's Human Resources Section to recruit and hire qualified personnel for positions within the Division. As stated above, the DSU currently has 4 vacant Rehabilitation Counselor positions statewide. The projections also show that the DSU will need to hire a total of 12 additional vocational rehabilitation counselors and 15 rehabilitation technician positions in the next five years and replace 27 vacated positions. The DSU has offered specialized training through the SDSU Interwork Institute program for Rehabilitation Counselors. The training focuses on emerging trends and the following topics:

- A Balancing Act: Ethical Rights and Responsibilities
- Social Security: SSI, SSDI, PASS and Ticket to Work
- Job Analysis in Rehabilitation Services
- Benefits Planning & Work Incentives
- Stress Management
- Ethics

The DSU and SDSU provided updated specialized training for Rehabilitation Technicians employed by the Division in June 2009.

The DSU regularly contacts and/or visits CORE-accredited programs including those closest to Nevada, such as the California State University (Fresno and Sacramento campuses), Arizona State University, and Utah State University for recruitment prospects.

The DSU provides outreach through disability groups and organizations serving individuals from minority populations. The DSU also dedicates funding for the provision of reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities who need assistance to perform the essential functions of their jobs. Examples include interpreters, flexible work schedules and assistive technology. The DSU continues to seek funding resources for education-related costs and has received in-service training grants from the U.S. Department of Education to help support our ongoing education program. In the DSU's Southern District, a designated Rehabilitation Technician assists with transporting a Rehabilitation Counselor with a vision disability to various program-related work sites and participant-related meetings. There are two counselors attending SDSU who are receiving scholarships for their programs, with the agreement to continue working for the DSU for a three-year period.

Nevada is actively working with and looking to recruit students from approximately six CORE approved universities closest to Nevada that offer a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, in order to recruit for a paid internship position with the DSU. This salaried paid internship allows the DSU to attract and recruit candidates for VR Counselor positions who have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation while they are still in school and before they are recruited by other agencies. While participating in this internship, they will accrue sick days and vacation days and will receive health insurance, group life insurance and other employee benefits upon their date of hire. Upon completion of said internship, they will be able to fill any vacant positions available in the DSU and potentially be selected for a Rehabilitation Counselor II position. With this additional employment incentive, the DSU will have an advantageous edge over other States in recruiting qualified personnel for the Public Service Intern position for candidates who choose to work in Nevada. Nevada had one intern working in a rural office starting in September 2008; he completed his Master's degree in December 2008 and was subsequently promoted to Rehabilitation Counselor II.

### **(c) Personnel Standards**

The DSU has established policies and procedures to ensure that professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained.

- (1) The State of Nevada does not have state-approved or other recognized certification, licensing or registration requirements that apply to personnel who are providing vocational rehabilitation services. The determination of applicants who are qualified rehabilitation staff is based on State Department of Personnel's interpretation of the Division's minimum qualifications
- (2) The DSU appoints individuals as rehabilitation counselors who:
  - Have a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from a CORE-accredited program and who are eligible to sit for the national certification examination; or

- Have a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling that was not fully accredited by CORE at the time the applicant's degree was granted and who are eligible to sit for the national certification examination; or
- Have a Master's degree granted by a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting body at the time the degree was conferred and who are eligible to sit for the national certification examination.
- Have a Master's degree granted by a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting body at the time the degree was conferred and who can achieve eligibility to sit for the national certification examination by committing to an approved Employee Educational Plan (EEP) within 90 days of the date of hire and completing the necessary EEP coursework, at employee expense, within 36 months of the date of hire.
- As stated above, Nevada is currently working with and looking to recruit students from over the nation's CORE approved universities that offer a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, nationwide, as a paid internship with the DSU. The salaried paid internship allows DSU to attract and recruit candidates for VR Counselor positions who have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation while they are still in school and before they are recruited by other agencies. While interns are working with the DSU, they accrue sick days and vacation days and receive health insurance, group life insurance and other employee benefits at the date of hire. When completing said internship, they can, if there are vacant positions available, move into a Rehabilitation Counselor II position within the DSU. This change adds an additional employment incentive for Public Service Intern candidates to choose to work for Nevada's DSU. Upon becoming a rehabilitation counselor, the intern is eligible to sit for the CRCC national examination and has 36 months from the date of hire to meet the standards.
- Academic achievement is gathered from official transcripts submitted as part of the personnel hiring process. Transcripts are reviewed to determine whether the indicated degree meets the agency minimum standard for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. In addition, internal systems are in place to monitor and develop new counselors throughout their remaining program and CRC acquisition. The division has on-going training and development. The counselors' respective supervisor maintains data on topic specific training and evaluates each respective trainee on said subject matter. The employee is evaluated based on their exceptions at the time of the employee evaluation which takes place quarterly until they have reached their first year, then annually. If an employee does not meet the standard for quality at any time during the first year, they are given an opportunity for further and more intensive training up to and including disciplinary action. However, failing this, an employee can be terminated. Upon completion of the first year the employee is expected to meet the standards set forth for that grade. The procedure for first and subsequent years is a process of evaluation and determination of needed correction and training.
- Currently, we have five (5) counselors that do not yet meet our established standards. Four (4) are in school currently to obtain classes for their certification and it is anticipated that they will meet these standards in 2010. Two (2) staff members are working on their education plans through San Diego State University

and the others at CORE accredited classes in different universities. Overall we have twenty-eight (28) qualified personnel. All Supervisors and District Managers hold the designation of CRC.

- (3) It is the preference of the DSU to hire rehabilitation teaching staff, which includes orientation and mobility instructors and orientation and adjustment instructors, who:
  - (A) Hold a Master's degree in a rehabilitation related field (e.g. rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation orientation and mobility, rehabilitation teaching, low vision specialist) granted by a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting body at the time the degree was conferred and are eligible to sit for the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) certification examination; or
  - (B) Hold a Bachelor's degree in a rehabilitation related field (e.g. rehabilitation counseling, teacher of the visually impaired, rehabilitation teaching, low vision specialist) and a minimum of one year of training and/or employment as an Orientation and Adjustment Instructor working with individuals who are blind or visually impaired and who hold ACVREP certification or are eligible for certification; or
  - (C) Hold an initial or renewable professional certification in Rehabilitation Teaching or Orientation and Mobility from the ACVREP.
- (4) The DSU paraprofessional staff has the job title, Rehabilitation Technician. Minimum qualifications at the Rehabilitation Technician II level include one year of experience in a rehabilitation setting, which involves interactive relationships with individuals with disabilities. All rehabilitation technicians have met the minimum qualifications.
- (5) The DSU hires or promotes Vocational Evaluators who have a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation with emphasis on vocational evaluation; or have a Bachelor's degree in vocational rehabilitation or vocational evaluation and one year of professional experience providing vocational assessment and work adjustment services for injured workers and clients with disabilities in a rehabilitation setting. The Vocational Evaluators meet the minimum qualifications.
- (6) The DSU hires or promotes rehabilitation supervisors who possess current national certification or are eligible to sit for the national examination, in addition to meeting the minimum standards for one-year management and supervisory experience in vocational rehabilitation. National certification standards require supervision by individuals who hold current credentials. To provide a mechanism to attract rehabilitation counselor interns and enable current rehabilitation professional staff to qualify for national certification, Nevada employs supervisory personnel who hold these credentials. Currently, all supervisory staff is CRCC certified or are eligible to sit for the CRCC exam and meet the minimum qualifications.

- (7) The DSU hires or promotes rehabilitation district managers who also possess current national certification or are eligible to sit for the national examination, in addition to meeting the minimum standards for two years management and supervisory experience in vocational rehabilitation. He/she must have a working knowledge of federal and state laws and regulations applicable to programs for persons with disabilities; principles and practices of management and public administration; program development, implementation and evaluation; budget development and administration; social, economic, educational and vocational trends including high demand occupations and related labor market demand; principles of organizational structure, analysis and design; medical, social, vocational, psychological and independent living needs of persons with disabilities; state and federal trends impacting programs and services. Currently, all managers are CRCC certified or are eligible to sit for the CRCC exam and meet the minimum qualifications.
- (8) The DSU hires or promotes the Chief who also possesses current national certification or is eligible to sit for the national examination, in addition to meeting the minimum standards for three years management and supervisory experience in Vocational Rehabilitation including responsibility for program planning, development and implementation, interpretation and application of regulations, budget development and managing professional personnel. The Chief must have a working knowledge of quality management; effective change management; programmatic and operational aspects of related agencies at local, regional and national levels; program policies and procedures; and, state budget development and monitoring processes. The Chief IS CRCC certified and meets the minimum standards.
- (9) The DSU hires or promotes the Deputy Administrators that meet the minimum standards as set by the State of Nevada. The Deputy Administrators must have a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in business or public administration, education, human services or other relevant field and five years of experience supervising and managing comprehensive, complex programs and budgets, and professional personnel. Entry level knowledge includes a working knowledge of principles and methods of administration and management including budget and personnel administration and staff development, coordination and supervision, principles and techniques used in planning, organizing, developing and administering comprehensive programs which are subject to unprecedented circumstances, strategic and program planning principles and practices, State Legislative processes to include drafting legislative bills and position statements; state and federal laws, regulations and administrative processes. Both Deputy Administrators meet the minimum qualifications.
- (10) The Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation Director appoints the Administrator based on the requirements of Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 232.945. The Administrator serves at the pleasure of the Director. The current Administrator attained a Bachelor's in Home Economics from the University of Nevada, Reno. Her employment history includes nine years as the Chief of Benefit Services for the former State Industrial Insurance System in Nevada, two years as a Director of a managed care organization, two years as the Chief Administrative Officer

with the Nevada Division of Industrial Relations, and eight years as a claims manager with an insurance company and third party administrator, and one year as Nevada's Rehabilitation Division Administrator.

(11) The DSU hires or promotes three Management Analysts (MA). All three Management Analysts meet the minimum qualifications:

- The MAIII must have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent and three years of professional experience in research, development, evaluation or revision of programs, organizations, methods or procedures. He/she must have a general knowledge of financial statements and statistical methods required to analyze, project and present fiscal effects; governmental accounting, auditing, financial reporting and/or research/statistical methods.
- The MAII must have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent and two years of professional experience in development, evaluation or revision of programs, organizations, methods or procedures. He/she must have a working knowledge of legislative proceedings and processes; state government agencies, resources and functions sufficient to locate and obtain needed information and/or resources.
- The MAI must have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent and one year of professional experience in development, evaluation or revision of programs, organizations, methods or procedures. He/she must have a general knowledge of research and analysis techniques and methodologies; governmental accounting and budgeting; management and public administration concepts; principles and practices sufficient to assist in evaluating, developing and recommending effective administrative and/or operational policies and procedures for the work unit; and various computer software including word processing, spreadsheet and database applications.

(12) The DSU hires or promotes two Business Process Analysts (BPA). Both Business Process Analysts meet the minimum qualifications:

- The BPA II must have a Bachelor's degree and two years of professional level experience in a related program area analyzing, interpreting, and implementing program laws, regulations, policies and procedures, which include one year of experience applying recognized data processing concepts to business process planning or analyses or equivalent and have a working knowledge of system documentation principles; data processing concepts including general database, system security, data communication, and multiple platform strengths and weaknesses; and, business process planning and analysis.
- The BPA I must have a Bachelor's degree and two years of professional level experience in a related program area analyzing, interpreting, and implementing program laws, regulations, policies and procedures, which includes one year of experience applying recognized data processing concepts to business process planning or analyses or equivalent and have a working knowledge of a variety of end-user tools and applications and DETR policies and procedures in relation to other departments, agencies, organizations and business customers.

(13) The DSU hires or promotes 17 Administrative Assistants (AA). All AA's meet minimum qualifications):

- The AAIV must have graduated from high school or equivalent and have four years of progressively responsible relevant work experience which included experience in one or more of the following areas: providing administrative/program support to professional staff and management; performing secretarial duties in support of a manager; coordinating communications between the manager, staff and program clientele; supervision of subordinate staff; researching information from internal and external sources and sufficient working knowledge of software. He/she must have a working knowledge of functions and operation of an administrative office and/or program area, principles of supervision and training if applicable to the assignment, maintenance of budget and financial records if applicable to the assignment;
- The AAIII must have graduated from high school or equivalent and have three years of progressively responsible relevant work experience which included experience in one or more of the following areas: maintenance of complex records and files; public/customer relations including explaining detailed policies, regulations and requirements; preparation and processing of financial and statistical documents such as payroll, travel, claims and budgeting forms; and assisting staff and management with projects and activities. He/she must have a working knowledge of functions and operation of an administrative assistant; operation and use of word processing; spreadsheet, database management and other associated business.
- The AAII must have graduated from high school or equivalent and have two years of progressively responsible relevant work experience which included experience in one or more of the following areas; maintaining records and files; preparing a variety of materials using a personal computer or word processor; assisting customers in completing forms and applications; and or performing secretarial duties in support of professional staff. He/she must have a working knowledge of administrative support functions.
- The AAI must have graduated from high school or equivalent and have one year of progressively responsible, relevant work experience which included experience in one or more of the following areas; maintaining records, answering telephones, and reviewing forms, documents and other written materials. He/she must have a working knowledge of standard office procedures, practices and methods; word processing software; data entry techniques; record keeping techniques; and telephone etiquette.

(14) The DSU hires or promotes eight Accounting Assistants (Act.A). All eight Act.A meet the minimum qualifications:

- The Act.A III must have graduated from high school or equivalent education and three years of progressively responsible clerical accounting experience which included duties such as responsibility for accounts payable, accounts receivable,

payroll and/or other accounting data; setting up computer spreadsheets to record, track, manipulate and report data; researching and interpreting financial data to prepare reports and respond to budget and account-related inquiries; and reconciling accounts. He/she must have a knowledge of clerical accounting principles, practices and techniques, budgeting and funding regulations, practices and procedures; payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable functions sufficient to recognize discrepancies, inconsistencies and errors and complete the required documents and procedures to make corrections; computer spreadsheet techniques sufficient to record, track, manipulate and report data.

- The Act.A II must have graduated from high school or equivalent education and three years of progressively responsible clerical accounting experience which included duties such as coding documents to distribute funds; preparing accounts payable and accounts receivable documents; using computer spreadsheets to record, track, manipulate and report data; balancing accounts; and identifying and applying established financial or record keeping procedures. He/she must have a working knowledge of accounting coding used to distribute funds in payroll, accounts receivable and accounts payable bookkeeping; use of computer spreadsheets to track, manipulate and record accounting related data, payroll accounts payable and accounts receivable functions; correct English usage, spelling punctuation and grammar sufficient to write standard memoranda, letters and report narratives; standard processes, procedures and methods used to reconcile accounts.
- The Act.A I must have graduated from high school or equivalent education and one year of clerical experience, six months of which included accounts payable and/or accounts receivable responsibility; and the use of computer spreadsheets and a calculator by touch. He/she must have a general knowledge of clerical accounting and financial record keeping procedures; the use of accounting codes for the distribution of funds for payroll, accounts receivable and accounts payable bookkeeping; accounts payable and receivable procedures; computer spreadsheets used for bookkeeping and accounts maintenance.

- (15) The DSU hires or promotes a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist who has a Bachelor's degree in therapeutic recreation, recreation, or specialty area such as art, dance, music or physical education and one year of full-time professional experience coordinating and providing recreation therapy in a clinical, residential or community-based organization; or has a certification by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation (NCTR) and one year of full-time experience described above; or has an equivalent combination of education and experience. The Therapeutic Recreation Specialist is currently vacant at this time, so we are unable to meet the standards. The DSU anticipates reclassifying this position in FFY-2010.

All employees are provided Work Performance Standards evaluations by supervisors, at a minimum, of one time per year. Each Rehabilitation Counselor receives an annual employee appraisal of which 25% of their case load is reviewed. The review is conducted in order to monitor case management, federal and state performance indicators, vocational counseling services, eligibility and ineligibility determination,

and management of case expenditures. During monthly budget meetings, discussions regarding vacant positions and projected funding for additional positions needed for the Division are addressed. At monthly and quarterly Management and Supervisory meetings, ideas regarding hiring projections, or in-process recruitments, are discussed to ensure that qualified persons are hired. This is a priority topic.

#### **(d) Staff Development**

- (1) Educational opportunities are provided by the DSU to increase the technician's capacity to effectively serve and interact with consumers and to provide technical support to the rehabilitation counselor.

In partnership with SDSU, the DSU has provided three supervisory rehabilitation counselors, five rehabilitation supervisors and one district manager with supervisory training. Plans for the future include providing additional staff with this valuable training opportunity.

Two Supervisors attended the Nevada Certificate in Supervisory Management training. Participants participated in a three-week course to gain skills, knowledge, and behaviors necessary to lead employees to achieve results and develop competencies necessary for effective supervision through focusing on theory and techniques with an emphasis on practical applications. One Supervisor completed the State of Nevada's Certified Public Manager 18-week course.

- (2) The DSU established a system for the continuing education of rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals. It has maintained its comprehensive provision of educational assistance to ensure that all personnel who do not meet the personnel standards described previously are provided opportunities to achieve these standards.

The BVR/BSBVI Management Team and RCEP IX staff redesigned Nevada's professional development model and anchors its training activities in competency-based training needs assessment. A DSU team of rehabilitation counselors researched the literature on effective rehabilitation counseling practices, (e.g., Rehabilitation Skills Inventory by Michael Leahy and Pamela Shapson) and developed an inventory of competencies for rehabilitation counselors in 11 major categories: ethical conduct; intake; preliminary assessment and eligibility determination; comprehensive assessment and service planning; service provision; placement preparation and monitoring; employer consultation; caseload management; office management; administration; and competencies specific to serving persons who are blind or visually impaired including orientation, assessment, adjustment, mobility and assistive technology. Two other work teams developed similar competency inventories, based on skill clusters, for rehabilitation technicians, orientation and mobility and orientation and adjustment instructors.

The DSU's training priorities and educational strategies are driven by the counselor needs assessment data. These needs assessments are collected from staff and supervisor;

managers and administration review them for upcoming training needs. Also, each staff are evaluated individually yearly for their work performance and are required to complete a Developmental Training Plan for the upcoming year. They can list training requests for assistance with role performance, professional maintenance and career development. The DSU provides a training calendar and staff can request training through the DSU, DETR and/or the State of Nevada Department of Personnel.

The DSU has offered ongoing training on diversity issues, Ticket to Work, leadership development and the rehabilitation technician series. Annual in-service training with BVR, BSBVI and the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council has been productive. Planning will continue for another statewide in-service on selected training areas. With the results of RCEP's competency inventories, a work plan is regularly developed that identifies training needs. The DSU also provides professional development training for all staff including specialized disability training, management techniques, provision of quality customer service, internal controls, development of regulations and policy and various Microsoft word applications.

The Administrator and Chief of Program Services are currently enrolled in the San Diego State University Interwork Institute's National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute (NRLI) Executive Leadership Seminar. This four-part course is offered over a period of 18 months for State directors, senior administrators and emerging leaders. Three of the courses are provided at the SDSU campus and one course is provided at The George Washington University in Washington DC. The seminars build sequentially on one another and serve as a four-part developmental learning process. The one-on-one executive coaching component, provided throughout the course of the NRLI experience, allows participants to customize their learning around the 360 degree feedback information and the goals identified in their Leadership Development Plan.

#### **(e) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs**

Specialty populations underserved are Nevada's Hispanic population and transition students. The State Demographer's 2008 projection indicates that Hispanics constitute 25% of Nevada's population. In FFY 2008, the number of Hispanic/Latino closed cases was 421, 13% of the total number of closed cases in the year. This was an increase from the 392 (7%) closed cases in FFY 2007. Despite staffing shortages, diversity and equity of services to ethnic minorities continue to be a priority. The DSU continues its efforts to recruit rehabilitation staff fluent in Spanish.

The DSU utilizes staff, and a variety of interpreters as the need arises, in order to translate documents to Spanish. The Southern District continues to maintain a Hispanic Services Team consisting of one rehabilitation counselor and a bilingual rehabilitation technician designated to serve consumers from the Las Vegas Hispanic community. In addition to this team, the DSU provides services to Hispanic consumers in each of our BVR office locations. The Southern District has a second bilingual rehabilitation technician stationed in the main southern field office along with one administrative assistant. When needed, the DSU regularly contracts with bilingual interpreters when providing services. There are five

Spanish-speaking employees who expend at least 20% of their time assisting participants in a bi-lingual capacity. The DSU provides a 5% pay increase to these five employees as an incentive to expand bilingual services. However, there are other Spanish speaking employees who utilize less than 20% of their time in which that combination of bilingual staff represents all JobConnect partners, and are available statewide in the JobConnect offices to provide assistance to Hispanic clients who are seeking employment services.

The DSU has set requirements for field staff working with specific disability and/or minority groups to have skills in sign language, Braille, foreign languages or other modes of communication. Requirements also include the ability to conduct outreach activities and knowledge and skills in the culture of the specific group served. Staff may receive an additional 5% special salary adjustment for these skills, depending on the percentage of time spent utilizing their bilingual abilities. If DSU personnel are unavailable, the services of vendors or volunteers from community agencies are purchased or contracted, as needed, to communicate in the native language(s) or to communicate via sign language, of applicants and eligible individuals.

**(f) Coordination with Personnel Development under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

The activities, which are carried out under this system of personnel development are coordinated with the provisions for personnel development required under the IDEA as evidenced by the following efforts:

- The Nevada DSU and the Nevada Department of Education, Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education and School Improvement Programs have a cooperative agreement, which contains provisions for the joint training of vocational rehabilitation staff and special education personnel.
- The DSU currently is working with the School Districts to provide for joint in-service training coordinated by local vocational rehabilitation offices. The local offices work with special education departments and technical and career education programs for the establishment of pre-vocational coordinated activities. Future plans include an increased effort for outreach to all students with disabilities, including students with disabilities who are not enrolled in special education.
- BSBVI staff has provided ongoing assistive technology training statewide for special education teachers so that they can provide this training to students who are blind or visually impaired.
- Statewide, BSBVI and BVR staff attend transition team meetings with local schools and school districts to provide ongoing orientation and education regarding vocational rehabilitation services.
- BSBVI and BVR Southern District office staff attend quarterly “Students Talking About the Real World” conferences with Las Vegas area school district special education staff

to provide orientation and offer VR facility tours. Students are given the opportunity to meet with agencies, vendors, and colleges to see what services are available to assist them in meeting their goals.

- The DSU and the Nevada System of Higher Education mutually developed and implemented an inter-local contract designed to facilitate the delivery of higher education opportunities to eligible students.
- The DSU is a member of the Interagency Transition Advisory Board (ITAB). The Board provides information and research regarding issues relating to transition students in Nevada. The DSU Administrator is a legislatively mandated member of this board.
- The DSU is a member of the Nevada Department of Education's Nevada Transition Advisory Committee. Their mission is to educate legislators, provide awareness campaigns to the public regarding students with disabilities, assist with self-advocacy, train providers and employers, and network building. Members of the Committee are experts in transition services and provide recommendations around best practice/compliance in transition services.

## **Attachment 4.11(a): Comprehensive Statewide Assessment**

### **(a) Comprehensive Statewide Assessment**

#### **(1) Programs:**

The DSU conducts a comprehensive, statewide needs assessment every three years. During the Spring of 2007, the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR), Rehabilitation Division, the Designated State Unit (DSU), in conjunction with the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) entered into a contract with the San Diego State University (SDSU), Interwork Institute to perform a statewide Needs Assessment. This assessment will be used for the FY 2009, FY 2010 and FY 2011 State Plan. Included in the scope of the contract was:

- An analysis of the DSU's Consumer Data;
- A review of Census Data and Available Data Sources and comparison with regional and national statistics;
- An analysis of Focus Group and Interview Data wherein consumers, rehabilitation counselors and community agency staff from southern, northern and rural areas discussed several issues including: mobility, communication, self-care, interpersonal skills, work skills and work tolerance; and,
- Conclusions drawn on the above-mentioned information as to the areas of need within the state as they relate to employment of individuals with disabilities particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.

#### **(A) Assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, including their need for supported employment.**

In September 2007, the DSU and NSRC met in a strategic planning session to receive the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Report and to strategize on the needs to be concentrated on in FY 2009. It is important to note that for many of the identified underserved areas, the samples were very small and may not be statistically valid. The following is a listing of general areas of concern identified by the Interwork Institute by category:

##### **(i) individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment.**

- Focus on persons with cognitive impairments, persons with mental retardation and persons with depressive/mood disorders;
- Need more on-the-job supported employment and transitional services to retain employment for individuals with most significant disabilities;
- Need more intensive work supports, more employment outcomes, focus on autism, and examine differences in rating by districts of "most significantly disabled."
- Need multiple types of Independent Living skills, higher paying jobs and work skills development;

- Need sign language interpreters and real time captioners and more assistive technology training;
- Greater outreach to several individuals with disabilities including homeless persons, sex offenders and transition students.
- Need to support the development of more public and para-transit services;

**(ii) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan:**

- Hispanic/Latino and Asian individuals are under-represented. Because White and Black are over-represented and Hispanic/Latino and Asian groups are under-represented, diversity-related needs should be addressed;
  - Determine why case expenditures for White participants was higher than other race/ethnic groups;
- Lower number of Transition Students served in comparison to regional and national data indicating this group is underserved; and,
- Persons with cognitive impairments, persons with mental retardation; and persons with depressive/mood disorders are under-represented.

**(iii) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide work force investment system;**

Although the comprehensive needs assessment did not specifically review the work force investment system, Nevada's DSU is an active member in each of the ten Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One-Stop offices also known as Nevada JobConnect. Rehabilitation counselors work with WIA partners to provide outreach and services to individuals with disabilities. The comprehensive needs assessment did, however, identify several systemic issues on which the DSU and its WIA partners should concentrate. These include:

- There was lower than expected college and university training. The DSU should determine if a focus on higher education is needed;
- Persons with disabilities need more information provided about the DSU rather than depending on referral sources;
- The population is increasing and the number of applicants is decreasing. Prepare for growth and determine why fewer applicants are entering the program when the state is growing;
- The system is in need of more rehabilitation counselors; and,
- The system is in need of more employer training regarding vocational rehabilitation services.

**(B) the need to establish or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state:**

The Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment recommendations were considered by the DSU and NSRC to be helpful in addressing service needs. However, they did not see it as feasible to address all of the needs in the FY 2009 and felt it was necessary to prioritize needs for the next year. After discussing the matter fully, the following priorities or focus areas were established:

- Strive to meet regional averages for Transition Student programs;
- Provide outreach to minority groups and individuals with mental health developmental disabilities, particularly individuals with autism;
- Strive to meet regional averages for transition-to-work opportunities and placements for individuals with the most significant disabilities through partnerships with other service providers, enhancing assistive technology supports and developing more work-related post-employment supports i.e. job coaching, interpersonal skills, enhanced community based assessment and job development. The primary providers for these services are community based training centers.

**Attachment 4.11(b)(1-3): Annual Estimates**

**(b) Annual Estimates**

(1) Number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the plan.

The DSU projects it will increase the number of individuals determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services in proportion to the State’s population growth as detailed below. These statistics were obtained from *StateData.info* which is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, supported in part by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with additional support from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research of the U.S. Department of Education.

<b>Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Population Increase</b>	<b>Potentially Eligible (By Year)</b>
FFY 2008: Actual		10,766
FFY 2009: Projected	3.2%	11,111
FFY 2010: Projected	3.0%	11,444
FFY 2011: Projected	2.7%	11,753

(2) Number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds under Part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order.

The number of eligible individuals to be served with funding from Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I, Part B) and Supported Employment (Title VI, Part B) under the State Plan is shown in the table below. The table contains data based on the State Demographer projections of population growth. The last column includes all clients at the time of application whether eligible or ineligible. The DSU is not under an Order of Selection at this time.

<b>Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Services Funded Under Title I, Part B</b>	<b>Services Funded Under Title VI, Part B</b>	<b>Applicants and Eligible Individuals (Including Carry-Overs)</b>
FFY 2008: Actual	6,134	133	6,267
FFY 2009: Projected	6,331	137	6,468
FFY 2010: Projected	6,521	141	6,662
FFY 2011: Projected	6,697	145	6,842

- (3) Costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

The actual client service expenditures for FFY 2008, needed to serve eligible individuals, are provided in the table below. The DSU expended a total of \$7,249,795 for all client services in FFY 2008. These client service expenditures were paid from Title I, Part B \$6,999,604; Title VI, Part B \$250,191; and Social Security Administration Vocational Rehabilitation reimbursement program income \$573,756. The amounts shown below, for FFY 2008, were for purchases of direct client services. The expenditure projections in the table below are based upon experiences in FFY 2008 and increase by the same rate as population growth.

<b>Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Applicants and Eligible Individuals (Including Carry-Overs)</b>	<b>Total Cost of Services for Individuals Served</b>
FFY 2008: Actual	6,267	\$7,249,795
FFY 2009: Projected	6,468	\$7,481,788
FFY 2010: Projected	6,662	\$7,706,242
FFY 2011: Projected	6,842	\$7,914,311

## **Attachment 4.11(c)(1)(2): Goals and Priorities**

### **(c) Goals and Priorities**

- (1) Identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- (2) The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.

In FFY 2008, and effective July 1, 2008, the DSU in partnership with the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC), revised the goals as a result of the Statewide Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment was comprised of focus groups consisting of Current and Past Program Participants, Program Services Staff, VR Counselors group, Service Providers, Advocacy Groups and Other Programs and Agencies that interact with VR Programs. A thorough analysis of Program Electronic Case File Data was conducted as part of the Needs Assessment to determine trends and recommendations. Comparative analysis was also performed to reflect Nevada's demographics against states with similar size and population (CO, AZ, ID, WY, NM) as well as National trends. The Needs Assessment prompted the DSU and NSRC to develop a Strategic Plan focused on four major areas in response to the Needs Assessment results in FFY 2008 that indicated potential un-served and underserved populations. The DSU and NSRC also based their analysis on the DSU's successful performance in meeting the standards and indicators in developing the strategic plan, goals and priorities.

A major issue discussed during meetings in FFY 2008 included State Plan Revisions developed with the NSRC. The NSRC's State Plan Committee significantly revised the goals with corresponding strategies and measurable indicators to align them with the recommendations and information revealed through the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and sentiments expressed in the NSRC meetings. The NSRC and the DSU were also able to consider input received from RSA monitoring activities.

The RSA on-site portion of the monitoring review was conducted prior to the NSRC's State Plan Committee meeting. The review team briefly provided verbal feedback at the conclusion of their visit; this feedback was considered by the DSU and NSRC during the development of the strategic plan, goals and priorities. The State Plan Goals are cited below:

#### Goal #1

Emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities, and improve Transition from school-to-work and school to post-secondary education.

Goal #2

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically, eligible individuals with Autism, Developmental, Cognitive and Mental Health disabilities.

Goal #3

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically minority populations represented in Nevada's Workforce.

Goal #4

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, increased retention of competitive employment, self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services and opportunities to all consumers who need Supported Employment services.

## **Attachment 4.11(c)(4): Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Supported Employment Funds**

### **(c) Goals and Priorities**

#### **(4) Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B funds**

The DSU received Title VI, Part B Grant funding budgeted in the amount of \$300,000 for FFY 2008. The entire award is distributed to DSU counseling staff for the provision of supported employment services.

The DSU will continue to expend supported employment grant funds on direct client services. These funds are also supplemented by Title I, Part B and Social Security Administration reimbursement funds. When a DSU consumer clearly meets the requirements of the federal definition for supported employment Title VI B funds are used to purchase the services necessary to secure and sustain successful employment. The DSU purchases services from community rehabilitation programs for the provision of time-limited supported employment services. Services are purchased via fee-for-service. An invoice is received from the vendor, DSU staff verifies that the service has been provided and processes the invoice through the DSU's financial management unit who completes the final process. The State Controller's Office issues all of the checks.

Training regarding supported employment was provided to professional and paraprofessional staff during the DSU's September 2008 in-service training seminar. The training provided information to staff regarding the funding stream, identifying appropriate clients, identifying employment providers, and utilizing funds appropriately. The DSU will build on the training during the annual training seminar in September 2009; additionally, the new goal, strategies and indicator will be discussed. In support of the new strategies, the DSU will be developing an updated interagency agreement with the Regional Centers.

Additionally, staff from the DSU and the Regional Centers will continue to meet to discuss individual cases. The DSU plans on scheduling meetings with the program directors of the Nevada Mental Health Services' Employment readiness Program the three Regional Centers (Desert, Sierra and Rural), and Mental Health Services (Southern, Northern and Rural) in order to collaborate on effective supported employment opportunities.

The DSU will continue to assess the potential funding opportunities for on-going employment supports in the revised regulations of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act.

The DSU will embark on an innovation and expansion project utilizing Supported Employment funds as described below.

The DSU is authorized under Nevada Revised Statute 334.025 to implement a program that expands job opportunities for individuals with disabilities through government contracts. The state law encourages state and local government and the Nevada System of Higher Education to purchase of goods and services from Non-Profit Community Rehabilitation Training Organizations that train and employ individuals with disabilities. Nevada law allows state or local governmental agencies to bypass the bidding process in the procurement of goods or services with these Non-profit Organizations, which are referred to in Nevada as a Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC).

The DSU established a program to provide assistance to CTCs in procuring state and local contracts, which, in turn create jobs for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant disabilities. Nevada's state use program is named "Preferred Purchase."

The intent of this innovation and expansion project is to develop a Pilot Project initiated with Supported Employment funds for the first year, and sustained thereafter through public and private contracts to retain the employment initially created through Supported Employment funds. The Pilot will create and expand job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market by engaging the talent and leadership of a Community Rehabilitation Training Center as a partner in the rehabilitation process, to identify competitive job and career opportunities and the skills needed to perform such jobs, and to create practical job and career readiness through a training program that will provide job placements and career advancement.

The DSU through its Preferred Purchase program identified a CTC that is capable of providing a secure, full-service, document management program, initially designing and establishing a business that will create employment training and job placement opportunities in an integrated setting. The chosen CTC is Opportunity Village in Las Vegas. Opportunity Village is a non-profit, 501(c) (3) corporation that provides training and employment to individuals with disabilities including individuals with significant mental and/or physical disabilities, as well as those without disabilities. Opportunity Village is a non-profit CTC in good standing with federal and state governments.

As the developer of the document management Pilot Project, the DSU's Preferred Purchase program is committed to maintaining a secure document management environment, providing quality images and convenient retrieval of documents through timely and responsible document management services. Opportunity Village possesses the highest national document security certification. Opportunity Village currently holds contracts for secure document destruction of Federal and State confidential documents. Opportunity Village offers dedicated space and restricted access for the document management services, secure, climatically controlled computer servers, a full range of security protocols and document management information technology professionals.

The 'Document Management Pilot Project' will provide a continuum of employment opportunities and job skills training for individuals with disabilities as well as those with a significant disability diagnosis, while maintaining an integrated employment setting

that is inclusive of those without disabilities. This Pilot Project will enable the participants to achieve their optimal level of independence and provide a competitive income thereby becoming more self-sufficient; tax-paying contributors through access to job skills training, job placement, supportive services and career advancement.

This project will provide, as appropriate:

- Training in realistic work settings in order to prepare individuals with disabilities for employment and career advancement in the competitive market.
- Provide individuals with disabilities with such support services as may be required in order to maintain the employment and career advancement for which the individuals have received training under this part.
- To the extent job skills training under this grant is provided, the training is provided on-site.

An individual shall be eligible under this Pilot Project to receive supported employment services if:

- The individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.
- The individual is determined to be an individual with a most significant disability.
- A comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs of the individuals, including an evaluation of rehabilitation, career, and job needs, identifies supported employment as the appropriate employment outcome for the individual.

Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I. Under this Pilot Project the individualized plan for employment:

- Specifies the supported employment services to be provided.
- Describes the expected extended services needed.
- Identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.

Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

Using supported employment grant funds, this Pilot Project will provide job skills training, job placement, supportive services and career advancement for 4-6 program participants referred from the DSU's Program Services Bureaus, as well as 10-15 program participants from the CTC program. Job Descriptions were jointly developed by the DSU Program Services Counseling staff and Opportunity Village.

A performance based contract with training and employment milestones will be executed between the DSU and Opportunity Village.

The Nevada State Purchasing Division is supportive of this project and will establish a Master Contract to obtain ongoing government contracts beyond the Pilot Project and assist with identifying potential customers. Private, commercial contracts will also assist with the sustainability of the employment initially created under the Pilot Project. A preliminary survey of potential customers reveals a substantial market for contracts as many agencies and companies are expending resources to warehouse and transport documents for storage. These funds may be utilized to obtain document management services.

Another benefit of the Pilot Project will be additional employment opportunities for Opportunity Village's secure document destruction (shredding) operation. The volume of work the document management contracts will secure is yet to be determined, although is estimated to provide future employment benefits.

Opportunity Village has provided significant monetary contributions to this pilot project, including: dedicated facility space, information technology professionals, an operations manager, payroll and bookkeeping staff, certifications, security equipment, and computer servers.

In FFY 2008, the DSU in partnership with the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) revised the goals based on the results of the Statewide Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment prompted the DSU and NSRC to develop a Strategic Plan focused on four major areas in response to the Needs Assessment results in FFY 2008 that indicated potential un-served and underserved populations. The NSRC's State Plan Committee significantly revised the goals with corresponding strategies and measurable indicators to align them with the recommendations and information revealed through the comprehensive, statewide Needs Assessment and sentiments expressed in the NSRC meetings. Supported employment is included in one of the new goals that went into effect October 31, 2008:

FFY 2009 Supported Employment Goal:

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, increased retention of competitive employment, self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services and opportunities to all consumers who need supported employment services.

FFY 2009 Supported Employment Strategies:

- Communicate with consumers, advocates, service providers, education authorities, disability service delivery system providers and DSU staff to foster a cultural shift that emphasizes the value of employment rather than benefits as the avenue to self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion, economic quality and integration into society.
- Emphasize both the potential of people with disabilities and the perspective of employment as the avenue to self-sufficiency in all staff training.

- Work with youth with disabilities, the Nevada Department of Education, local education authorities, parent organizations and families to encourage early discussions with students about the expectations of employment and their skills, abilities, and talents that will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Support peer mentoring of people with disabilities that encourages employment and empowers individuals to risk leaving the benefits system.
- Support assistive technology services that enhance employability.
- Identify and support best practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.
- In conjunction with the Community Mental Health Centers, Community Development Disability Organizations and affiliates, coordinate services to increase the number of individuals with disabilities that are interested and willing to pursue employment by overcoming real or perceived barriers to employment.
- The Division and Nevada State Rehabilitation Council will examine Consumer Satisfaction Survey instruments to determine if opportunities for improvement exist (example: improve definition for “Other Disabilities” category).
- Include Nevada State Rehabilitation Council attendance during the Division’s yearly staff in-service training seminar.
- Obtain annual input from the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council regarding counselor recruitment/retention.
- Conduct a Needs Assessment a minimum of every three years with presentations and reports to the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council.
- Conduct annual meetings of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council’s State Plan Committee to draft goals.

FFY 2009 Supported Employment Indicators:

- The Division’s performance regarding the numbers of individuals rehabilitated who achieve competitive employment in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
- Increase the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully, earning at least the federal minimum wage. The Division’s performance regarding an increase in the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
- Increase the number of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) for supported employment participants. The Division’s performance regarding an increase in the number of supported employment participants with an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels.
- Nevadans with disabilities will achieve quality employment and self-sufficiency through an increase in successful retention of employment. The Division’s performance regarding Nevadans with disabilities achieving quality employment and self-sufficiency through an increase in successful retention of employment in FFY 2009 will equal or exceed FFY 2008 performance levels. Also, assistive technology services will be tracked and reported.

Attachment 4.11(b) details FFY 2008 data and subsequent fiscal year projections for the number of persons to be served.

## **Attachment 4.11(d): Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities**

### **(d) Strategies**

The DSU developed the following State strategies to address identified needs and determine how Title I funds for innovation and expansion activities will be used.

1. Address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph (a) of this subsection and achieve the goals and priorities identified in paragraph (c) of this subsection;

The assessment conducted jointly by the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council and DSU identified the following needs:

- Increase outreach efforts to better serve transition students

#### Strategy:

- The DSU will fund a statewide project called Transition Connect in order to increase outreach to potential vocational rehabilitation participants. This project will focus on services to transition students. The transition coordinators will serve to build a bridge from the IEP to the IPE, with a focus on insuring that services provided to transition students are seamless, meaningful and timely. In tandem with the vocational rehabilitation counselor, the transitional coordinators will provide ongoing support of the vocational goal's developmental activities. This is now a Transition Contract Statewide
- In Northern Nevada, vocational rehabilitation counselors will participate in a special project for transition students who have developmental disabilities. In conjunction with the State of Nevada's Sierra Regional Center and the Washoe ARC, counselors will provide outreach services to students including identifying community resources and developing a plan of continuation/transition of services when these students graduate from high school. Counselors will continue to work with the Northern Nevada school districts to assist with transition of students with physical and mental disabilities.
- In Rural Nevada, vocational rehabilitation counselors will participate in the same project for transition students as in Northern Nevada with the State of Nevada's Rural Regional Center and the Ormsby ARC. Counselors will continue to work with the Rural Nevada school districts to assist with transition of students with physical and mental disabilities.

- Counselors will continue to work with the seventeen (17) Nevada counties' school districts to assist with transition of students with physical and mental disabilities.
- Increase outreach efforts to better serve the Hispanic population
 

Strategy: The DSU will publish articles in Spanish language periodicals describing vocational rehabilitation services and provide direct outreach to Hispanic community organizations and Spanish chambers of commerce. In addition, whenever possible, Spanish-speaking staff will be hired.
- Provide more supported employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities
 

Strategy: Focus on the development of additional support services such as job coaching, extended job development and follow-up activities.

The following goals and strategies have been developed in partnership with the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council.

Goal #1

Emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities, and improve Transition from school-to-work and school to post-secondary education.

Strategies:

- Serve more Transition Students by developing referral mechanisms with elementary and post-secondary institutions.
- Creative marketing to schools and students.
- Provide Statewide “Transition Connect” Expansion Project
- Counselor phone calls with follow-up.
- Increased communication between Counselor/Special Education Teachers statewide.
- Counselors to Participate with Parent/Teacher Conferences.

Goal #2

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically, eligible individuals with Autism, Developmental, Cognitive and Mental Health disabilities.

Strategies:

- Increase marketing efforts with Mental Health hospitals and Physicians.
- Partner with Special Olympics.
- Partner with Residential Providers and Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC's).
- Partner with groups concerned with Autism.
- Partner with advocacy groups.

- Partner with Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disability Services for statewide Autism Workshops to gain referrals.

### Goal #3

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically minority populations represented in Nevada's Workforce.

#### Strategies:

- Recruit Spanish-speaking staff.
- Public Service Announcements in ethnic media.
- Utilize "other language" brochures.

### Goal #4

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, increased retention of competitive employment, self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services and opportunities to all consumers who need Supported Employment services.

#### Strategies:

- Communicate with consumers, advocates, service providers, education authorities, the disability service delivery system and staff to foster a cultural shift that emphasizes the value of employment rather than benefits as the avenue to self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion, economic quality and integration into society.
- Emphasize both the potential of people with disabilities and the perspective of employment as the avenue to self-sufficiency in all staff training.
- Work with youth with disabilities, the Nevada Department of Education, local education authorities, parent organizations and families to encourage early discussions with students about the expectations of employment and their skills, abilities, talents that will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Support peer mentoring of people with disabilities that encourages employment and empowers individuals to risk leaving the benefits system.
- Support Assistive Technology services that enhance employability. Identify and support best practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.
- Coordinate with the systems for Community Mental Health Centers and Community Developmental Disability Organizations and affiliates to increase the expectations for the percent of persons serviced pursuing employment.
- The Rehabilitation Division and the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council will examine Consumer Satisfaction Survey instruments to determine if opportunities for improvement exist (example: improve definition for "Other Disabilities" category).
- Invite the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council to the DSU's Staff In-Service Training and complete Evaluation of Training for each Workshop/Training Module.
- Provide Assistive Technology Services.
- Conduct a Needs Assessment a minimum of every three years with presentations and reports to the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council.

- Conduct Annual Meetings of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council's State Plan Committee to draft goals and gain input regarding Rehabilitation Counselor recruitment/retention.

The DSU has and will continue to have written intrastate inter-local contracts with each Nevada school district (17). The contract delineates the responsibilities of the DSU and each school district. Counselors and staff will schedule regular visits to their assigned school districts. The visits will be conducted in order to accept referrals and participate in meetings with school staff, parents and students.

The DSU funds a project called Transition Connect in order to increase outreach to potential vocational rehabilitation clients. The DSU funds this project through RSA Basic 110 funds. This project focuses on services to transition students on a statewide basis. The DSU contracts with entities that employ transition coordinators. The coordinators act as liaisons between the DSU and school district special education teachers, counselors and coordinators to assist with providing information regarding the DSU's vocational rehabilitation program and services. Under the guidance of the DSU's vocational rehabilitation counselors, the Transition Connect vendor assigns transition coordinators with school district staff to identify students in need of services. The transition coordinators serve to build a bridge from the IEP to the IPE, with a focus on ensuring that services provided to transition students are seamless, meaningful and timely.

At the beginning of the fall 2008 school year, the DSU met with each school district, along with the contractor, to discuss the roles of the contractor in the IPE (Individualized Plan of Employment) process. In tandem with the vocational rehabilitation counselor, the transitional coordinators provide ongoing support of the vocational goal's developmental activities. The Transition Connect vendor works with the following agencies in order to coordinate referrals to the DSU: State of Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, State of Nevada Desert Regional Services, St. Jude's Ranch for children, and the Blind Children's Foundation. The DSU counseling staff and the Transition Connect vendor provide presentations regarding transition services at the Nevada Department of Education's annual transition seminar.

Each DSU District has counselors assigned to Nevada's high schools. In the DSU's Southern District office, 4 counselors are designated transition counselors. The Las Vegas and surrounding area high schools are assigned to these designated transition counselors. In the DSU's Northern District office, a high school has been assigned to each counselor; each counselor carries a case load of not only transition students but all other clients as well. In the Rural District offices, each counselor is assigned to the high school in their office location as well as high schools in their surrounding counties. In most instances the rural teacher plays the additional role as the coordinator of school services; thus, the DSU's vocational rehabilitation counselor is actively involved in assisting with the development of an IEP and with transition services.

Clark County has the largest population in the State of Nevada, representing 70% of the population in the state. The Clark County School District (CCSD) is one of the largest school districts in the United States. Of the state's approximate 7,000 special education students, 4,948 reside in Clark County. The DSU is contracted with ASAP Services Inc in Las Vegas for the Transition Connect program. Southern Nevada DSU staff conducts an open house with the Clark County School District to provide an update regarding referrals to the DSU. Vocational rehabilitation counselors frequently participate in the individual IEP and Transition Planning meetings for students.

The DSU is contracted with Easter Seals of Sierra Nevada. Easter Seals of Sierra Nevada handles the Transition Connect program for the DSU's Northern and Rural Districts. In Northern Nevada, vocational rehabilitation counselors will continue to participate in a special project for transition students who have developmental disabilities. In conjunction with the State of Nevada's Sierra Regional Center and the Washoe ARC, counselors provide outreach services to students including identifying community resources and developing a plan of continuation/transition of services when these students graduate from high school. The students are participants of both the Center and the ARC.

2. Carry out outreach activities to identify and serve individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities consistent with the provisions of subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement.

The DSU provides outreach to serve minorities and graduating high school students via Transition Connect. To better serve the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities, the DSU has a Spanish-speaking counselor and a rehabilitation technician out-stationed at Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services in Las Vegas. Recruitment of multilingual staff is a priority. In the thirteen vocational rehabilitation office locations statewide, there are a total of five Spanish-speaking staff available to assist in providing services to Spanish-speaking clients.

3. Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

Goal:

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, increased retention of competitive employment, self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services and opportunities to all consumers who need Supported Employment services.

Strategies:

- Coordinate with the systems for Community Mental Health Centers and Community Developmental Disability Organizations and affiliates to increase the expectations for the percent of persons serviced pursuing employment.

- Rehabilitation Division and NV State Rehabilitation Council will examine Consumer Satisfaction Survey instruments to determine if opportunities for improvement exist.
- Conduct a Needs Assessment a minimum of every three years with presentations and reports to NV State Rehabilitation Council.

Focus on the development of additional support services such as job coaching, extended job development and follow up activities. Examine alternative fee structures for supported employment providers that would enable more extensive services to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

#### Community Rehabilitation Program

The DSU has contracted with ASAP and Manpower to assist in the provision of community-based assessments. The DSU is working with San Diego State University (SDSU), the DSU's assigned TACE Center, to update a quality control process to evaluate contracts such as these. Updating the quality control process was identified in the DSU's RSA FY 2008 Monitoring Report as a recommendation. The TACE work plan has been approved by RSA.

#### Strategy for Assisting Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System

The DSU is continuing to partner with the Nevada Employment Security Division (ESD), one of the DSU's Workforce Investment partners, at two of Nevada's JobConnect offices in Las Vegas and will be adding another. The collaboration is called "Team One." The purpose of Team One is to facilitate the return to employment of a select group of VR participants. The Team is comprised of employees of the DSU and ESD and includes an employment interviewer, an employment and training representative, a business services representative, and a DSU counselor. Each has a caseload of no more than 7 participants on an ongoing basis. The Team will meet with the participant in order for the participant to become acquainted and to insure that the participant understands expectations. All activities and actions are documented in case notes. The Team provides a report regarding outcomes to their managers. The DSU anticipates that with the combined experience and expertise of the DSU/ESD partnership, participants will have a positive result.

#### Assistive Technology

The DSU provides assistive technology assistance on a statewide basis. The DSU's Southern District Office has an on-site assistive technology staff position. This position is responsible for providing testing and support services to participants to assist them in getting and maintaining employment. Counselors also have the option of referring participants to Easter Seals of Southern Nevada or Innovative Rehabilitation Technology Inc. to provide assistive technology equipment and/or services unavailable internally.

The DSU's Northern and District Offices, in collaboration with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), have received a grant for assistive technology services. The DSU has developed this new program to expand assistive technology services to northern and rural Nevada clients. Currently, the DSU referred 70 participants to UNR in order to conduct

an assistive technology assessment. The DSU purchased a number of assistive technology devices that are housed in the Northern District office Resource Center, to use as models for participants.

The vocational rehabilitation counselor takes into consideration the need for assistive technology assistance at each stage of providing assistance to participants. Specifically, consideration for assistive technology assistance is provided during the assessment process. The participant's physician may recommend assistive technology assistance at any stage of the process. The counselor refers the participant to the appropriate assistive technology specialist.

The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council in partnership with the DSU established a strategy relative to assistive technology: "Support Assistive Technology services that enhance employability." This strategy is part of Goal #4.

#### Innovation and Expansion Summary

The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council and the DSU developed the goals and strategies in a partnership effort and based the goals and objectives on the outcome of the needs assessment and comments from the RSA monitoring review team. Examples of activities that assist with attaining the goals, and were developed and discussed above include:

- Transition Connect
- Updating interagency agreements
- Updating the quality assurance process relative to contracts
- Developing Spanish language articles and pamphlets
- Developing additional support services for supported employment opportunities
- Extending outreach efforts toward diverse populations
  - Eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities
  - Minority populations
- Coordinate activities with partners such as Community Mental Health Centers, Community Developmental Disability Organizations, and other state agencies.

## Attachment 4.11(e)(2): Evaluation and Reports of Progress

### (e) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

(2) Identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

In FFY 2006, the DSU in partnership with the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) revised the goals to better meet the objectives of the state. The goals were effective on July 1, 2006 and sunset September 30, 2008. With this in mind, the DSU continued to implement the strategies jointly developed by the NSRC and the DSU. The goals are outlined below.

#### Goal #1

Improve the quality of employment outcomes by increasing the average hourly earnings of people placed in competitive employment from the prior FFY by 2%.

Evaluation: This goal was not met in FFY 2008. In FFY 2008, clients of the DSU experienced a -0.64% decrease in the average hourly earnings of people placed in competitive employment. The DSU was not able to meet this goal due to the economic condition of the State of Nevada. Nevada experienced, and continues to experience, a significant increase in its unemployment rate. For a number of months, Las Vegas led the nation in the number of housing foreclosures. As a result, hourly wages of successful placements lagged. Due to the economic downturn, over qualified individuals are applying for open positions leaving less financially desirable positions available to our clients. The largest industry in Nevada is the gaming industry and Nevada ranked No. 3 among the 17 states that reported revenue declines. Our revenue is based squarely in the gaming industry thus leaving fewer positions available to our clients. Additionally, because of the reduction in tourism there is a reduction in the need to hire higher paid union positions, so non-union and lesser paying positions are available.

Average Hourly Wage Earned:	FFY 2007	=	\$11.01
	FFY 2008	=	\$10.94
	% Change	=	-0.64%

#### Goal #2

Improve the quality of employment outcomes as evidenced by the availability of healthcare benefits from all sources provided to people successfully closed into competitive employment.

Evaluation: This goal was met in FFY 2008. In FFY 2008, the percentage of clients of the DSU with healthcare coverage from sources was 66.28%, an increase of 4.19% from the prior year. Nevada has the third highest rate of uninsured individuals in the United States. Nineteen percent of Nevada Citizens do not have health care coverage. Nationally, approximately 56% of all employers offer healthcare coverage, down from 62% in prior years and is continuing to trend downwards. Nevada is also experiencing a downward trend in provision of health insurance. Individuals with disabilities have more difficulty securing coverage because they have pre-

existing medical conditions that insurers often do not cover. The increase of 4.19% is a reflection of the focus staff placed in this quality outcome.

Available Health Insurance:	FFY 2007	=	63.62%
(all sources, all closures)	FFY 2008	=	66.28%
	% Change	=	4.19%

Goal #3

Ensure that the percentage of minority clients served by the DSU is the same as the representation of minorities in the Nevada workforce.

Evaluation: This goal was met. Between the years 2003 and 2008, the percentage of vocational rehabilitation services to people from minority backgrounds rose from 37.18% to 47.97%, an increase of 29%.

<b>Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Minority Participation in VR Programs (Closed Cases)</b>
FFY 2003	37.18%
FFY 2004	37.03%
FFY 2005	39.69%
FFY 2006	42.91%
FFY 2007	43.90%
FFY 2008	47.97%

According to data obtained from the Nevada State Demographer’s Office (Census 2000 Data), the percentage of minorities in Nevada’s workforce is 21.92%. Using this data, the DSU served more than double the state’s minority representation percentage.

Goal #4

Provide accessible and equitable services and opportunities to all consumers in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Evaluation: The DSU met this goal in FFY 2008. During FFY 2008, the DSU continued its efforts to co-locate vocational rehabilitation services with partner organizations. Co-location opportunities have been completed in all districts. Of 13 vocational rehabilitation offices in the

state, 11 are co-located in Nevada JobConnect offices and one office is in the Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services facility. Within the Nevada JobConnect offices, collaborative cross training efforts have been initiated and are continuing in an effort to enhance the understanding of various program components relative to serving individuals with disabilities. The DSU continues to focus on maintaining or expanding partnership opportunities to bring services to convenient and accessible locations in the communities. The need to maintain or expand participation in community transportation programs, in co-locations and in ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of personal information of clients will remain a priority.

Goal #5

Provide increased employment and higher education opportunities to students with disabilities from the prior FFY by: Increasing competitive employment by 3% from the prior FFY (2008 over 2007); and, increasing higher education services by 3% (2008 over 2007).

Evaluation: The DSU met the goal relative to increasing the competitive employment outcomes for transition students but did not meet the goal for increasing higher education services.

<b>District</b>	<b>FFY-2007 Competitive Employment Closures For Transition Students</b>	<b>FFY-2008 Competitive Employment Closures For Transition Students</b>
Northern District	18	15
Rural District	16	14
Southern District	94	103
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>132</b>

Student Competitive Employment Closures:	FFY 2007	=	128
	FFY 2008	=	132
	% of Increase	=	3.1%

The DSU saw the need for greater communication with higher education institutions to insure that students are referred to the DSU for services. The DSU is aware that Nevada’s Millennium Scholarship was utilized as a funding source for college and that these qualified individuals used those resources prior to availing themselves of our services. A number of former transition students came to us seeking employment after they completed their two-year Community College Associate’s degree or educational program. Many students came to the DSU looking for employment rather than seeking education. The DSU is encouraging students to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Nevada Student Leadership Transition Summit sponsored by the Nevada Department of

Education. The purpose of this Summit is to expose participants to the postsecondary options/resources available and to improve their understanding of the requirements for a successful transition to the world beyond high school. Also, the DSU is planning several summer youth transition programs to assist youth in a greater awareness of the world of work, job preparation and educational opportunities. The University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) and the Community College of Southern Nevada (CSN) will be partners in this collaboration.

<b>District</b>	<b>FFY-2007 Higher Education For Transition Students</b>	<b>FFY-2008 Higher Education For Transition Students</b>
Northern District	22	26
Rural District	42	34
Southern District	39	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>89</b>

Student Higher Education Opportunities:	FFY 2007	=	103
	FFY 2008	=	89
	% of Increase	=	-13.6%

Amount Spent on Higher Education:	FFY 2007	=	\$176,946
	FFY 2008	=	\$140,386
	% of Increase	=	-20.7%

Goal #6

Support and encourage economic development by helping more individuals with the most severe disabilities to become taxpayers and customers of business and industry or to otherwise live more independent of public support.

Strategy: Provide the additional services such as assessments, job selection, job development and stabilization services that are needed to bring about successful employment outcomes for individuals with the most severe disabilities by maximizing supported employment grant funding through an increased focus on developing community resources to assist in providing supported employment services.

Evaluation: This goal was met. The DSU’s rehabilitation counselors provided services such as situational assessments and community based assessments. The DSU’s vocational evaluators provided testing. The results of the testing were used to initiate referrals to the psychologists at the Regional Centers; the psychologists would then complete an assessment.

Rehabilitation counselors worked with the Regional Centers' case managers in developing plans and identifying extended services. This information was used to complete an IPE. The assessment opportunities were used to assist with developing a strategy for providing employment services to those individuals with the most severe disabilities. Outreach efforts included meetings with the Regional Centers, mental health agencies and the Nevada Community Enrichment Center.

When appropriate, the rehabilitation counselor used family members, natural supports and supports in employment settings to provide supported employment assistance. Ongoing training will be provided to professional and paraprofessional staff during the FFY09 in-service training seminar.

**Nevada State Rehabilitation Council  
Summary of Expenditures for Innovation and Expansion Activities for SFY 2008**

<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>Purpose of Expense</b>	<b>Amount Expended</b>
<b>Category 01: Personnel</b>	A staff member functions as the liaison and provides support to the Council @ .50 FTE. And two Administrative Assistants provide support to the Council @ .30 FTE.	\$43,423.74 \$12,978.17 \$6,708.31
<b>Category 17: Strategic Planning</b>	Expenses designated specifically for activities of the NSRC.	\$6,180.29
<b>Category 03: In-State Travel</b>	Travel expenses for Council members and Council staff to attend meetings held in Nevada.	\$1,283.89
<b>Category 02: Out-of-State Travel</b>	Travel to SRC Training in Sacramento.	\$936.54
<b>Category 04: Operational Costs</b>	Cost of basic operational supplies, printing, insurance, contractual services, postage, legal notices.	\$11,659.23
<b>Satisfaction Survey</b>	Consumer satisfaction survey by UNR Center for Research, Design and Analysis.	\$15,773
<b>New Member Training</b>	In Las Vegas.	\$2,759.28
	<b>Total for SFY2008</b>	<b>\$101,702.45</b>
	<b>Less Category 01 Personnel</b>	<b>\$63,110.22</b>
	<b>Total Category 17 - NSRC Council</b>	<b>\$38,592.23</b>

The NSRC strategies and guidance were instrumental in the DSU's success in meeting most of the agency goals as detailed above and the RSA Evaluation Standards as detailed below.

Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Evaluation Standards

Information related to the DSU meeting the Federal Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators established in Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act is presented below.

In agreement with Title I, Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended 1998, the DSU seeks to improve services to and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, to ensure equal access to all individuals from minority backgrounds, and to meet or exceed prescribed Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators. To the maximum extent practicable, the VR program standards and indicators shall be consistent with the core indicators of performance established under Section 136 (b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. In

FFY 2008, all three of the primary performance indicators (1.3, 1.4 and 1.5) were met by the DSU.

The DSU also exceeded the performance level for Evaluation Standard #2 – Equal Access.

#### Federal Evaluation Standards #1: Employment Outcomes

The DSU did not meet Performance Indicator 1.1 for the number of successful employment outcomes. In FFY 2008, the DSU achieved 1,060 employment outcomes as compared to a total of 1,161 in FFY 2007, a decrease of 8.7%.

The DSU met Performance Indicator 1.2 requiring 55.8% of the individuals who, after receiving VR services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), were closed successfully. In FFY 2008, the DSU achieved a 61.59% rating versus the 63.8% rating in 2007.

Performance Indicator 1.3 requires 72.6% of the people who exit the vocational rehabilitation program in competitive employment, self-employment, or a Business Enterprise Program (BEP) (in Nevada termed Business Enterprises of Nevada) to earn at least the minimum wage. In FFY 2008, the DSU achieved a 99.72% rating.

Performance Indicator 1.4 requires that at least 62.4% of individuals with disabilities who enter competitive employment, self-employment or a Business Enterprise Program earn at least the minimum wage. In FFY 2008, the DSU attained a 95.36% rating, an increase of .15% compared to FFY 2007.

The DSU exceeded Performance Indicator 1.5. This indicator requires all individuals exiting the VR program in competitive employment, who are self employed or are employed in a BEP facility to earn at least a .52 ratio of the statewide hourly average of all individuals employed in the state (as derived from the most recently available Bureau of Labor Statistics report entitled “State Average Annual Pay”). The most recent report indicates an hourly average wage of \$19.91 per hour for Nevada’s workforce. In FFY 2008, the DSU achieved an average hourly wage of \$10.94. This finding results in a .55 performance ratio.

The DSU met Performance Indicator 1.6 which requires that a minimum of 53% of all individuals who earn at least the minimum wage when they exit the VR program in competitive employment, self-employment or in BEP employment report their own income as their largest single source of economic support at exit compared to the percentage of applicants who reported their own income as the largest source at application. In FFY 2008, 69.35% of people exiting the VR program with such employment outcomes reported being self-supporting.

#### Federal Evaluation Standard #2: Equal Access to Services

The evaluation standard in Performance Indicator 2.1 requires the DSU to provide equal access to services for all people with disabilities from minority backgrounds. Equal access is determined by comparing the “Service Rate” for people with a disability from a minority background to the service rate for all non-minority people with disabilities. A ratio of .80 or greater is required to achieve Evaluation Standard #2. In FFY 2008, the DSU exceeded the required .80 ratio by achieving an equal access to “Service Rate” ratio of .935.

## **Attachment 4.12(a)(1): Innovation and Expansion Activities (Section 101(a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.35)**

**(a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the:**

- (1) Development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a)

The State Plan Goal developed jointly by the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) and the DSU in FFY 2009 in response to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, that encompasses outreach to individuals with disabilities including individuals with the most significant disabilities is outlined below:

### State Plan Goal #2:

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically, eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities.

### State Plan Goal #2 Strategies:

- Increase marketing efforts with mental health hospitals and physicians.
- Partner with residential providers and Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC's).
- Partner with groups concerned with autism.
- Partner with advocacy groups.
- Partner with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disability Services for statewide autism workshops in order to gain referrals.

### **DSU Identifies Program Service Needs**

Various DSU and State Rehabilitation Council documents were researched in order to identify unmet needs. These include:

- The 2007 Needs Assessment Survey
- The 2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey
- The 2009 State Plan
- The 2009 RSA Monitoring Review Report.

The following is a list of areas of need identified in these documents:

- A considerably higher number of applicants were rated most significantly disabled in the north than in the south and rural regions.
- Given the high service costs and growing incidence rates associated with autism, there is a need for future planning to meet the needs of these individuals.
- Three disability groups were identified that were under represented when compared to regional or national statistics. These included: persons with cognitive disabilities, persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with depressive/mood disorders. These findings suggest a need for outreach to these populations.
- Need to speed up the process.
- Improve the quality of jobs that are available.

Innovation and expansion activities in FFY 2009-2011, include Pilot Projects that will generally begin in FFY 2009 through FFY 2010/2011 and subsequently be sustained in FFY 2012 through government and private commercial contracts and involve partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC's).

Innovation and Expansion Activities will assure Vocational Rehabilitation Job Placements for individuals with disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities in an integrated setting, within competitive employment guidelines.

The Innovation and Expansion Activities under these Pilot Projects will include:

### **Secure Document Management Services Pilot Project**

Job Placements to include:

- Document Preparation Positions
- Scanning and Imaging Positions
- Indexing Positions
- Quality Assurance Positions
- Supervisor Positions

### **Rural Nevada Park Services Pilot Project**

Job Placements to include:

- Parks Supervisor Positions
- Landscape Design Positions
- Parks Maintenance Support Positions

## **Internet Marketing Pilot Project**

Job Placements to include:

- Trainer Positions
- Customer Service Positions
- Order Fulfillment Positions
- E-Bay Lister Positions

## **Customized Board Manufacturing**

Job Placements to include:

- Supervisor Positions
- Customer Service Positions
- Quality Assurance Positions
- Order Fulfillment Positions
- Manufacturing Positions

Under these Innovative and Expansion Activity Pilot Projects and encompassing Section 622-628 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the following will apply:

- Each Pilot Project, Performance Contract, Scope of Work will consider the results of the comprehensive, statewide assessment conducted under section 101(a) (15) (A) (i), with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities as well as those with significant disabilities and the need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.
- Each Scope of Work will describe the quality, scope, and extent of Job Placements and Individualized Plans of Employment (IPE's) including supported employment services authorized under The Rehabilitation Act to be provided to individuals who are eligible under this Act to receive the services and specify the goals and plans of the State with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622.
- Demonstrate evidence of the efforts of the designated State agency to identify and make arrangements (including entering into cooperative agreements) with other State agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of Job Placements for individuals with disabilities and including supported employment services.
- Demonstrate evidence of the efforts of the designated State agency to identify and make arrangements (including entering into cooperative agreements) with other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the State, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended service.

The DSU will enter into Performance Based Contracts with Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC's) to assist in the provision of successful Job Placements as well as supported employment services. The CTC's involved in these Pilot Projects are Non-profit, 501 (c) (3) organizations.

- The DSU assures that funds made available under this part will only be used to provide Job Placements and supported employment services authorized under this Act to individuals who are eligible under this part to receive the services.

An individual shall be eligible under this part to receive supported employment services authorized under this Act if—

- The individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services;
- The individual is determined to be an individual with a most significant disability.
- A comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs of the individual described in section 7(2) (B) of the Act, including an evaluation of rehabilitation, career, and job needs, identifies supported employment as the appropriate employment outcome for the individual.
- The comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b) (1) and funded under title I will include consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.
- An individualized plan for employment, as required by section 102, will be developed and updated using funds under title I in order to specify the supported employment services to be provided.
- Specify the expected extended services needed.
- Identify the source of extended services, which may include natural supports, or to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that such sources will become available
- The State will use funds provided under this part only to supplement, and not supplant, the funds provided under Title I, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.
- Services provided under an individualized plan for employment will be coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other Federal or State programs.
- To the extent job skills training is provided, the training will be provided on site.
- Job Placements and supported employment services will include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with disabilities and individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The DSU anticipates the Community Rehabilitation Training Centers involved in these Innovation and Expansion Activities will provide discrete post employment services in accordance with Section 101 of the Rehabilitation Act.

### **Innovation and Expansion Activities Utilizing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Stimulus Funds**

The Rehabilitation Division received approximately \$2.2M in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA funds) from RSA. The DSU's guiding principals are listed as follows:

- Spend quickly to save and create jobs.
  - Balance speed and stimulus with careful planning and effective reforms.
  - Maximize short-term investments with lasting results.

- Minimize unsustainable ongoing commitments.
- Integrate coherent improvement strategies that are aligned with the core reform goals.
- Ensure transparency and accountability.
- Track ARRA funds separately.
- Capture required information on reporting template.
- Transparency to quantify/define goals and mobilize support for improving results.
- Monitor sub-recipients to help ensure data quality and the proper expenditure of Stimulus Funds.
- Thoughtfully invest one-time funds.
  - Funds should be used for short-term investments that have the potential for long-term benefits, rather than for commitments that the State may not be able to sustain.
- Advance effective reforms.
- Reporting requirements.
  - Reports will be required to contain the information required under section 1512.c of the ARRA and must be submitted no later than 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter. The first report is due in October 2009.
- Disburse the stimulus money to the individuals who most need it, assist people into jobs, and develop new jobs.
- Improving performance and serving more individuals.
- Serving individuals on waiting lists.
- Increasing services to eligible consumers.
- Expanding services to traditionally underserved and unserved populations in the state.
- Construction for community rehabilitation program purposes, (no more than 10% of a state's allotment may be spent on construction).

**Innovation and Expansion Activities Involving State Agency Infrastructure Including Technology:**

- Purchasing equipment to enable and improve remote access of personnel in the field such as laptops and portable printers.
- Purchasing, installing, and training staff on use of video conferencing systems to enhance communication between field offices and state office.
- Improving the accessibility of technology used by agency counselors and employees with disabilities.
- Upgrading data systems to support real time access to data report.
- Creation of statewide "Job Club" with Computer Lab and Job Development Trainers.

## **Innovation and Expansion Activities Involving Transition Student Activities:**

### Summer Youth Training Program

- Includes Peer Mentors, cultivating individual sense of responsibility and discipline, gain academic advancement, enhance interpersonal relationship skills, and gain budgeting skills
- Will involve a Summer College Residential Component
- Tutors
- Employment Training Certification Upon Completion

### Youth Culinary Training Academy

- Involves Transition Students Who Are Job Ready
- Job Seeking Skills from Service Provider
- Social Skills Training
- Personal Grooming Kits
- Work Experience Provided

## **Attachment 6.3: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION; Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. [Section (b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and 363.50(b)(2)]**

### **SCOPE**

Supported Employment in Nevada is an important component in the DSU's services to people with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive Supported Employment services. Services provided will vary and are individualized, based on the kind of support needed by each individual. The DSU vocational rehabilitation counselors provide assistance to find a job, learn the job and provide ongoing support to maintain the job. The client becomes integrated with co-workers who do not have disabilities in a business that is typical and representative of the whole community. Employment opportunities are based on the client's abilities and interests.

Our service delivery system is based on collaboration with statewide community rehabilitation programs, secondary and post secondary educators and counselors, physicians, ophthalmologists, clients, parents, advocacy organizations, the Nevada Community Enrichment Program, the Nevada Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services (MHDS), private vocational rehabilitation counselors, and other representatives.

The Title VI, Part B, supported employment grant funding is supplemented by the use of Title I, Part B funds, Social Security Administration reimbursements and in-kind funding from the supports provided by MHDS. The DSU provides supported employment services through all of its offices and expands services by:

- Co-location of rehabilitation counselors at the Southern Nevada Mental Health Institute's Psycho-Social Rehabilitation program.
- Collaboration of the DSU with San Diego State University and Nevada's community colleges for job coach training and job development.
- Establishment, coordination, and funding of a multi-year collaborative project or projects between the DSU and community rehabilitation programs to provide jobs for people with the most significant disabilities. In Nevada, this project is called the Nevada State Use Preferred Purchase Program.
- Identification of and support to projects designed to enhance employment of Nevadans with the most significant disabilities.

### **QUALITY**

Supported employment services must provide competitive work in integrated work settings with extended support services. Services are provided for clients with the most significant disabilities who have a documented need for supported employment, including extended support services. The job can be a full-time or a part-time job. The client and the counselor establish the IPE (Individualized Plan of Employment), including a goal for the number of hours to work each week. The work must be in an integrated setting with coworkers who do not have disabilities.

Wages must at least be at the Nevada minimum wage amount. In addition to the standard contents of the IPE, the following must be included for any participant for whom Supported Employment services are planned:

- A description of the Supported Employment services to be provided.
- The identification of the provider of extended services.

The quality of Supported Employment outcomes is assessed individually, taking into account: client satisfaction with their work, the level of earnings, the benefits provided by the employer, transportation, work environment, and support services that are needed. The vocational rehabilitation counselor completes the assessment.

### **EXTENT**

Supported Employment will be considered as a possible vocational outcome for individuals with the most significant disabilities as a part of the eligibility determination process.

In addition to the full scope of services provided by the DSU under Title I, Part B, individuals may receive the following support services:

- An assessment of the need for supported employment;
- Development of and placement into jobs; and,
- Intensive services at or away from the worksite that are needed to maintain employment stability including:
  - The provision of skilled job coaches who accompany the client for intensive job skills training at the worksite;
  - Social skills training;
  - Independent community travel and transportation system training;
  - Job seeking skills training;
  - Job retention skills training;
  - Regular observation and supervision of the client;
  - Follow-up services consisting of regular contact with the client, employers, parents, guardians, or representatives of the client, and other professional and informed advisors to reinforce and stabilize the job placement;
  - Facilitation of natural supports at the worksite;
  - Identification and coordination of extended follow along services to ensure job stability and retention such as the DSU's use of the inter-local agreement with MHDS, use of community rehabilitation programs and the increased utilization of natural supports; and,
  - Post employment services targeted for the retention and advancement in employment.

Extended services are specific ongoing support services that are provided, organized and made available in such a way as to assist the participant to maintain integrated competitive employment or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working towards competitive work, such as an enclave.

Extended services are provided once the time-limited services of assessment, job development, placement and intensive job skills training at the work site are completed. Extended services are provided, at a minimum, twice monthly at the work site of the participant, or more often if requested by the participant or work site.

Title I and Title VI, Part B, funds may not be used for the provision of extended services. The specific method used to provide extended services may vary according to the employment setting, the funding source and resources available. Sources may include interagency agreements with other agencies, such as the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services, or natural supports such as family members, supervisors or coworkers at the work site or residential care givers.

Validation: The DSU's Program Services Chief will routinely audit and report on a representative sample of cases involving supported employment, in order to validate outcomes.

Below is a summarization of our Supported Employment participants.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total Supported Employment Individuals Closed</b>	<b>Total Supported Employment Individuals Closed With Employment Outcome</b>	<b>Percent of Employment Outcomes</b>
<b>FFY 2005</b>	235	119	50.64%
<b>FFY 2006</b>	228	145	63.60%
<b>FFY 2007</b>	193	118	61.14%
<b>FFY 2008</b>	135	89	65.93%