

**LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES  
LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES REPORT  
MARCH, 2011**

**PROGRAM PLANNING/RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

**STATE PLAN**

- LRS has received instructions for their 2012 State Plan and will begin gathering information this month.

**IN SERVICE AND CSPD INITIATIVES**

**CSPD**

- Two more counselors completed their Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling as part of the Comprehensive System for Personnel Development. One graduated from University of North Texas following the fall quarter and another graduated from Southern University at the end of the fall semester. There was one new enrollee starting in January, beginning the distance education program at UNT. Presently eight staff are enrolled in Master's programs. Currently, plans are being made to start the recruiting of staff that need to begin their Master's training.

**Counselor Academy**

- The annual Counselor Training Academy was conducted over two weeks in late October and November. Ten counselors participated in the training that included a comprehensive review of the VR Service delivery process, presentations from professionals pertaining to medical aspects of disabilities and exposure to demonstrations of assistive technology devices. This was the smallest group of counselors participating in an Academy in a number of years due to the recent hiring freezes imposed on the agency. All of LRS' present staff has participated in Academy training.

**Deaf Services**

- Two of the Counselors serving Deaf caseloads are planning to participate in Deaf Orientation Training provided at Western Oregon University and sponsored by PepNet. All counselors serving these specialized caseloads are required to attend this training. Additional training opportunities for these specialists are also being pursued to enhance their skills and improve the service delivery to these consumers.

## **COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS (CRP'S)/EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT**

### **CRPS**

- LRS continues to annually monitor CRP's. This process is initiated at the regional level by requiring providers to meet certain quality indicators and submit documentation to verify the accuracy of reports. The CRP's are monitored at the state level through programmatic and fiscal reviews. The annual renewal process is completed via a facility site visit or a review of files. The Program Coordinator provides technical assistance as areas of remediation are identified.

### **MINORITY OUTREACH**

- Program Coordinator continues to maintain a relationship with the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation agency's in Louisiana.

### **DRUG COURTS**

- The Drug Courts and their Work Release programs continue to be monitored.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE**

- LRS continues is a participating partner with the Neighborhood Place (NP) facilities located in Sabine Parish (Zwolle & Many).

### **EMPLOYMENT/SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

- The LRS/Jefferson Parish Human Service Authority Pilot Project is off to a good start. The joint state agency collaboration began in November 2010. To date, we have two consumers - one on the Eastbank and one on the Westbank of Jefferson Parish. Through LRS referrals, one consumer is now employed, and the other consumer was scheduled to be placed into a job shortly. We are awaiting a report from JPHSA with exact placement figures and other information. If this joint state agency proves to be successful in the placement of LRS consumers into jobs, LRS will look into possibly expanding this joint collaboration throughout the state.
- LRS continues to meet with the Work Pays consortium and distributes information and leads from the VR Business Network throughout to Counselors statewide.
- Information on upcoming Supported Employment workshops conducted

by the University of North Texas has been distributed to vendors throughout the state. In addition to site workshops, vendors also have the choice of accessing a continuing education course online.

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- LRS attends and participates in the monthly Work-Pays Consortium Meetings, the monthly Louisiana Workforce Investment Council Meetings, as well as well as participate in High Level Leadership Council Meetings.

## **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

- **AT Services Contract:** The multi-year contract with the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering, Science and Technology (CREST) at Louisiana Tech University, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) has completed the second quarter of the first year. This contract provides Engineering and/or Assistive Technology Assessments state-wide. Services include: ***computer assessment, activities-of-daily-living evaluations, home and job-modification evaluations, adaptive driving and transportation evaluations, vehicle modification reports, and seating and positioning assessments for wheelchairs and wheeled mobility systems.*** Services include state-of-the-art assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering support to our 8 Regional offices, between 1 July, 2010 and 31 June, 2013. Two new Assistive Technology Professionals have been employed; Brad Marsh and Latoya Ashley. They will serve Shreveport and Thibodeaux Regions, respectively.
- **Partnership with LATAN:** LRS is partnered with Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN) under the 2004 AT Act, funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide state-wide demonstration-learning, lending, and purchasing assistance of assistive technology.

LATAN, as a Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) has worked with LRS in planning for emergency response for persons with disabilities. LATAN, the Red Cross, Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) have conducted training to assist individuals with their personal planning for evacuations. The training is for volunteers, personal care attendants and other shelter personnel who may assist persons who require assistive technology in the Critical Transit-Needs Shelters (CTNS) and Red Cross Shelters (ARCS). LATAN acquired wheelchairs, shower-chairs, walkers, vision-aids and other devices to pre-position within the CTNS facilities prior to the declaration of an emergency. This equipment is on-loan to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS).

- Accessible/Affordable Housing: LRS participates with the Department of Health and Hospital (DHH) task force to increase consumer awareness and access to “affordable-accessible” housing. The AT Program Coordinator is a member of the Capitol Area Consumer Housing Advocacy Network (CACHAN). The purpose of CACHAN is to assist persons with disabilities to exercise their rights under the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Boards and Commissions: The AT Program Coordinator continues to provide review of ADA Accessibility Guidelines for new construction of business and organizations serving the public, in coordination with the State Fire Marshall’s office.

Following the merger of LRS under the Office of Workforce Development (OWD), after six years, John has resigned as a voting board member on the Department of Labor (DOL) Second Injury Fund Board. The Board is mandated by the State of Louisiana to control and reduce the costs of 2<sup>nd</sup> Injury medical insurance settlements. As AT Coordinator, John has represented LRS to provide technical assistance and guidance to a focus group, meeting with the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) to find ways to improve the employment of disabled individuals under the guidelines of the new Louisiana Law, 799.

## **PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND PROGRAM SERVICES**

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING**

- The Community and Family Support Program was transferred to the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Aging and Adult Services effective July 1, 2010.
- LRS program coordinator continues to provide technical assistance as needed. The Developmental Disabilities report is completed by the Office of Aging and Adult Services.

### **LOUISIANA REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Council held a meeting January 27-28, 2011 in Baton Rouge, LA. This State Fiscal Year (SFY) the council has also held meetings in Metairie and Shreveport.
- Meeting dates for the remainder of SFY 2011 include:
  - March 24-25, 2010 in Monroe
  - May 26-27, 2020 in Baton Rouge
  - SFY 2012 meeting dates will be decided at the March meeting.

- The Council has 25 members to date. No vacancies.

### **OPERATIONAL PLAN**

- SFY 2011 Second Quarter Performance Indicators were reported in February 2011.
- LRS Performance Indicators for SFY 2011 were integrated into the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) Executive Budget Supporting Document as a result of the transfer of LRS to LWC at the start of SFY 2011.

### **TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM**

- LRS is preparing to implement Partnership Plus (+) which involves state VR agencies and EN's working together to promote long-term SGA level earnings.
- TTW Program Coordinator continues to participate in /EN/SSA calls which present agenda's aimed at updates on procedures, forms and provides a valuable resource to agencies.

### **TRANSITION**

- The Transition Coordinator is a member of the Transition Learning Collaborative team. Regular conference calls are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Last conference call was held February 8, 2011. Transition Coordinator will not attend face-to-face meeting with TLC member in Oklahoma City, OK March 23<sup>rd</sup> -25<sup>th</sup>.
- Transition Coordinator facilitates monthly conference call on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month with Transition VR Counselors to discuss outreach efforts, best practice methods, and exchange information to maximize resources and discuss how to increase successful closure for transition students. Participation from all Regions makes this a very productive exchange of information.
- Program Coordinator continues to work with the Department of Education in developing Regional Core Teams in each of the regions.
- LRS and DOE are working on a Third Party Agreement for a Transition program to enhance Transition services across the state. Last Workgroup meeting was held March 21, 2011 at LRS.

### **Blind Services/Randolph Sheppard**

- The Randolph-Sheppard program is scheduled to open a new location at

the Marine Corps. Installation at Federal City in New Orleans. This is scheduled to be in full operation by June 1, 2011.