

**LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES**  
**LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES REPORT**  
**June, 2009**

**IN-SERVICE TRAINING/ COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT (CSPD)**

- LRS continues to work toward the goals of the CSPD Initiative. Though agency funding to assist counselors in completing their Masters in Rehabilitation counseling has been reduced, LRS is working with the University of North Texas and Southern University to secure Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Scholarships for counselors pursuing their degrees. It is anticipated that three more counselors will graduate at the end of the summer session. Four counselors are in the process of applying for admissions beginning in the fall.
- The Counselor Training Academy which was previously postponed has been rescheduled. Other placement and service delivery initiatives this spring caused the postponement of the Academy which is now scheduled for late August and Early September with approximately 20 new counselors anticipated to participate.
- In May, the training unit worked collaboratively with Southern University in presentations in Baton Rouge and Houma. These presentations were for the purpose of recruiting transition students with disabilities to consider employment goals in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math fields. The presentations also promoted Disability Awareness.
- Video equipment (to include a Canon Power Shot camera, studio lights, backdrops with rack and a Tri pod) was purchased by LRS to create a functional video recording studio in the basement. A total of 14 video training clips have been completed. DSS IT and LRS are working to determine where the videos will be posted for LRS staff statewide to view.
- A multi-media presentation, "Tech Points" (method to assess assistive technology needs throughout the entire rehab process) was developed that can be used for group training, on-line training or sent via the GroupWise e-mail delivery, or mailed-out via CD.
- Since March 31, 2009, a total of 31 CPTP classes for CPTP classes were scheduled for employees.
- On March 24, 2009 "New Hire Orientation" was conducted for new staff at LRS State Office.
- Participate as a member on the DSS Modernization committee and continue to review proposals and attend meetings for Staff augmentation for Modernization Project.
- Currently serving on the Call Center project. The RFP has been completed and are waiting on approval from the executive board for approval. Once approved the RFP will be posted and we will begin to receive contact proposals. As a member on the selection committee, I will read and grade those contracts.

- The LRS In-Service Training Grant Annual Report for the 2008-2009 FFY was completed and sent to RSA. This report is mandatory and approval is required for continued funding for 2009-2010 grant year.

### **PROGRAM SERVICES**

- The "Making a Difference" Campaign is an initiative launched by LRS Director, Roseland Starks, in March 2009 and will end June 30, 2009. The purpose was to contact over 4,000 consumers in eligibility status to write plans and provide services. All 4,000+ clients were contacted and over 2,000+ IPE's were written for services ranging from Supported Employment, post secondary training, job placement and job skills training, Assistive Technology and On the Job Training.

### ***BLIND SERVICES/RANDOLPH SHEPPARD***

- Our current contracts for IL older blind services expire on June 30, 2009. New contracts are being approved with our three IL for older blind providers. We have received a total of \$483,000 in additional stimulus funds to be used in the next two fiscal years for the provision of IL older blind services.
- We are still working to develop a new Randolph-Sheppard location at NASA's Michoud Assembly facility in New Orleans. This location could possibly be large enough to warrant more than one manager.
- On June 5, 2009, we held upward mobility training for all licensed managers in the Randolph-Sheppard program. Managers learned about how to properly care for and maintain the Auto-fry, tips and techniques for successful interviewing, and about the selection process for Randolph-Sheppard managers.

### ***TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM AND DEAF SERVICES***

- Deaf Services is current vacant.
- Revisions to Ticket to Work procedures for LRS to comply with the new regulations issued this year are in process.
- Ticket to Work Program Coordinator submitted The 2008 Annual Periodic Outcome Report to Social Security Administration.

### ***TRANSITION***

- The Program Coordinator continues to participate in monthly conference calls as a member of Transition Learning Collaborative. Monthly conference calls are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Educational information and webinars are

also available via internet for the exchange of information between the Region VI states.

- The Program Coordinator is a member of a stakeholder committee which developed the draft of a Transitions Training Manual to be used statewide to aid in preparing school teachers understand the process of assisting students receive Transitions services.
- Program Coordinator participated in the Lafayette Parish Transition Team meeting held Monday, April 20, 2008 in Lafayette.
- Program Coordinator continues to work with the Department of Education in developing Regional Core Teams in each of the regions.
- Program Coordinator continues to serve as member of the Special Education Advisory Council.

### ***WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT***

- Program Coordinator for Work Force Development continues to serve as member of Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Advisory Council. The last quarterly meeting was held on May 28-29, 2009 in Lake Charles, LA. Program Coordinator is part of the Services Workgroup which reviewed the statewide survey that was conducted to review what services were most wanted by MPP enrollees. Among other activities, this Workgroup is focusing on advocating for the expansion of existing services that will benefit MPP enrollees. Conference calls are held monthly with the Services Workgroup. The next scheduled MIG Advisory Council meeting will be held August 20-21, 2009 in Shreveport, LA
- Planning has begun for the October 2009 Job Fairs for each region. This is a collaborative effort involving various state agencies and community stakeholders.
- Program Coordinator attended WIPA meeting held in Iberville Bldg Tuesday, April 14, 2009 to answer general questions.

### ***LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF***

- **Consumer Satisfaction Survey:** The annual consumer satisfaction survey was mailed during the first week of May to 320 LCD consumers. Thus far, 33% of the surveys have been returned. The vast majority of LCD consumers rated the services received as excellent or good.
- **Interpreter Certification:** To date, there are 55 certified interpreters on the LCD registry, and three applications pending. All LCD-certified interpreters possess national certification and complete a background check through Louisiana State Police.
- **Site Reviews:** The LCD staff has completed five of eight site reviews with contractors to the LCD program. Two are scheduled for the second week of June.

These reviews are performed to assess that LCD consumers are served; and documentation is in accordance with the terms of the contracts.

- **Equipment/Services:** LCD staff recently coordinated a workshop with the LCD Regional Service Centers' staff. Representatives from HumanWare and Audio Visual Mart provided training on the functions and operations of the Deaf-Blind Communicator, a high-tech device which enables individuals with hearing and visual loss to communicate with others. This training prepared the RSC' staff to educate LCD consumers on the functions of the equipment when it is distributed through the state loan program.
- At the May LCD board meeting, a statewide resource list was provided which listed contact information for programs and organizations that serve persons with hearing loss and/or speech impairment.
- **Board Membership:** John K. Davis was recently appointed to the LCD Board by the Governor. Mr. Davis, from East Baton Rouge parish, is a member of both the Louisiana Association of the Deaf and the National Association of the Deaf; and is serving as a representative from the Deaf community.
- **Deaf-Blind Awareness Outreach:** LCD is collaborating with Louisiana Acadiana Deaf-Blind Citizens and Affiliated Blind of Louisiana in recognition of Louisiana Deaf-Blind Awareness Week. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, the LADBC is hosting a luncheon in Lafayette with presenters to include Keller J. Thompson great-niece of Helen Keller, and C.C. Davis, regional representative of Helen Keller National Center. For more information, contact [LSUCajunDan@lusfiber.net](mailto:LSUCajunDan@lusfiber.net)
- **Emergency Preparedness:** EP training in tactile ASL continues to be provided to deaf-blind persons; and ID badges are provided to them. This ID will be required for those persons who are driven by family to the State Critical-Transportation Needs shelters (as opposed to riding in the DOTD transports). All individuals with hearing loss and/or speech impairment are encouraged to prepare a personal plan for emergencies and visit [www.getagameplan.org](http://www.getagameplan.org)

## **COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS (CRPs)**

### ***MINORITY OUTREACH***

- Program Coordinator continues to maintain a relationship with the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation agency's in Louisiana to ensure that the consumers are provided services.

- Program Coordinator attended The United South Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) / U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Regional Tribal Consultation Session (regions 1, 2, 4 & 6) held in Marksville, Louisiana on May 12 – 13, 2009.
- LRS continues to monitor community rehabilitation programs (CRP's). This process is initiated at the regional and concluded at the state level through programmatic and fiscal reviews. CRP's are monitored annually using promulgated standards to evaluate the quality of services, accessibility and outcomes. The annual renewal process is completed via site visit or a review of files. The Program Coordinator provides technical assistance as areas of remediation are identified.
- The Drug Court and their Work Release programs continue to be monitored for their effectiveness.

### ***SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT***

- Since April 2009, the CRP Program Coordinator for SE has been working with the Social Security Administration hiring initiative that involves the hiring of 5,000 to 6,000 persons with disabilities for a variety of positions throughout the country. As of today, LRS has received and forwarded 28 applications to the Social Security Administration regarding these available positions. LRS employment development specialists throughout the State have selected well qualified candidates for these positions. Three (3) of our consumers in the Lafayette/Opelousas region have been interviewed for positions with the SSA Managers, and two have second interviews, one of which was hired. Our **Reemployment Development Specialists** have been doing a phenomenal job in the selection of applicants for these positions and should be recognized for such.
- Job Fair 2009 is in the planning stages and is moving along. And there have been three (3) committee meetings that involved a variety of participants. Some dates and Job Fair sites have already been selected. The next Job Fair 2009 Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2009, at 11am at the Baton Rouge Regional Office on Cedarcrest Ave.
- The CRP Program Coordinator for SE attended training in April for SE presented by the University of North Texas.

### ***TBI/SCI TRUST FUND***

- There are 9 Contracts with vendors who provide Case Management services to the TBI/Spinal Cord Injury consumers

- Have served 631 consumers since 7-1-08
- Waiting list of 297
- Program Manager continues with Site Reviews and monitoring of the Case Managers of which there are 11.
- On track to spend the entire budget allowed for client services (approximately \$3,000,000) Have already spent \$2,622,188) for this fiscal year, since 7-08.
- Unsure of funds for next year, but think we will get the same amount we got this year.
- Will try to open new cases with the start of the fiscal year.

We are following some bills in the legislature that may have an affect on the Trust Fund program.

### ***ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY***

John Schweitzer is the Program Coordinator.

#### **Contracts:**

- The professional staff of the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering, Science and Technology (CREST) has conducted 325 Rehabilitation Engineering and/or Assistive Technology Assessments as reported in the second quarterly report to the AT Program Coordinator. This represents 108% of the annual goals for this contract. Contract services included *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*. John is currently reviewing comments by Regional Managers on ways to expedite scheduling and reporting of AT assessments. The AT Coordinator has submitted a budget increase to the third year of a 3-year contract for AT service delivery with Louisiana Tech University.

#### ***Training/Professional Education:***

- Dr. Schweitzer was co-presenter at two workshops at the March 4-5th Spring Into AT Conference at La Tech University: Navigating the Medicare/Medicaid Maze and Assistive Technology Assessments: A Comprehensive Approach.
- John recently developed a 5 minute-multi-media presentation with Guy Augustine, Training Section. This compressed AVI-formatted MPEG can be used in group trainings, or for “coffee-break” trainings on-line, via the GroupWise™ e-mail delivery, or mailed-out via CD. Travel budgets

allowing, he will conduct state-wide trainings with follow-up question-and-answer and problem solving sessions.

- The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Association of North America (RESNA) annual conference will be in NOLA at the Sheraton from 23-27 June. Dr. Schweitzer is a member of the local host committee.

### ***AT Partnerships:***

- LRS continues to coordinate with Louisiana Assistive Technology Network (LATAN) on an expanded program, funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide state-wide demonstration-learning, lending, and purchasing assistance of assistive technology. LATAN has joined the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters and has participated with LRS in planning for emergency response for persons with disabilities. LATAN is conducting training to assist individuals with their personal planning for evacuations. LATAN now has a vendor number and is providing a device-rental service so consumers may have a more realistic trial use of an AT device before requesting that LRS provide them with said device.
- 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.
- LRS provides technical assistance to DHH in a “problem-solving” mode to better serve the needs of displaced, persons with disabilities who have accessibility problems in single-family dwellings. The AT Program Coordinator works with Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Disaster Housing Assistance Program, the Governors’ Offices of Disability Affairs and Elderly Affairs to assist persons to make their homes accessible under Uniforms Federal Accessibility Standards and ADA guidelines

### **Modernization of DSS Enterprise:**

- The AT Program coordinator serves on two “Business Modernization” committees; Electronic Case management, and Paperless processes to assist the DSS/IT Director in identifying actionable plans for re-vamping our IT-supported business applications. Moreover, he has been tasked with providing technical assistance to the ESF-6 Task Force of rewriting the Hurricane Emergency Response plan, state-wide. Currently, he has been tasked with assisting the Secretary of DSS with a response to the Federal Department of Justice (DOJ) survey of eleven (11) of our Critical Transportation Needs Shelters (CTNS).

- 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.
- In addition, the AT Program Coordinator continues to provide review and serve as a voting board member on the Department of Labor (DOL) Second Injury Fund Board, which meets monthly. This is a program mandated by the State of Louisiana to control and reduce the costs of 2<sup>nd</sup> Injury medical insurance settlements.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

- Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Planning and Response  
LRS continues to work with DSS Emergency Preparedness in developing the plan for this hurricane season.
- Louisiana residents can now pre-apply online or by phone for Disaster Food Stamps in order to prepare for hurricane season, save time, and avoid long waits in the event of a disaster.
- Disaster Food Stamps provide food assistance for eligible low- to moderate-income households that do not receive regular food stamps who need help buying groceries due to lost income or damages following a disaster. Exact requirements for the program are determined following the event and are based on location and income
- Five states have agreed to shelter up to 26,000 Louisiana residents who do not have the resources to evacuate on their own before a storm.

50,000 Louisiana residents do not have the means to get out of harm's way when a hurricane targets the state. This agreement will further Louisiana's emergency planning efforts and provide safety for our residents until conditions allow them to return."

States offering shelter space for planning purposes are:

- Texas - 10,000 spaces
- Georgia - 5,000 spaces (planning number dependent upon estimates for self-evacuees into their state)
- Tennessee - 5,000 spaces
- Arkansas - 4,000 spaces
- Kentucky - evaluating their ability to support up to 2,000 spaces

- Louisiana has CTNS spaces in Shreveport (two shelters), Monroe, Bastrop and Alexandria that can house 8,000 evacuees. Seven medical special needs shelters statewide can accommodate 2,650 patients and caregivers. In addition, the American Red Cross, who historically has managed the majority of shelters within Louisiana and is partnering with the State in shelter planning and implementation, is working to identify an additional 11,000 CTNS spaces across the state.

Parish-run CTNS are located in Shreveport (two shelters) and Bossier City and can provide 3,400 beds. Officials in Caddo and Bossier parishes recently finalized an agreement that will bring in volunteers and state employees from Oklahoma to run one of those facilities.

- To increase evacuees' sense of comfort at the shelters, DSS will apply a modified American Red Cross standard of 30 square feet per person for both pre- and post-storm sleeping arrangements. The American Red Cross standard is 20 square feet before a storm and 40 square feet after the storm.

DSS also is ensuring that shelters are equipped with one toilet and hand-washing station per 20 evacuees and one shower per 25 evacuees. All hygiene stations will be ordered 72 hours before the expected arrival of evacuees at the shelter so that they are delivered prior to evacuees arriving.

Each shelter will be pre-stocked with a three-day supply of Meals Ready to Eat, water and comfort kits, with extra inventory warehoused to replenish stock. Additionally, shelters will have television and radio capabilities so residents will be able to monitor local, national and weather stations.

Both DSS and GOHSEP believe that in the long-term, the state must be able to house all critical transportation needs of evacuees in-state. Louisiana will continue to invest resources in state sheltering capabilities, including hardening and renovating existing state buildings and constructing new multi-purpose facilities.

### ***Independent Living***

The annual Fiscal Site Review with New Horizons Independent Living Center is scheduled for June 15-19, 2009. The annual programmatic site review with New Horizons will be scheduled during July, 2009 or August 2009.

The annual Site Review with Resources for Independent Living was conducted on April 20-24, 2009. The overall compliance with policy and contract requirements was satisfactory.

## Supported Living Contract with Resources for Independent Living, Center (RIL)

- Currently provides on-going services to 22 consumers (total consumers served as of March 30, 2009 - 106)
- Mid-Year Budget Reduction contract amendment for the Supported Living Program was approved. Amended contract for 7-1-09 – 6-30-09 = \$302,491.
- Total spent through May 30, 2009 = \$256,386.94 with a balance of \$46,104.06.

## ***Louisiana Rehabilitation Council***

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Council held a meeting May 21-22, 2009 in Baton Rouge at the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Regional Office. Meeting dates were scheduled for SFY 2010 and include: July 30-31, 2009 in Lake Charles, September 24-25, 2009 in Baton Rouge, November 19-20, 2009 in Alexandria, January 28-29, 2009 in Baton Rouge, March 25-26, 2009 in Thibodaux, and May 27-28, 2009 in Baton Rouge.
- One new member was appointed to the Council in June 2009.

## ***Operational Plan***

- State Fiscal Year 09 Third Quarter Performance Indicators were reported in May 2009. 95% of the indicators reported in the quarter met or exceeded performance targets.

LRS Performance Indicators for State Fiscal Year 2010 have been redeveloped to best reflect strong outcome based performance measures in conjunction with the Department of Social Services and Division of Administration initiative