

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES
LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES REPORT
December, 2009

PROGRAM PLANNING/RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

DEAF SERVICES

- No new updates in this area.

STATE PLAN

- The 2010 State Plan updates were approved by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

IN SERVICE & CSPD INITIATIVES

- In November, an updated Training Report was received from Human Resources indicating the LRS staff who are in compliance with the CSPD initiative. From this report, recruiting visits were planned for regional offices to promote enrollment of staff in the highest priority group for retraining. These visits are scheduled for January and February 2010. Currently, there are ten staff enrolled in Master's Programs, one of these students is scheduled to graduate at the completion of the present term. Four other staff are in the process of applying to Southern University for acceptance in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program through use of RSA Scholarships. Program Coordinator is promoting the use of scholarships by staff to meet the goals of this initiative.

UPCOMING TRAINING AND CONFERENCES

- Exceptional Entrepreneurs of Louisiana (ExcEL) is a collaboration between LRS, University of New Orleans Training, Resource, and Assistive Technology Center (UNO-TRAC), and the University of New Orleans-College of Business Administration. ExcEL is a statewide self-employment training program that helps individuals with disabilities establish their own small business.

The training provided to LRS consumers covers all the principles of starting and maintaining your own business. The program services consist of an introductory workshop, a 2-week residential workshop for consumers successfully completing the introductory workshop, and follow-up with technical assistance with setting up their business. Each consumer is coached through the completion of a functional business plan. Both LRS and ExcEL monitor and assist each consumer from incubation to success.

All new LRS counselors will be attending the ExcEL training in February to learn about the program so that they will know what services are available to consumers they are working with.

COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS (CRP's/EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT)

MINORITY OUTREACH

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

CRPs

- LRS continues to monitor all (private & LRS operated) CRPs. This process is initiated at the regional level and concluded at the state level through programmatic and fiscal reviews. CRPs are monitored annually using promulgated standards to evaluate the quality of services, accessibility and outcomes. 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.

DRUG COURTS

- The Drug Court and their Work Release programs continue to be monitored for their effectiveness.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE

- LRS is a participating partner in the development of Neighborhood Place (NP). The concept of NP is to have several state agencies housed in one facility for better accessibility by consumers. Currently there are two locations in Sabine Parish (Zwolle & Many). The next NP is located in New Orleans (Mahalia Jackson). The anticipated opening date is February 2010.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

- A Supported Employment (SE) Focus Group has been convened to come up with ways to improve the milestone payment system that will allow LRS to get money moving faster through the payment system along with sustaining longer employment times for LRS consumers. The focus group

consists of counselors, district supervisors, two state office program coordinators, a regional manager, a bureau administrator, and possibly a consultant for the future. A few of the items that the SE Focus Group are considering, but are not limited to, include: timely reporting by vendors; more training for vendors; changing the way payments to vendors are authorized; and looking at a possible two (2) tier payment system. It is important to note that at this point, all discussions are just that (discussions), and that nothing has been finalized.

- LRS was the lead agency in Job Fair 2009, which was a tremendous success. Final Job Fair 2009 numbers were as follows: total number of participating Businesses—**198**; total number of job seekers—**3152**; total number of visitors—**1751**; total number of referrals to LRS—**186**; total number of business interviews—**545**; total number of hires—**47**. A final wrap up Job Fair Committee meeting was held on December 2, 2009. Members discussed various ways to improve any future Job Fairs. Overall, the comments about Job Fair 2009 were positive.

TBI/SCI TRUST FUND

- There are 9 Contracts with vendors who provide Case Management services to the TBI/Spinal Cord Injury consumers
- Served 646 consumers between 7-1-08 and 6-30-09
- Waiting list of 310
- Currently serving 584
- Program Manager continues with Site Reviews and monitoring of the Case Managers of which there are 11.
- 09/10 Budget for client services (excluding contract budgets) is \$2,540,724.
- As of 10-31-09, \$1,413,235 has been spent.
- Ten cases were released from the waiting list to be opened, explaining that they will receive services (by the purchasing of goods/services) as the budget allows.
- As of 10-31-09, the fund balance is \$3,247,251
- The average annual income from the dedicated funds is \$1.8 million

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Contracts

- The professional staff of the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering, Science and Technology (CREST) at LA Tech continues to exceed the 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.

The Assistive Technology (AT) Program Coordinator is now monitoring the third year of a 3-year contract for AT service delivery with Louisiana Tech University.

- The AT Program Coordinator is currently working with Counselors and Rehabilitation Engineers to develop assessment protocols for hi-cost/hi-tech prosthetics, such as high-performance, dynamic lower limbs and myo-electric hands. This protocol will be based on the vocational benefits of the performance features of suggested prosthetics, with an emphasis on cost-effectiveness without reduction in services.

Training /Professional Education

- The AT Program Coordinator will co-present with Mike Shipp of LA Tech at Spring Into AT training which is scheduled for March 3, 2010.

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
- The AT Program Coordinator received The Agency Championship Award for LRS at the LATAN annual award banquet in December.
- LRS and LATAN are coordinating efforts to make affordable loans available to LRS consumers for purposes of Home Modifications and other Assistive Technology as appropriate.
- LRS participates with the Department of Health and Hospital (DHH) task force to increase consumer awareness and access to “affordable-accessible” housing.

Modernization of DSS Enterprise

- The AT Program Coordinator will be serving on the Business Modernization Development Team for a period of up to 36 months. He will be permanently assigned to this team for the duration of the modernization project.

PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND PROGRAM SERVICES

INDEPENDENT LIVING

- The annual Fiscal Site Review with New Horizons Independent Living Center will be scheduled during the month of January 2010.
- Supported Living Contract is currently being managed by LRS Program Coordinator.
Currently provides on-going services to 20 consumers
- Discussions are still underway with DHH/OAAS for the transition of this program to DHH.

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION COUNCIL

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Council held a meeting November 19-20, 2009 in Alexandria. This year the council has also held meetings in Lake Charles, Lafayette, and Baton Rouge.
- The next scheduled meeting is January 28-29, 2010 in Baton Rouge at the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Regional Office.
- Meeting dates for SFY 2010 include:
The March 25-26, 2010 in Thibodaux. The remainder of the 2010 meeting dates will be decided at the March meeting.
- The Council has 19 members to date. Applications are pending with Boards and Commissions and there are 6 vacancies.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

- State Fiscal Year 2010 First Quarter Performance Indicators were reported in November 2009.
- LRS Performance Indicators for State Fiscal Year 2010 were redeveloped to best reflect strong outcome based performance measures in conjunction with the Department of Social Services and Division of Administration initiative.

BLIND SERVICES/RANDOLPH SHEPPARD

RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD

- LRS filed for federal arbitration against the National Aeronautical and Space Administration's Michoud Assembly Facility (MAF) in New Orleans. This is due to the fact that the MAF failed to recognize the Randolph-Sheppard priority for their New Orleans property. As per the recommendation of the U.S. Department of Education, LRS is attempting to negotiate with NASA, and the arbitration process has been temporarily paused for these negotiations.
- LRS is in the final stages of preparing a new Technical Assistance and Guidance Manual for our Randolph-Sheppard program. It is scheduled to be completed and in full use by June, 2010.
- Independent Living Older Blind contracts are being revised to include ARRA funding. This past state fiscal year, IL older blind services were provided to 4,671 individuals

TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM AND DEAF SERVICES

- Deaf Services Program Coordinator is currently vacant.
- Revisions to Ticket to Work procedures for LRS to comply with the new regulations issued this year are in process.
- Program Coordinator participated in webinars, July 10, 2009 facilitated by CESSI which discussed Ticket to Work process.

TRANSITION

- The Program Coordinator is a member of the Transition Learning Collaborative team. Regular conference calls are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Educational information and webinars are also available via internet for the exchange of information between the Region VI states.
- Program Coordinator continues to work with the Department of Education in developing Regional Core Teams in each of the regions.

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 December 10-11 in New Orleans, LA.

Program Coordinator was absent for this meeting but obtained meeting notes and continues involvement with workgroup.

- Each Region has October 2009 Job Fair scheduled. This is a collaborative effort involving various state agencies and community stakeholders.

LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF (LCD)

- **CapTel:** LCD is purchasing CapTel phones to be used with CapTel relay services. The first shipment of phones will be available for distribution after the first of 2010.
- **SSP services:** Provision of SSP services for consumers who are deaf-blind remains in demand. SSP services include provision of communication and sensory information to deaf-blind individuals to enable them to participate in activities in their communities. Services are currently being expanded to four additional parishes – Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, and Terrebonne.
- **Captioned television programs:** LCD staff is working with representatives from television stations around the state to address the quality of captioning services on their programs (both network and local).
- **Regional Service Centers:** LCD staff is working with the Regional Service Centers to ensure that consumers in the rural parishes are made aware of LCD hearing aid services, telecommunication equipment loan services, and interpreting services.
- **Promotion of ASL interpreting services:** LCD staff continues to promote ASL interpreting services to other state agencies to facilitate accessibility to public and private services required by individuals with hearing loss and/or speech impairment. LCD is consulting with state agencies; and encouraging those programs to ensure facilitation of services.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/DISASTER PLANNING AND RESPONSE

- Emergency Services were in place but were not utilized due to the absence of hurricanes this season.