

**Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)
Quarterly Report to the DD Council
March, 2015**

Update/progress on agency initiatives

Supported Employment:

- Program Coordinator is currently working on the RTAC Project through the Institute for Community Inclusion. This project is to improve employment outcomes for individuals receiving Supported Employment services. This includes strengthening our partnerships with OCDD and Mental Health, evaluating our milestone system, and evaluating how we certify and re-certify vendors. We are currently in the process of planning statewide Supported Employment training to improve our staff's knowledge in this area. Statewide vendor training is also forthcoming.

Employment Initiative:

- LRS has been selected to host 3 events per region under the DEI Grant. The allowable events are:

Employer Workshops/Symposiums/ and/or Summits- which will allow for training and information to be presented to employers about the business case of hiring adult job seekers with disabilities. This event should be at a minimum of 3 hours. Do not call the Employer Summit an Appreciation Luncheon.

Asset Development Summit- to increase outreach to people with disabilities and their families so that they are more aware of the existence of free tax preparation.

One-Stop Career Center Open House events- to introduce employers, service providers, and adult job seekers with disabilities to the services that are available within the centers.

Job and Service Fairs- fairs for employers and recruiters to meet with and provide information to prospective job seekers.

Region 1 hosted an Employer Symposium event on February 27, 2015. The speakers were Tommy Levatino with LWC (Manger of the WOTC) and Sherri Hanson, a local employer that talks about her experience regarding one of their staff members who had a disability, and the positive effect it had on the staff and customers alike.

Region 2 hosted an Asset Development Summit on January 29, 2015. They had approximately 90 people in attendance. Guest speakers included Jillian Sergio, Investment Manager with Capital Area United Way, Irby Hornsby, Executive Program Administrator with East Baton Rouge Parish, Vincenzo Pssquantonio, and Community Work Incentives Coordinator with LA Benefits Planning Service, and Ebony Holmes, Public information and Communications Representative with the LA Office of Student Financial Assistance.

Region 3 will be hosting An Employer Symposium on March 26, 2015. They will be having Keith Hill from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as their key note speaker.

Region 4 will be hosting An Employer Symposium on March 26, 2015. The guest speakers are as follows: Rob Roux, attorney with LWC, Missy Grimmett, Industry Coordinator with LWC, and Randy Broussard with LRS.

Region 5 hosted an Employer Symposium on February 25, 2015 and had 100 people in attendance. Rob Roux with LWC spoke about the advantages of hiring diversely, relevant tax incentives and EEO Charge Avoidance.

Region 6 will be hosting an Employer Workshop on March 25, 2015. They have two guest speakers; one is an LWC employee discussing WOTC and the other a local businessman who has used WOTC and has a great experience in hiring LRS consumers.

Region 7 will be hosting an Employer Summit on March 18, 2015. Their key note speakers will be Miyako Lee from Louisiana Association for the Blind, Stephanie Jackson from Program for Successful Employment and Shane Sumlin from Wells Fargo.

Region 8 will be hosting an Employer Symposium on March 2, 2015. Their keynote speaker is Dr. Damion Cummins, an assistant professor in the Clinical Mental Health Program at the University of Louisiana at Monroe. His journey and aspirations for the mental health field began after a traumatic football accident in high school which left him paralyzed and wheelchair dependent.

LRS DEI committees are already planning the next set of events which will occur statewide in May 2015.

LRS Second Injury Program Partnership Results:

- In the first three years of the SIF Partnership, from July 1, 2011 through August 1, 2014 1,955 LRS customers were successfully employed. In the first nine months of the current year (July 1, 2014-March 1, 2015) five-hundred-seventy-three (573) cases have been closed, “successfully-rehabilitated” and employed, with two-hundred-twenty-two (221) open-cases with expectations of success. \$2,475,507.13(the complete budgeted amount) has been spent of the SIF-Vocational Rehabilitation budget.

Status of agency’s activities/participation on DDC plan initiatives and impact (if applicable)

Transition:

- Transition Coordinator and regional staff members attended the Jumpstart Conference hosted by DOE at the Rivercenter in Baton Rouge January 21, 2015
- Transition Coordinator and BR Regional District Supervisor attended the Educate, Supports, and Empower Workshop held in Thibodaux January 23, 2015 which focused on providing transition students and families with information on resources available to them in their region.
- Transition Coordinator participated in the CSAVR Transition Committee Call February 6, 2015 which focused on “What Activities Fall Under PETS?”
- Transition Coordinator and Account Manager participated in Transition Learning Collaborative call February 24, 2015 with focus on “Tracking PETS Services Provided by VR Counselors”
- Transition Coordinator continues to meet with school district to discuss Third Party Agreements for Transition Specialist positions.

Status of Council recommendations to agency (if applicable)