

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)
Quarterly Report to the DD Council
September, 2014

Update/progress on agency initiatives

Training or Conferences:

- December 4, 2014 marked the completion of the 1st class of the Leadership Academy with included 18 graduates.

Supported Employment:

- Program Coordinate is working on obtaining the necessary information to provide counselors and consumers with information for better informed choice regarding vendor selection. Several changes to procedures have been suggested and are awaiting consideration. The aim is to improve standards and provide better quality service to consumers.

Employment Initiative:

- The Employment Specialist continues to assist with connecting with business statewide and working with REDS in the mission focused on providing higher quality business services and outreach.
- Participated in numerous calls with the Employment Coalition discussing promoting employment for people with disabilities. This coalition wanted to increase awareness of employment opportunities for people with disabilities among the general public and to develop and promote commitments of businesses to hire people with disabilities. LRS State Office has communicated with numerous businesses that have a multi-footprint in the state of Louisiana in an effort to inform them of our impending job fairs across the state. Meeting held with Regional Managers to discuss the impact of the these job fairs statewide.

Blind Services:

- LRS has opened a new Randolph-Sheppard facility at Baton Rouge Community College. This is a cafeteria facility, and will feed the students at BRCC. This is a true “win” for the program, as we do not have priority on college campuses around the state. This is the 2nd campus we have obtained in as many years, as we developed a location at Delgado in New Orleans last year.

LRS Second Injury Program Partnership Results:

- The 2013 Louisiana Legislative Session re-authorized the Second Injury Fund (SIF) and rescinded “sunset laws” that would have phased out the SIF program by 2017. In August, 2014, the SIF Board again approved the allocation of 1% of the 2nd Injury funds to be spent by LRS counselors on Vocational Rehabilitation consumers. With matching funds from RSA, this results in \$2.2 million increased funding for VR services during the current year. 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 six months of the current year (July 1, 2014-December 1, 2014) three-hundred-thirty-seven (337) cases have been closed, “successfully-rehabilitated” and employed, with two-hundred-twenty-two (222) open-cases with expectations of success. \$757,832.63 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 attended the Transition Workshop organized by Region 3 at Nicholls University. This workshop provided day long job readiness activities for students with disabilities receiving services from LRS.
- Transition Coordinator attended a training meeting facilitated for the Regional Business Services Team which provides insight for greater collaboration with LRS for Transition students and the Business Career Solution Centers.

Status of Council recommendations to agency (if applicable)