



# DVR

Working to Meet Employment Challenges  
in a Challenging Economy



# Timely Words of Wisdom

## **Albert Einstein**

*In the middle of every difficulty  
lies opportunity*

## **Winston Churchill**

*The pessimist sees difficulty in every  
opportunity*

*The optimist sees opportunity in  
every difficulty*

# Opportunity in a Difficult economy

## Public confidence and investment of Federal Recovery Funds in vocational rehabilitation services

- \$10.1 million in new federal funds will be invested in Wisconsin VR services
  - 50% received April 1, 2009
  - 50% to be received September 30, 2009

### ***“Stimulate the economy in the short term to help drive the nation’s economic recovery”***

- Spend funds to save and create jobs
- Use funds to strengthen VR programs, drive reforms and improve results for people with disabilities
- Accurately measure and track results; publicly report
- Invest one-time ARRA funds to minimize the funding cliff

- Note: funds must be used within the parameters of the current Title I-B regulations and obligated by 9/30/2011

# Opportunity in a Difficult economy

- The Governor's budget proposal for DVR includes increases in both years of the biennium starting 7/1/09.

\$319,900 in new state funds in SFY '10  
= \$1.5 million combined with federal funds

\$583,300 in new state funds in SFY '11  
= \$2.74 million combined with federal funds



# Opportunity in a Difficult Economy

The federal and state investment in DVR services means that between April 1, 2009 and June 30, 2011

- DVR will invite a very significant number, 2,500+ additional eligible applicants from our wait list
- DVR will purchase over \$100,000,000 in services and products for DVR consumers in support of their employment goals
  - A portion of the ARRA funds will be targeted to an affirmative hiring initiative to increase employment of job-ready DVR consumers
- DVR will fill key staff vacancies to serve and support the increased number of consumers



# DVR Wait list Opportunities through June 30, 2011

- DVR will continue to immediately serve eligible applicants with the ***most significant disabilities (category 1)***
- In anticipation of the federal recovery funds, we began in February doubling our monthly invitations for wait listed applicants with ***significant disabilities (category 2)*** from 500 to 1,000 invitees each month
- By July 1, 2009 we will have invited 5,100 waitlisted applicants to develop an employment service plan
- By July 1, 2010, we will be serving an additional +2,000 individuals every day



# Opportunities for increased collaboration and partnership

- Expanded DPI/DHS/DVR MOU
- New Minnesota and Wisconsin VR Partnership
- WIA Recovery Fund Training and Employment Opportunities



# Opportunities for Innovative Projects and Partnerships

- Milwaukee Youth in Transition
  - MPS/DPI/MCFI/SHRM/DVR . . .
  - Youth Jobs – from summer to year around
- Affirmative hiring initiative to increase employment opportunities & outcomes for job-ready DVR consumers (5,100+)
- Increasing employment opportunities across state borders – the MN and WI partnership



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

Received by e-mail

- An item to consider in the DVR State Plan is the method of payment to vendors for job placement. Presently DVR is using the PBA (Performance Based Agreement) for job placement payment. As a placement vendor there are obvious financial benefits in quick placement, however in areas with limited job opportunities and difficult placement assignments there may be a disadvantage for the client. After numerous placement efforts & clients quitting jobs before the 90 day period, the placement vendor may not be able to give placement the best full effort. It may be beneficial to consider an hourly rate for placement or some combination of PBA and Hourly..



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

April 1, 2009 – Kohler, WI Public Hearing:

- Tom Lutzow, a Community Rehabilitation Program representative asked DVR to reconsider employment with a community rehabilitation program work center, when the job is in the community, as competitive employment. He noted the new 5% tax credit opportunity for organizations that contract work to a CRP employing persons with disabilities to do the work. He asked why contracted work that was performed by the person with a disability, in a community setting, at a regular wage could not be claimed as a DVR employment outcome.



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

## Kohler – Continued:

- Mike Bachhuber representing the Independent Living Council of Wisconsin shared positive feedback on the Council's ability to coordinate efforts with DVR and with WRC. He expressed his opinion that there are many opportunities to increase the level of cooperation and collaboration. He suggested that DVR's statewide disability needs assessment results could help inform the ILC needs assessment efforts and IL state plan.



## FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

### Kohler – Continued:

- Rick Hall, spoke on behalf of the Wisconsin Chapter of APSE, encouraging DVR to increase training for consumers, vendors, and staff on supported and customized employment. He emphasized that with the long term employment supports focus of Family Care, all stakeholder partners need to be trained.



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

Kohler – Continued:


- Tom Cook on behalf of Rehabilitation For Wisconsin (RFW), spoke about Family Care and the anticipation created by the promise of choice, community employment and no wait for service that is created in the training that is being offered around the state. He has concerns with the financing of Family Care and the financial realities of the Family Care Managed Care Organization infrastructure. He noted that while consumer demand for employment supports is being driven up, the available financing to support the demand for short and long-term employment supports may not be sufficient. He reinforced that to achieve employment outcomes we need to work together with congressional members and focus on opportunities for out-of-the-box service delivery designs that result in employment



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

## Kohler – Continued:

- In his role as chair of the Wisconsin Mental Health Council, Mike Bachhuber recommended a toolkit on the national Center for Mental Health Services website for evidence-based practices in supported employment as a treatment option.



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

Kohler – Continued:


- Glenn Olson, on behalf of the DWD Division of Employment and Training Disability Navigator Program asked DVR to take emergency preparedness ever more seriously. He cited the lessons from hurricane Katrina and that emergency preparedness has to take into account that DVR staff may be affected by disasters and unavailable to provide direct service. He would like to see more details for VR service delivery emergency response measures.



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

## Kohler – Continued:

- Attorney Mark Wurtz from the Sheboygan area raised concerns that the DVR waiting list, the downsizing of DVR office locations, and delays in the SSA eligibility process make it very difficult for the individuals he serves who are seeking SSI/DI benefits. He stated that these individuals need someone to talk to, somewhere to stop in, with or without an appointment, to discuss their disabilities and their frustration. He stated, "We need boots on the ground."



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

## Kohler – Continued:

- Jackie Wenkman representing the Wisconsin Pathways to Independence Office spoke in support of Customized Employment as an effective service. She also raised concern that supported employment is often viewed as an expensive service which isn't always the case.



# FFY 2010 DVR State Plan comment; highlights from the April 1, 2009 public hearings

April 1, 2009 - Madison, WI:

- Gary Goyke, representing the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI) commented on the needs for state services that lead to employment for consumers with a vision disability. He noted the WCBVI's serious concern with the DVR state plan in terms of a slow movement away from rehabilitation services to job placement programs. He referenced and presented a letter from Vision Services Wisconsin (VSW), a consortium of blindness services organizations, stating a concern with the DVR budget for the management services for the Business Enterprise Program and the abrupt changes to DVR referrals to the program at NTC. VSW would also like to look at the option of moving staff and programs of Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired to DVR.

A person in a dark suit is walking through a futuristic, brightly lit corridor. The corridor has a blue and white color scheme, with a large, glowing blue light source on the left side. The person is walking away from the camera, towards the light. The overall atmosphere is clean, modern, and high-tech.

Questions?