



## **Rising to the Challenge**

**Annual Report  
Federal Fiscal Year 2012  
October 1, 2011-September 30, 2012**

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The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council would like to dedicate this report to Bruce Borden, who passed away in January, 2012.

A former council member, Bruce worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

In addition to founding several non-profit organizations that assist people with disabilities to become more independent, Bruce worked with the previous DVR Administrator, Charlene Dwyer, and developed a proposal he called "Making Work Pay". The proposal would allow people with significant disabilities to earn what they are capable of earning without losing the safety net of disability services needed to live and work in the community. To retain the safety net, Bruce proposed a cost-share model. As an individual's earnings increased, their cost-share would increase, but at no point would services, such as personal care, be cut off due to a raise or a promotion.

Even after leaving the WRC membership, Bruce worked closely with the WRC to raise awareness about work disincentives and to influence policy makers to make changes to systems that create them. He worked with the Wisconsin Congressional delegation to develop legislative language that would authorize a demonstration project. The demonstration project, once funded, would test his hypothesis that allowing individuals to earn (and pay taxes) to their full potential, would offset continued access to disability services.

Bruce encouraged our council to look beyond the internal performance of the state VR program. As a business person, Bruce looked at internal and external factors. He found that job prospects for someone like himself were limited by work disincentives in several federal programs. If we wanted our council to have a real impact on DVR's performance, we needed to focus on the external factors, as well.

Bruce's goal to remove work disincentives for individuals with long term care needs is alive with our council and many other state rehabilitation councils across the nation. We are all better off for having known Bruce Borden.

## **Message from the Chair**

I am pleased to share our council's annual report on the performance of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and why we believe Wisconsin DVR has been rising to the challenge.

Here are a few examples from the data in our report:

What is the average hourly wage of an individual who "graduates" from DVR services and joins Wisconsin's workforce? \$12.27

There are 3,250 individuals with disabilities who worked with DVR and are now working. What is the return on investment for Wisconsin? 210% (No, it is not a typo.)

Are you curious to see how many people in your county were successful closures? Let me translate successfully closed. It means the individual with a disability and the VR Counselor agreed to a plan of action that included how the disability would be addressed and how the individual would become qualified for their job goal. It means progress measures were accomplished and it means the job was obtained and retained for a minimum of 90 days. Those job outcomes and the return on investment numbers, by county, are on pages 12-15.

What about the people who don't have jobs? Our council has focused on that and will continue to focus on what changes could be made to increase the number of employment outcomes. Our recommendations from the federal Fiscal Year 2013 DVR State Plan reflected that focus.

[http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/state\\_plans/fy13/4\\_2\\_c.pdf](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/state_plans/fy13/4_2_c.pdf)

Our council will always expect more of Wisconsin DVR. More outcomes, more effective services, and more outreach to Wisconsin businesses. If DVR can rise to the challenge when the economy was struggling, we expect even more in the coming year.

Linda Vegoe, Chair  
Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council

## Letter from the DVR Administrator

In partnership with the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council, DVR has pursued the many opportunities created by a challenging and changing job market. Innovation has been a key in DVR “rising to the challenge”.

- DVR partnered with the Walgreens Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) to provide training for individuals with disabilities in a retail setting. This national program began its pilot in the Milwaukee metro area Walgreens retail locations. The REDI program will be rolled out statewide throughout 2013.
- Wisconsin continued its successful participation in Project Search, a national program that provides real-life work experience to help youth with significant disabilities make successful transitions from school to adult life.
- DVR partnered with the Wisconsin Board for Persons with Developmental Disability, (BPDD) and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to award Let's Get to Work grants to nine schools throughout the state. The overall goal of this project is to increase the number of transition-age youth who are participating in paid, integrated, community employment prior to graduation.
- DVR and the Department of Health Services have worked collaboratively to establish an innovative model that provides a rapid job search and includes ongoing and individualized support after a placement is made for job seekers with severe and persistent mental illness.
- DVR implemented an online application process for job seekers with disabilities.
- DVR established a cold case unit that is dedicated to making contact with DVR consumers who, for a variety of reasons, have not been engaged with DVR

We are especially grateful for the active role of the WRC in promoting and supporting these innovations and the success of our program and of job-seekers with disabilities, and for the Council's thoughtful analysis and unwavering commitment to high quality employment services for Wisconsin's citizens with disabilities.

Michael A. Greco, Administrator  
Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

## **Mission**

The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council (working on behalf of Wisconsin residents with disabilities) will review, analyze, and advise DVR regarding the performance of its responsibilities in providing quality services to people with disabilities.

## **Vision**

The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council will endeavor to:

- **Build partnerships** among people with disabilities, providers of service, advocacy organizations, and those other groups that can and should participate in the accomplishment of the mission and vision of the organization.
- **Forge a spirit of trust and cooperation** with the administration and staff of DVR and advocacy organizations for people with disabilities so that the use of scarce resources for accomplishing the mission and vision are optimized and conditions are created for acquiring additional resources.
- **Reach out to people with disabilities** throughout the state so as to create a true spirit of inclusion for every citizen including an opportunity to contribute to the work of the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council.
- **Hear and respond** to the concerns and issues raised by people with disabilities, their advocates, and other concerned individuals so that the work of the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council is as effective as possible and we are able to truly be a catalyst for positive change.

## **WRC Members**

Linda Vegoe, Chair  
Client Assistance Program  
Madison

Jim Dobrinska, Vice Chair  
Business, Industry and Labor  
Milwaukee

Rob Buettner, Secretary/Treasurer  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Milwaukee

Ben Anderson  
Business, Industry and Labor  
Amery

Cayte Anderson  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Madison

Wendi Dawson  
State Education Agency  
Madison

Stephanie Drum  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Madison

Julie Ferchoff  
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor  
Janesville

Steven Gilles  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Waunakee

Michael A. Greco  
Director of Designated State Unit  
Madison

Jodi Hanna  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Madison

Alvin Hill  
Community Rehabilitation Services Provider  
Milwaukee

Ron Jansen  
State Independent Living Council  
North Hudson

Monica Kammal  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Madison

Tina Koehn  
Workforce Investment Board  
Milwaukee

Patricia Lerch  
Native American Vocational Rehabilitation  
Lac du Flambeau

John Lui  
Community Rehabilitation Program  
Elk Mound

Roxann Perez  
Business, Industry and Labor  
Brookfield

Don Pirozzoli  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Madison

Kristin Stern  
Representative of persons with disabilities  
Milwaukee

Matthew Zellmer  
Parent Training and Information Center  
Milwaukee

The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council performs several functions to execute their duties, as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act. Each section of this report will highlight the activities of the WRC, and show how those activities fulfill the WRC's requirements in the Act.

1. Review, analyze, and advise DVR regarding the performance of its responsibilities (particularly regarding eligibility), the extent and effectiveness of services, and the functions performed by State agencies that affect or potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes under this title.
2. Advise and assist DVR in the preparation of the state plan and its amendments, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations.
3. Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of VR and consumer satisfaction.
4. Coordinate the work of the Council with the activities of other disability-related councils.
5. Establish a working relationship between DVR and the State Independent Living Council and the centers for independent living in the state.



## Employment Outcomes

	FFY 10	FFY 11	FFY 12
Successful Outcomes	2,784	2,972	3,250
Return on Investment	189%	197%	210%

Council members expected that the economic recession would have a negative impact on employment outcomes. DVR management reported progress at our quarterly meetings and we were surprised to see an actual rise in employment outcomes.

As the chart above indicates, outcomes have been on the rise for the past three years.

While we do not have empirical evidence, we believe the steady increase in employment outcomes was a result of the expanded use of On-the-Job Training (OJT), DVR's direct outreach to businesses, and the efforts of the DVR staff to keep individual's motivated and working towards their goals despite the negative economic news.

## Employment Outcomes Details

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent of Placements</b>	<b>Hourly Wage</b>
Employment without Supports in Integrated Setting	2,785	85.7%	\$12.11
Employment with Supports in Integrated Setting	403	12.4%	\$9.17
Homemaker	2	0.1%	\$0.00
Self-employment (except BEP)	59	1.8%	\$31.74
State agency business enterprise (BEP)	1	0.0%	\$21.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$12.27</b>

The employment status categories use the terms used in the federal reporting on outcomes.

- Employment without supports refers to the typical hire, where a qualified candidate is hired by a business.
- Employment with supports refers to individuals who are hired by businesses and they receive some supports, such as job coaching, that are funded by a source other than the business.
- Integrated setting is the term that refers to competitive jobs in the community. Vocational rehabilitation services must be directed to obtaining competitive jobs in the community. “Sheltered” employment in a community based work center is funded through sources other than DVR.
- Homemaker refers to small number of individuals who require rehabilitation to be able to perform household tasks so another member of the family can work. DVR cannot duplicate services that could be covered by health benefits or human service agencies, so it usually involves a very unique need.
- Self-employment outcomes involve starting one’s own business or receiving help to accommodate the disability so a business owner can continue to operate their business. This category includes farmers who have become disabled and want to continue farming

through assistive technology or restructuring how the work is done.

- State agency business enterprise is a program that assists individuals who are blind or visually impaired to operate food service or vending operations in federal or state owned buildings.

While we celebrate the successes of those DVR customers who have reached their employment goals, the WRC is also very mindful of the many that are the DVR waiting list (Order of Selection – OOS) for services.

At the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2012, 4,565 people with disabilities were on the DVR waiting list for services. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (OOS Category 1), receive services when they are found eligible for DVR. Those in OOS Category 2, people with significant disabilities will wait for DVR services for 5-6 months. Category 3 individuals (all other eligible applicants) face an indefinite wait time.

Every month, DVR activates 800-1000 individuals from the waiting list to participate in DVR services. Activations are based on an individual's application date.

One of the greatest challenges for our council is to recognize that DVR must manage a delicate balance between the length of time on a waiting list and the amount of time an individual needs to work with their VR Counselor. There are a number of individuals who come to DVR with a job goal in mind and are ready to work on the disability concerns. A much larger number of individuals are uncertain about their disability and uncertain about employment options.

Our council is not in a position to second guess management as they balance the waiting time and the direct service time for the tens of thousands of people with disabilities working with DVR. Our council's request has been simple. We don't want people to wait any longer than necessary, but we want DVR services to be worth waiting for.

Wisconsin receives an impressive return on taxpayer investment when a person with a disability joins our state's workforce. In FFY 2012, DVR invested \$26.8 million in the 3,250 DVR consumers who were successful in reaching their employment goal. The estimated annual earnings for that group were more than \$56.4 million. This table shows, county by county, the investment made in DVR services alongside the estimated annual earnings of the people with disabilities who were successful in reaching their employment goal.

<b>County</b>	<b>Successful Closures</b>	<b>Total Cost Services</b>	<b>Annual Wage</b>
Adams	2	\$15,874	\$29,692
Ashland	23	\$180,534	\$358,696
Barron	41	\$406,759	\$672,220
Bayfield	4	\$32,490	\$77,896
Brown	133	\$717,518	\$2,326,997
Buffalo	2	\$29,512	\$54,819
Burnett	6	\$69,551	\$121,160
Calumet	21	\$171,905	\$500,102
Chippewa	32	\$298,827	\$753,067
Clark	12	\$499,677	\$499,252
Columbia	46	\$600,899	\$709,005
Crawford	14	\$396,567	\$317,044
Dane	342	\$3,060,312	\$5,729,091
Dodge	35	\$330,746	\$626,535
Door	10	\$43,881	\$195,154
Douglas	29	\$175,714	\$459,368
Dunn	24	\$250,289	\$371,072
Eau Claire	77	\$508,407	\$957,954
Florence	1	\$4,024	\$11,544
Fond Du Lac	91	\$710,373	\$1,386,534
Forest	3	\$61,445	\$69,160
Grant	21	\$170,509	\$684,784
Green	18	\$81,601	\$310,760
Green Lake	6	\$39,147	\$94,076
Iowa	11	\$62,100	\$166,592
Iron	3	\$12,216	\$89,492
Jackson	14	\$127,200	\$203,400
Jefferson	39	\$349,791	\$817,554

Juneau	17	\$157,182	\$317,876
Kenosha	86	\$593,179	\$1,358,420
Kewaunee	10	\$44,135	\$128,154
La Crosse	71	\$709,577	\$872,076
Lafayette	12	\$92,367	\$217,152
Langlade	3	\$17,019	\$29,380
Lincoln	10	\$100,000	\$72,430
Manitowoc	54	\$437,627	\$928,460
Marathon	73	\$1,093,081	\$1,189,200
Marinette	25	\$167,580	\$363,588
Marquette	7	\$28,233	\$72,800
Menominee	4	\$23,744	\$101,277
Milwaukee	492	\$3,089,189	\$8,428,664
Monroe	18	\$422,286	\$942,864
Oconto	13	\$64,125	\$218,658
Oneida	36	\$230,690	\$641,155
Outagamie	93	\$651,631	\$1,459,694
Ozaukee	50	\$787,489	\$1,130,932
Pepin	6	\$76,579	\$64,464
Pierce	8	\$64,867	\$152,190
Polk	29	\$321,105	\$490,067
Portage	28	\$239,189	\$300,237
Price	14	\$61,003	\$202,813
Racine	120	\$1,249,887	\$2,150,464
Richland	21	\$96,223	\$225,143
Rock	111	\$716,214	\$1,575,701
Rusk	10	\$89,946	\$398,377
St Croix	23	\$241,066	\$432,923
Sauk	24	\$214,470	\$621,663
Sawyer	10	\$118,607	\$254,514
Shawano	14	\$239,964	\$206,562
Sheboygan	77	\$595,969	\$1,017,142
Taylor	10	\$78,507	\$320,175
Trempealeau	8	\$95,670	\$125,752
Vernon	24	\$479,009	\$496,184
Vilas	1	\$2,380	\$3,770
Walworth	74	\$656,191	\$1,272,920
Washburn	7	\$22,623	\$54,246
Washington	97	\$593,855	\$1,730,467
Waukesha	206	\$1,345,854	\$4,036,666
Waupaca	9	\$45,841	\$134,992

Waushara	13	\$84,610	\$205,156
Winnebago	117	\$615,809	\$2,118,913
Wood	55	\$341,022	\$736,203
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>\$26,803,459</b>	<b>\$56,393,506</b>

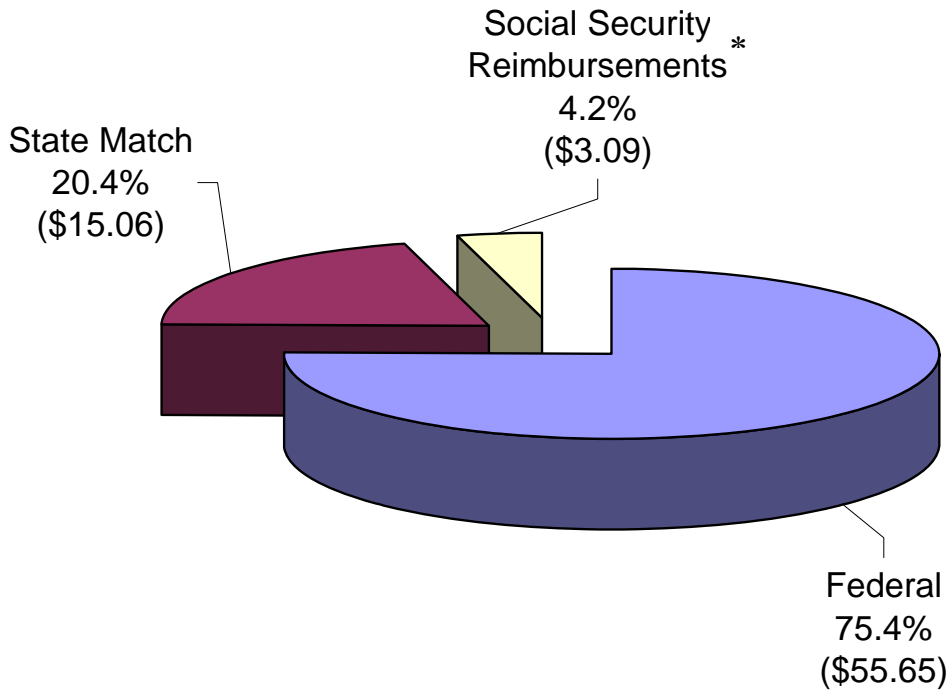
The focus of the vocational rehabilitation program is assisting job-seekers with disabilities to find employment that is in an integrated, community setting, earning a wage that is commiserate with those earned by their non-disabled peers.

The table below demonstrates the wide variety of jobs obtained by DVR customers.

<b>Types of Jobs Obtained by DVR Consumers</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Hourly Wage</b>
Office and Administrative Support	517	\$10.61
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	407	\$9.37
Food Preparation and Serving Related	401	\$8.34
Production	322	\$11.71
Transportation and Material Moving	256	\$11.32
Sales and Related	249	\$9.72
Personal Care and Service	215	\$9.48
Healthcare Support	129	\$12.05
Management	127	\$25.95
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	105	\$12.71
Education, Training and Library	86	\$14.58
Community and Social Service	73	\$13.91
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	56	\$11.68
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	51	\$19.24
Construction and Extraction	46	\$16.04
Business and Financial Operations	42	\$19.15
Computer and Mathematical	42	\$16.98
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	42	\$15.87
Architecture and Engineering	37	\$17.17
Protective Service	26	\$10.66
Life, Physical and Social Science	8	\$17.72
Legal	7	\$14.78
Military	3	\$7.88
Homemaker & Other	3	\$9.96
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>\$12.27</b>



## Vocational Rehabilitation Funding Sources *(in millions)*



\* In Federal Fiscal year 2012, DVR received approximately \$3.2 million in reimbursements from the Social Security Administration. Reimbursed funds are folded back into the program to offer additional job seeker and business services.

## Case Service Expenditures

Service	Amount	Percent of Expenditures
Job Development	\$7,357,693	15.31 %
College/University Training	\$5,761,507	11.99 %
Temporary Work	\$5,512,227	11.47 %
Rehabilitation	\$5,387,897	11.21 %
Assessment	\$4,683,257	9.74 %
Supported Employment	\$3,516,781	7.32 %
Transportation	\$3,451,513	7.18 %
Training	\$2,832,935	5.89 %
On-The-Job Supports	\$2,623,387	5.46 %
Restoration	\$1,576,927	3.28 %
Work-Related Materials/Tool	\$1,455,753	3.03 %
Occupational/Vocational Training	\$1,279,520	2.66 %
Other Services	\$688,634	1.43 %
Small Business Services	\$616,584	1.28 %
State Internship Program	\$361,316	0.75 %
Interpreter/Note Taker for the Deaf	\$317,026	0.66 %
Maintenance	\$200,185	0.42 %
Low Vision Aid/Adjustment Services	\$185,153	0.39 %
Services/Family Members	\$167,875	0.35 %
Personal Assistance	\$37,971	0.08 %
Vocational Counseling	\$19,046	0.04 %
Reader Services	\$11,703	0.02 %
Post-Employment Services	\$11,512	0.02 %
Job Referral	\$3,400	0.01 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$48,059,801.90</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Disability Types of Consumers

<b>Disability Type (reported as primary disability)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
AODA	717	1.6%
Blind/Visual	969	2.2%
Brain Injuries	806	1.8%
Cognitive	2,984	6.8%
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	1,602	3.7%
Learning Disabilities	3,894	8.9%
Mental Illness	8,692	19.8%
Orthopedic	7,258	16.6%
Other Physical	866	2.0%
Autism	1,444	3.3%
ADHD	1,634	3.7%
Congenital Condition or Birth Injury	1,623	3.7%
Other	7,917	18.1%
Eligibility Undetermined*	3,442	7.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,848</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* cases closed prior to eligibility determination