



2011 Annual Report State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND (DSB)

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State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) was established as mandated by the Rehabilitation Act as amended in 1998 to serve as a separate Council to DSB which administers the part of the state plan under which vocational rehabilitation services are provided for individuals who are blind.

The major purpose of the Council is to develop, analyze and make recommendations to state goals, the state plan, state policies, and state activities to insure that persons who are blind in the state of Washington receive the most effective and efficient services possible.

In addition, it is the purpose of this Council to:

- Provide direct public and consumer guidance to the Director of Services for the Blind;
- Where appropriate, advise or report directly to the Governor and make recommendations to the State Legislature to promote efficient and effective services; and
- Enhance the services, opportunities, and rights of Washingtonians who are blind by working closely with other state councils, state agencies and state organizations whose programs may impact such services.

Council Membership

The SRC strongly supports demographic and ethnic diversity among its members.

Statutory / Current Members:

Linda McClain - Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)
Tracy Kahlo - Parent Training and Information Center
Bob Huven - Client Assistance Program (CAP)
Linda Wilder - Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
Nate Marshall - Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider
Vacant – Blind and Multiply Disabled
Mike Davis - Business, Industry, and Labor
Veronica Baca - Business, Industry, and Labor
Vacant - Business, Industry, and Labor
Vacant - Business, Industry, and Labor
Sue Ammeter - Disability Advocacy Group
Gaylen Floy - Current or Former Recipient of VR Services
Mike Cunningham - Current or Former Recipient of VR Services
Vacant - Section 121 Native American
Lori Pulliam - State Educational Agency
Patricia Spencer - State Workforce Investment Board

Departing Members:

Jennifer Wheeler - Blind and Multiply Disabled
Cindy Van Winkle - Current or Former Recipient of VR Services
Dawn Andrews – Business, Industry and Labor
Edna Harper – Section 121 Native American
Ronald Moss – Business, Industry and Labor

Biographies

Sue Ammeter – Representing Disability Advocacy Group

Port Hadlock, WA

Sue has been a disability/civil rights advocate for over forty years. Sue worked for the City of Seattle, Washington State and King County in the areas of civil rights, disability accommodations and employee training. She has served on the Board of Directors of the American Council of the Blind (ACB) and as President of the Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) for several terms. She has served as Chair of the Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues and Employment and as Chair of the Patron Advisory Council for the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL). Currently, she is First Vice President of the Washington Council of the Blind; she chairs the Advocacy Committee and the Health Issues Task Force for the American Council of the Blind; she chairs the Advocacy and Legislative Committees for the Washington Council of the Blind; she serves on the State Rehab Council for the Department of Services for the Blind; and she is on the board of the Louis Braille School and the Washington Assistive Technology Program (WATA).

Following her retirement in 2005, Sue and her husband John moved to their retirement “dream home” in Port Hadlock which is about one hundred miles from Seattle on the Olympic Peninsula.

Veronica Baca – Representing Business, Industry and Labor

Woodinville, WA

Veronica worked for over two decades at the City of Seattle, Seattle Public Utilities, and has experience as a private business owner. After experiencing a medically caused permanent yet stable loss of 50% field of vision in each eye in 2009, she was temporarily unable to work until attending and graduating from the Orientation and Training Center in the Fall of 2010. The combination of her recent experience as a vocational rehabilitation services recipient, as well as her active involvement in industry, allows her a great perspective to make meaningful contributions to the Council’s objectives.

Michael Cunningham – Representing Current or Former Recipient of VR Services

Olympia, WA

In 2007, Mike was appointed by Governor Gregoire to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Blind. Mike has served as Vice Chair and Chair and currently serves on the Operations Committee and Legislation Committee.

Mike has a Master's degree in Social Work, and a Certificate in Disability Management. He is nationally certified as a vocational rehabilitation counselor and a clinical social worker and licensed in the state of Washington as independent clinical social worker.

Mike has worked with the State of Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) for 10 years. As policy manager, Mike consults on VR laws, regulations and policies. He develops policies and maintains the on-line policy manual. Mike provides statewide training at DVR on topics such as VR Process, Advanced Best Practices and Rehab Law.

Mike established social service departments for two hospitals and was co-founder and director of one of the first hospice programs in the State of Washington. Mike also successfully owned and operated a retail appliance business for 15 years.

Mike and his wife Jeanne live in Olympia.

Mike Davis – Representing Business, Industry and Labor

Deer Park, WA

Mike was born in Jacksonville, Arkansas. His family moved to Spokane when he was six years old. At the age of seventeen, he was diagnosed with Juvenile Macular Degeneration. Mike got married when he was twenty and feels fortunate to have been married for twenty-six years. He and his wife raised four children on the same family farm where his wife grew up. Over the years, he has owned and operated three different businesses. Mike has earned an AA degree and is working towards a BA in Economics.

Mike volunteered for AmeriCorps Vista and had been the volunteer director of a youth sports

organization for thirteen years. Mike is employed as the administrative coordinator for the Inland Northwest Lighthouse, a manufacturing facility owned by the Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. Mike has enjoyed the opportunity to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council for the past two years.

Lou Oma Durand – Executive Director (Ex-Officio Member)

Seattle, WA

Lou Oma Durand was appointed as Executive Director of the Washington State Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) in July of 2005. Previously she held the position of Deputy Director, as well as other executive and administrative positions since beginning her career at DSB in the late 1970's when it was then the State Commission for the Blind. Ms. Durand left state government from 1984-86 to work in the private sector for the Boeing Corporation, where she was responsible for the following corporation-wide programs: Injured Worker Return to Work Program, the Medically Impaired Employee, and the Handicapped New Hire programs. Lou Oma received a Special Achievement Award for the "Return to Work" program, saving Boeing millions of dollars and enabling Boeing workers to remain employed. Lou Oma worked for three years as a vocational rehabilitation counselor and two years as a rehabilitation teacher for Washington State Department of Services for the Blind. She spent three years as a high school English and humanities teacher at the Washington State School for the Blind and Vancouver School District. In addition to over twenty-five years of service in state government, Lou Oma has served on numerous education, arts and other non-profit boards, advisory councils, literary arts organizations, and legislative task forces.

Ms. Durand is proud to lead a state agency that for the past nine years has ranked in the nation's top three among agencies providing services to people with visual and other disabilities, using a variety of job placement quality indicators.

Lou Oma believes it's a privilege to help people take charge of their lives and become contributing members of their community.

Gaylen Floy – Representing Current or Former Recipient of VR Services

Federal Way, WA

Gaylen has worked as a graphic designer and illustrator for agencies and newspaper for 27 years. She teaches ZoomText and the Office Suite at the Orientation and Training Center part-time. Gaylen just completed a social media marketing course and is pursuing studies related to content management.

Bob Huven, M.Ed., CRC – Representing Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Seattle, WA

Bob has Bachelors' in Habilitation/Rehabilitation and American Sign Language as a Second Language from Antioch University. He also has a Master's in Vocational Education from the University of Washington and is certified both as a sign language interpreter and rehabilitation counselor. He looks forward to hearing from members of the community on issues related to blindness and low vision.

It has been Bob's privilege to serve the Governor and the people of Washington on the State Rehabilitation Council as the representative of the Client Assistance Program (CAP). He brings to the SRC his experience as a person with a disability and 30 years' experience working with blind, deaf, and other people who experience life with a disability.

Tracy Kahlo, Representing Parent Information and Training Center

Tacoma, WA

After moving to Washington in 1992, Tracy oversaw an Individual Employment Program serving persons with developmental disabilities residing in Pierce, King and Thurston counties for a local employment vendor. This position achieved a personal goal of doing what she loved to do and couldn't believe she got paid to do it! It was during those eight years that she had the pleasure of collaborating with Linda Wilder to find and secure employment for two individuals who are blind. Both gentlemen became employed at a statewide organization thanks to the joint partnership with DSB, DVR and DDD. In 2000, Tracy had her most rewarding educational experience while earning a Master's in Not-for-Profit Leadership at Seattle University. She then enjoyed seven years as Vice President for a national not-for-profit in Seattle. In 2008, she was hired as the Executive Director of PAVE fulfilling her dreams to return to her home

community of Pierce County and serve families in WA State with loved ones who have a disability. She looks forward to representing families and individuals while serving on the SRC.

Linda McClain, Representing Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

Spokane, WA

Linda is a native of Southern California and proud to have grown up in an area that offers so many opportunities to experience diversity. When she moved to Spokane 20 years ago, she knew her destiny was to become a social worker and dedicate her life to the independent living movement. She has a master's degree in Social work and has been involved in disability issues for over 20 years and will continue this journey on behalf of herself and folks with disabilities. For the past 12 years, she has been the Executive Director of Coalition of Responsible Disabled - CORD, the center for independent living in Spokane that advocates for the civil rights and educates folks with disabilities about IL. The job often seems never ending. She is also a member of the State Independent Living Council as well as the Treasurer on Association of Centers for Independent Living – ACIL-WA. She has been involved in several councils and committees dedicated to disability issues most of her life. She truly believes that all persons with disabilities have something to offer and are contributing members in society.

She loves music, outdoor activities and traveling.

Nate Marshall – Representing Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP)

Tacoma, WA

Nate graduated from the University of North Dakota with a Bachelor's of Arts Degree from the Department of Philosophy and Religion. He moved to Washington State in 2002. He served in AmeriCorps as a Reading Corps tutor in Oakville (2002-03) and Olympia (2003-04). Nate then became a MLK Service Learning VISTA staff member for FPA (now Solid Ground) at Franklin High in Seattle. While there he began working as an educational program assistant for the Seattle Jewish Film Festival's FilmTalks Program for their 2003 program during that year's festival.

Nate then attended the University of Washington-Tacoma's Non-Profit Management Program under Dr. Stephen De Tray. He came to Tacoma Goodwill as the Wheels to Work Program's

Project Coordinator during its inaugural program year. He has honed his skills in case management as a WorkFirst Case Manager in TGI's Lakewood office, and has been the PWI Career Consultant since April 2008. He plans on starting Masters Level Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation in 2011 and to learn how to apply cutting edge methods to help people with disability based barriers find work.

He has lived in Tacoma since 2004 and plays in a local independent rock band and is a practiced amateur poet and aspiring culture reporter on a mission to help Tacoma become the true "City of Destiny."

Lori Pulliam, Representing State Educational Agency

Vancouver, WA

Lori was appointed to the SRC to fill a vacancy in mid 2010. She has recently been re-appointed for a full term as the education representative. Lori has worked at the Washington State School for the Blind as a teacher since 1982. She has had a wide range of experience while at the school starting as a teacher of the deaf-blind, working with WSSB students who attend classes in the Vancouver Public Schools, the WSSB career and work experience program, the transition specialist, and most recently directing the LIFTT program; a post secondary independent living program. She has been very involved in the YES summer career and work experience program from its inception. In the summer of 2010, Lori gained a position as director of the Residential program at WSSB.

Lori resides in Vancouver with her husband Roy, and has three grown children.

Patricia Spencer, Representing State Workforce Investment Board

Fircrest, WA

Patricia has been a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) member since 2008. She earned a Bachelor's in Sociology from the University of Minnesota and participated in graduate-level studies in Economics, Statistics and Business at Pacific Lutheran University.

Patricia works for the Washington State Workforce Investment Board as an education program specialist to ensure adequate educational quality at private vocational schools. She has

also contributed to the report on High Skills High Wages, a roadmap for Washington's workforce development system, envisioning what needs to be in place to ensure a vibrant economy fueled by a skilled workforce. She has over 27 years' experience working with employment and training programs, and vocational programs and services.

Patricia is a member of the Statewide Displaced Homemaker Advisory Committee and the Citizen Advisory Committee for Purdy Corrections Center for Women. She has been an active fundraiser for L'Arche, Charles Boromeo and Bellarmine Preparatory School.

**Linda Wilder, MA, CRC – Representing Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
Tacoma, WA**

Linda lost her vision at age 28 and began her journey of education, employment and self-confidence leading to an extraordinary life today. With the support of the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) and many noteworthy scholarships and academic awards, she graduated with a Bachelor's from Seattle University in 1985 and a Master's from Chapman University in 1997—both with honors. In 1987, she was hired full-time by DSB where she has distinguished herself for the past 20 years as a nationally-certified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. In this role, Linda is able to directly promote the independence of others who are blind or visually impaired at home, in the work place, and the community. She also guides them towards suitable employment, advocates for their rights, and coordinates other necessary services to enable the customer to attain their career and life goals.

Chairperson's Report

Sue Ammeter

Honorable Christine Gregoire, Governor
Lynnae Ruttledge, RSA Commissioner

As chair for the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), I'm pleased to present to you, and the other committee internal and external stakeholders, our Annual Report for 2011.

The SRC met four times in 2011, at the DSB office in Seattle, Washington. During these meetings SRC members provided feedback to the Director in the areas of planning, policy, performance and cost savings, to address budget reductions. Each meeting included time for public comment. Individuals and stakeholders from across the state gave input to the SRC in-person or by conference call.

This year the most significant issues the SRC dealt with include:

- Declining state revenues has resulted in a 10% "across-the-board" cut for all state agencies, and more cuts are expected. This past June, the governor asked all state agencies to prepare budgets with an additional 5% reduction, and a 10% reduction. The state legislature met in special session in November to address a projected budget gap of almost 2 billion dollars.
- In addition to the across the board funding cuts that all state agencies are planning for there may be some additional reductions in funding for programs that rely heavily on "state only" funds such as Older Blind Independent Living and the Orientation and Training Center.
- It is not clear how much the DSB budget will be reduced but some reductions are anticipated. Customers who are currently utilizing comparable benefits may not have these first dollar resources available in the future and this will put even more pressure on the

DSB to pay for services that have been covered, in whole or in part, through other community resources.

- State employees took a 3% pay cut and next year they will be asked to take on more of the costs for health insurance. In spite of these funding challenges the DSB staff continues to provide excellent customer service to customers.
- The Orientation and Training Center (OTC) residential program moved to new apartments. These apartments are called the Station at Othello. Each unit is 2 bedrooms and houses 2 students for a total of 12 students. These apartments are more secure and less costly to maintain.
- During the past Legislative Session a cost-savings bill passed that eliminated many state boards and commissions. Fortunately, the SRC was granted an exception so the SRC can continue to meet in person, and SRC members will continue to receive an allowance for subsistence, lodging and travel.
- One of the SRC members died this year. This was a tremendous loss for her family but also for the SRC. Her contributions on the SRC will be greatly missed. The Governor reappointed three members, appointed three new members and likely will be appointing one or two additional new members.

The SRC is proud of the relationship we have with the Director and staff of DSB, and the partnerships we have with key stakeholder groups. We are passionate about representing individuals who are blind and we look forward to receiving your continued support.

Sincerely,
Sue Ammeter, Chair

Director's Report

Lou Oma Durand

Honorable Christine Gregoire, Governor
Lynnae Ruttledge, RSA Commissioner

Through advocacy that represents a broad spectrum of Washington citizens, the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) guides our agency mission—“Inclusion, Independence and Economic Vitality for People with Visual Disabilities.”

The role of the Council has been particularly important in our current economic environment. Council members actively seek and convey the input of their respective constituents. Hence, the Council members have been strong partners in helping the agency to clarify values and assess options regarding our budget, policies and strategies.

As a result of this advocacy, and the commitment of the SRC, stakeholders and our employees, Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) continues to demonstrate the positive impact of our services on children and families, youth transitioning from school to work, adults who want to be competitively employed, elderly citizens who want to remain independent in their homes, and employers who need qualified workers. Most of those we serve are severely disabled. That is, in addition to blindness, they face the challenges of other disabilities.

Our successful outcomes demonstrate the strong focus of the SRC and our employees on Washington's economic and cultural vitality by emphasizing the skills and abilities of all its citizens including those with disabilities and vision loss.

In spite of the economic downturn this past year, DSB trained and placed 147 customers in competitive employment at an average hourly wage of nearly \$20. These customers took charge of their lives, gained independence, went to work in a wide range of good jobs with benefits, and paid taxes. We create these successes by being innovative in how

we manage our resources, provide for our state employees an environment of recognition and development, and keep our stakeholders and the public informed.

We provide comprehensive, individualized services specific and unique to the issues of blindness. This includes intensive residential training, Low Vision assessment and training (LV), Assistive Technology (AT), Orientation and Mobility (O&M) training and other specialized services. In addition, we work with employers to retain qualified employees who have lost or are losing their vision. We provide services as unique, intelligent and individualized as our customers.

As a state agency, we continue to emphasize accountability, performance outcome measures, and careful analysis of data as the drivers for strategic planning, as well as the key tools for our Council members to be well-informed as advisors and advocates.

Our Council plays a critical role in accomplishing DSB's mission—"Inclusion, Independence and Economic Vitality for People with Visual Disabilities"—both in their own communities and across the state. Seven of our Council members are blind or have a disability themselves and continue to thoughtfully share their expertise, resources, and life experiences with our customers. As a group and individually, they function as models for an engaged Washington committed to the well-being of its individuals and persistent on behalf of the economic and cultural vitality of our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce the work of these dedicated volunteers.

Sincerely,
Lou Oma Durand, Director

Input and Recommendations

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) has met four times since the last State Plan update. Meetings were all held in Seattle and were open to the public, including a phone conferencing system with call-in information advertised ahead of time allowing interested consumers to take part regardless of where they live throughout our state. The agenda included a public comment period and allowed for opportunity for input on any subject related to the business of the agency including the vocational rehabilitation, independent living and employment of blind Washington citizens.

Topic areas included the following:

- Washington State Government Reform
- State Budget shortfalls & Impact to Agency
- Management of the Independent Living Program for the Older Blind
- American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA) projects
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Re-organization / Integration of IL - Part B Services
- Legislation that would have suspended the Council / Travel Exemption Request
- Orientation & Training Center Residential Program – New Housing Project
- Update to DSB's Strategic Plan
- State Plan Update
- Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) IL performance measures and achievement of those measures
- Recruitment of SRC Members
- VR Employment Outcomes
- Collaboration and Partnering with Native American 121 VR Programs
- SRC Annual Report

Communication and Collaboration

The Council is pleased with the relationship it has with the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB). Decisions that may have impacted programs and services were reviewed by the Council and the Council provided input as necessary. The relationship between the Council and DSB is considered a partnership that involves very dedicated members and staff that are committed to the sustainability of the agency and the customers served by the agency.

DSB Response

DSB is very pleased with the collaborative relationship that has developed with our State Rehabilitation Council. It is a relationship where DSB has been prodded to improve but also where ideas and suggestions are openly shared.

State Budget Impacts

The Council supported the agency in making required budget cuts as necessary but opposed cuts that would impact the core programs of the agency which included the Vocational Rehabilitation program, Independent Living – Part B, and Independent Living Program for the Older Blind (ILOB).

The SRC recognized DSB staff for their advocacy and good work in leveraging resources and absorbing budget cuts without impacting services provided to customers.

DSB Response

DSB faced some difficult challenges this last fiscal year with the required 10 percent budget cut but was able to utilize existing resources and move the funding of the Deaf Blind Service Center to the Office of Deaf & Hard of Hearing so that other programs and services were not impacted. DSB will have to continue to be careful about spending during these difficult economic times.

Review of State Plan

The Council reviewed the components of the State Plan and agreed with the updates. The Council recommended including a public forum to solicit input for next year's update to the State Plan.

DSB Response

DSB uses many forums to obtain input from customers, constituents and the general public throughout the year, the Council meetings being one of those forums. DSB agrees that next year a broader process could be sought to solicit additional input specific to the State Plan.

Operations Committee Report

Committee Members

Bob Huven, Chair
Mike Cunningham

Purpose

It is the purpose of the Operations Committee to develop and propose draft processes, policy, and procedure for Council activities.

There were no recommended or required changes during this that last year to policy or procedure. The SRC charged the Operations Committee with the general task of comparing Council policies and procedures with the Federal and State laws and regulations governing this body. To date, the chair has reviewed all policies and is in the process of comparing them to the regulations and law. Specifically, we are in the process of making recommendations regarding the requirements for Council membership, terms and expiration of terms.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Huven, Chair
Operations Committee

Legislative Committee Report

Committee Members

Edna Harper, Chair
Mike Cunningham
Sue Ammeter
Linda McClain

Purpose

It is the purpose of the Legislative Committee to annually track legislation impacting policies, procedures and/or any part of service delivery by the Department of Services for the Blind; educate the blind community and the legislature on the impacts of such legislation; testify at hearings; and propose legislation to the Rehabilitation Council and the Department, when appropriate.

During 2011, the SRC Legislative Committee monitored the progress and adoption of the 2011-13 biennial budget by the State Legislature. Additionally, DSB staff produced a weekly legislative report tracking the status of bills potentially affecting people with disabilities. This weekly report was e-mailed to the SRC, DSB staff, and interested stakeholders. Because of the report's timeliness, stakeholders often distributed it to their contact lists.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Harper, Chair
Legislative Committee

Membership/Outreach Committee Report

Committee Members

Mike Davis, Chair
Linda Wilder

Purpose

It is the purpose of the Membership/Outreach Committee to recommend, recruit, and ensure a balanced makeup of the Council to the Governor and encourage involvement of persons with disabilities in activities of the Rehabilitation Council.

The Membership Committee is currently recruiting for the following vacancies:

- Business, Industry and Labor (2)
- Blind and Multiply Disabled

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Davis, Chair
Membership/Outreach Committee

Results for Fiscal Year 2011

Despite the high (over 9%) unemployment rate in Washington, 147 of our customers went to work in, or retained competitive jobs.

- The average wage was \$19/hour, despite the current downward pressure on wages.

Twenty-two high-school-age students participated in our Youth Employment Solutions (YES) program and benefited from paid summer work experiences.

Internally, we served 270 Independent Living (IL) customers under the age of 55.

Our Older Blind (OB) Program served 1,259 people through a network of 12 providers statewide.

Our Business Enterprise Program (BEP) generated results that benefit the state as a whole:

- Generated \$10,194,074 in gross sales.
- Paid \$819,025 in taxes.
- Employed 209 people (35% of whom are disabled).

Orientation and Training Center (OTC)

Numbers Served

- In the calendar year 2011, OTC has served a total of 51 students.
- 36 students were full-time students participating in all classes. 28 of them were residential students while 8 students commuted from their own homes.
- 15 students were part-time students who participated in classes determined necessary for their Vocational Rehabilitation process. All of them were commuting students.

Secondary Issues

- 7 students possessed moderate to significant hearing loss requiring some type of accommodation including the use of hearing aids.
- 10 students possessed learning challenges due to some type of cognitive impairment resulting from brain injury, English as a Second Language, etc.
- 7 students had health issues which affected their ability to consistently participate in the program.
- 7 students possessed multiple disabilities other than vision impairment.

Student Profiles

Student A has had vision impairment since birth. Prior to attending the OTC she had limited training in alternative skills, had no real work experience and lacked awareness of employment opportunities for blind/visually impaired people. She also lacked confidence in herself and often underestimated her abilities. She mastered literary braille in 3 terms and excelled in computers with speech access thereby proving to herself and others that she possessed excellent abilities and aptitude for learning. She is open to exploring various career options including library science and would like to pursue higher education as her next step.

Student B is making excellent progress. She came to the OTC with limited English skills due to having learned English as a second language and inconsistent academic training. She has received one-on-one tutoring from a volunteer with her language development and has successfully completed learning uncontracted braille and undergoing computer training with large print access. She is overcoming her reluctance to engage in conversations with the public and is able to ask questions of businesses in order to do route planning. She is able to travel independently even in unfamiliar areas. She is an excellent cook and enjoys entertaining others. Her contributions to the student body were recognized by fellow students; she served as the president of the Student Council. Upon completing the OTC she hopes to attend community college to improve her English skills and to expand her opportunities for employment.

Student C lost his vision due to a stroke which also affected his cognitive functioning such as short-term memory, information processing, etc. He has had significant work history within the legal system performing a variety of functions. His last employment was as a part time driver for a blood bank. While student C on the surface possessed significant functional vision, because of his brain injury, his perception of what he saw was not always accurate which put him at risk. Through daily instruction and feedback from instructors and fellow students, he has gained awareness of his limitations and is developing strategies to cope with them. Combining non visual strategies and skills, he is able to perform desired tasks without undue risk to him. While he struggles with learning braille due to his short-term memory issues, he enjoys the challenge and a sense of accomplishment when he masters a new letter. He enjoys experimenting with new recipes in his Home Ec. class, learning to use the computer again with large print access, and challenging the Shop instructor in making something that he has not made with a student before—a hatch cover for his boat. He hopes to have part-time employment after he completes the OTC.

SRC Customer Satisfaction Survey

The State Rehabilitation Council contracted to have an anonymous customer satisfaction survey conducted for Vocational Rehabilitation customers who were closed in fiscal year 2011. The survey was conducted September and October 2011, by phone. The response rate was more than 86%, with 191 respondents out of the total 220 closed cases for that fiscal year.

The data will be analyzed for areas the agency is doing well in, and areas that are more challenging. In general, customers appear satisfied with DSB services, although there are some target areas for improvement. Having created initial benchmarks with this survey, we will be able to measure progress in key areas over time.

We were pleased to note that, when all 'Yes' and 'Strongly Yes' responses are grouped together, 96% of respondents felt the DSB counselors were knowledgeable about the issues of blindness, and 91% were satisfied overall with the services received through DSB.

Some areas where we can improve include responsiveness of staff and the feeling of training needs being addressed to completion. This data will be useful for strategic planning in the following year. The State Rehab Council will provide feedback to DSB staff based on this data. DSB staff plan to provide a response to the SRC about how the agency intends to address areas of concern and maintain areas of satisfaction.

Stories from DSB Customers

We'd like to share with you a sample of stories and statements we have gathered from customers who have received services from DSB this year.

Larry Irvin

Help Desk Technician/Front Office Support
Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind

I had an appointment with my counselor Linda Wilder and she started telling me about the Orientation and Training Center (OTC). From there, she told me it's a good program and that I would get more out of it if I was a residential student. I've always wanted to work with computers but never learned how to type. I've always wanted to learn and through the OTC, I did that. That was a major step for me because that's part of my job, communicating with my supervisor, my coworkers and the IT Department, some of which are hearing-impaired, so learning to type was important. I got a lot of other things out of the OTC. I learned more about the Office Suite and ZoomText and using keystrokes instead of the mouse.

Also, at the OTC, you meet people with the same disability and they understand where you're coming from and you gain a lot of support. The OTC's Supervised Internship Program (SIP) helped me explore my interest in computers and the IT field. SIP gave me the opportunity to intern at an organization, the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind, and get an idea for how things work. I started the internship in March and then when I graduated at the end of March, the Lighthouse called me and offered me a full-time job!

I am the Help Desk Technician/Front Office Support, doing a variety of things. I love my job; there are great people here. I can't begin to say how much the OTC has done for me, boosting my confidence. I would recommend this program to anyone who is blind or has low vision.

Erica Taylor

Mother of Two-Year-Old Kalea Shane Taylor

Shortly after I found out my only child was blind, I received a call from DSB's Janet George saying she would like to meet with me. When Janet came to my home, I was truly in a state of shock, going through the stages of grief, didn't even want to admit that my daughter was blind. It was a harsh reality I wasn't yet able to grasp.

During the visit with Janet, I was able to ask questions, ask about services available and just have someone to talk with about all the things going on inside my head, even asking her personal questions about her life and her own vision impairment. I felt strongly that she knew what I was going through. After talking for a while I broke down and cried and she held me. That was one of the turning points for me. It made me feel really good that I had someone to open up to and talk to and someone that would help me navigate through my new path in life. Also someone who personally had gone through being vision impaired in her life and family. I made a true friend that day. The services provided were so important to me at that point in my life.

Needless to say, Janet got me into the Baby Jamboree in Vancouver and to several conferences that taught me so much and connected me to families with children and family members who were vision impaired and local teachers in my area to contact for services. I became super-involved with all kinds of groups and activities and found love, support and happiness in dealing with other people who had someone in their lives or had been touched in some way with vision loss. Just being able to connect with others and getting those services made a huge impact on our lives.

Now I couldn't be happier with my life and where I'm at with my daughter. I feel so strong about having the programs that were available to me, the visits and conferences. Now, I'm an advocate for people who are blind or have low vision and I feel that without this help from Janet and the services like that out there we are doing a huge disservice to our friends and family that are vision impaired. We need more help, services and programs like these.

Whitney Jensen

Health Information Representative
Virginia Mason Medical Center

My dream was to work in the medical office field. I had a lot of support from my family, Snohomish County, Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and my counselor Eva Larrauri at Department of Services for the Blind (DSB). DSB has always been great to work with and I have had a lot of help from them in learning how to deal with my vision issues and learning how to do things like cooking. They have helped me with my computer too. Eva has always been so great and helped us find my employment services provider, Wayne Mathewson with Creative Development Services. With Eva, DSB and Wayne, I really found the right fit for me and my job goals. Wayne sat down with us and made a list of all the places we'd thought about as places I would like to work. He encouraged my mom to make a call to her doctor at Virginia Mason and that opened the door for me. Wayne helped me to get an internship there through DSB. I spent six months at Virginia Mason Medical Center as an intern and then another six months as a volunteer. Wayne was really good about supporting me but also knowing when to let me take the lead. I was hired on a permanent basis in January 2011.

I love my job. I am a Health Information Representative at Virginia Mason Medical Center's Lynnwood Clinic. I have a lot of duties. I make my medical runs several times a day. I deliver mail and information to the doctors and then I pick up any mail or other information. I make lab runs. I do faxing for the doctors and for medical records. I make copies of paperwork and help the medical records staff. I organize charts and put them in order on the shelf. I love being a part of the team and I am proud that I am working at Virginia Mason. I really love my job.

Carrie Arnold

Owner/Operator
Courtyard Plaza Café

When I started receiving services from DSB, I didn't really know what I wanted to do; I was trying to figure out what I wanted. I've always had low vision which is normal to me. I

had been a Certified Nursing Assistant for 10 years but I needed a change. I kind of heard about the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) before but I never thought I would be running a café by myself. I started going to Edmonds Community College and someone suggested that I volunteer at a BEP site. Then I started working at Albertson's for food experience and went to culinary school.

For the past four years, I have been the owner/operator of the Courtyard Plaza Café at the Everett Courthouse. I love the clients. The best part of my job is the customer service. I know all the clients by the coffee drinks they order. I have a great client base here. I really like the work, the people. The customers know me by first name.

Dawn and Ted Krogen

Parents of Two-Year-Old Kiley Krogen

We're the paternal grandparents and the adoptive parents of Kiley and received her at our home in April 2010 from California. Kiley had Shaken Baby Syndrome; she has some sight on the right side but it is blurry and has no vision on the left. We were trolling on the internet, putting our feelers out for blind services prior to Kiley arriving here. Working with DSB's Janet George, prior to Kiley coming on April 23, 2010, helped us learn about different sensory things and how people who are blind see. Janet gave us massive amounts of advice and information. It was absolutely amazing. It took our fear down. It broke down that wall of uncertainty because we wanted to help Kiley as much as we could. Janet taught us about the edges of things, walls, colors, different types and sources of lighting for babies. She helped us understand how the neurons in the brain work. She taught us to describe things to Kiley. She told us to not give up, keep trying. It was such valuable information for us to know that there was hope, to know that we can be that special connection in her life. Kiley is only two-years-old but she is so intelligent and has taught us so much; she is our little spark plug in the house!

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Successful Employment Outcomes for 2011

147 of our customers went to work in, or retained competitive jobs.

<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Employer</u>
Administrative Assistant	AARP WorkSearch
Storage and Distribution Manager	Ace Hardware
Customer Service Representative	ACS Gateway
Network and Computer Systems Administrator	ACS Gateway
Demonstrator and Product Promoter	Advantage Sales and Marketing
Customer Service Representative	Affiliated Computer Systems
Marking Clerk	Alayna Johnson
Office Clerk	Alutiq, LLC
Customer Service Representative	Apple Store
Customer Service Representative	Apple Store
Customer Service Representative	Arc Of Washington
Program Coordinator	Auburn School District
Teacher Assistant	Auburn School District
Library Technician	Bangor Naval Submarine Base
Tax Preparer	Basin Bookkeeping Services
Business Continuity Planner	Bellevue City Hall Café
Advertising and Promotions Manager	Blank Law & Technology, PS
Insurance Sales Agent	Blue Horizon Insurance and Finance
Cook	Blue Moon Burger
Aerospace Engineer	Boeing
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technician	Boeing
Engineering Technician	Boeing
Teacher/Instructor	Boeing
Tool and Die Maker	Boeing
Office Clerk	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Janitor/Cleaner	C What's Cooking Catering
Cashier	Candy Tyme
Sewing Professional	Cascade Yarns
Medical Transcriptionist	CBR Medical
Loan Interviewer/Clerk	Circulation Technician, Inc.
Office Clerk	City of Seattle, Parks & Recreation
General and Operations Manager	City University

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Job Title

Dishwasher
Mathematical Science Teacher, Postsecondary
Retail Salesperson
Computer Systems Analyst
Food Preparation Worker
Massage Therapist
Child, Family, and School Social Worker
Financial Specialist
Office Clerk
Rehabilitation Counselor
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Worker
Legal Secretary
Farmer/Rancher
Office and Administrative Support Worker
Radiologic Technologist
First-Line Supervisor/Manager

Cosmetologist
Construction Manager
Office and Administrative Support Worker
Customer Service Representative
Customer Service Representative
Recreation and Fitness Studies Teacher, Postsecondary
Customer Service Representative
Massage Therapist
Orchard Manager
Child Care Worker
Computer Programmer
Massage Therapist
Teacher/Instructor
Housekeeping Cleaner
Receptionist/Information Clerk
Production Worker
Tax Examiner, Revenue Agent
Interpreter

Employer

Clark College
Clover Park Technical College
COACH Store
Computer Science Corporation
Country Gentleman
DaVinci Physical Therapy
Department of Social and Health Services
Department of Social and Health Services
Department of Social and Health Services
Department of Social and Health Services
Disney World
Domex Superfresh Growers
Donamere Angus Ranch
Dreamworks Residential
Eberline Services
Economic Development Association of Skagit County
El Toque Magic
Energy Northwest
Enginuity
Entrust Community Services
Entrust Services
Expansions Yoga

Expeditor
Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health
Fritz Glover
Goodwill Industries
Google
Happy Horse
Heritage University
Hoover Cleaning Service
Hopelink
Inland NW Lighthouse
Internal Revenue Service
Interserve USA

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Job Title

Chemical Dependency Counselor
Musical Instrument Repairer/Tuner
Teacher/Instructor
Food Service Manager
Business Continuity Planner
Coach/Scout
First-Line Supervisor/Manager
Merchandise Displayer and Window Trimmer
Rehabilitation Counselor
Claims Investigator
Accountant
Elementary School Teacher
Sales Representative, Services
Grounds Maintenance Worker
Chief Executive
Chef
Human Resources Manager
Physical Therapist
Chiropractor
Customer Service Representative
Lawyer
Office Clerk
Janitor/Cleaner
Customer Claims Representative
Personal Care and Service Worker
Business Operations Specialist
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerk
Purchasing Manager
Lodging Manager
Teacher/Instructor
Customer Service Representative
Administrative Assistant
Social and Community Service Manager
Management Analyst
Barista
Construction Manager

Employer

Kaiser Permanente
Keys to Your Heart
Keys With Ease Piano Studio
Landmark Convention Center
Lighthouse for the Blind
Lopez School District
Lorraine's Landscaping
Macy's
Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
Maxwell and Associates
Moncrieff Construction
Mukilteo School District
Muzak, LLC
Nations Quinault Tribe (Housing Authority)
Next Level Assistive Technology
Nimbus Restaurant
Northwest Center
Olympic Sports and Spine Rehabilitation
One Sky Wellness Associates
Paratransit
Perkins Coie
Physicians of Southwest Washington
Portland Habilitation Center
Premera Blue Cross
Providence Elder Place
Quest Group
Regence Blue Shield
REI
Riverstone Residential Group
Scriber Lake High School
Sears
Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
Seattle Deaf-Blind Service Center
Seattle Public Utilities
Seattle's Best Coffee
Self-Employed

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Job Title

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Worker
 Mental Health Counselor
 Multi-Media Artist/Animator
 Business Operations Specialist
 Food Service Manager
 Food Service Manager
 Farmworker/Laborer
 Food Service Manager
 Marriage and Family Therapist
 Massage Therapist
 Musician
 Real Estate Investor
 Home Health Aide
 Customer Service Representative
 Teacher/Instructor
 Teacher Assistant
 Child Care Worker
 Educational, Vocational, and School Counselor
 Counter Attendant
 Adaptive Physical Education Specialist
 Registered Nurse
 Market Research Analyst
 Baker
 Stock Clerk
 Stock Clerk
 First-Line Supervisor/Manager of Food Preparation
 and Serving Workers
 Lodging Manager
 Public Relations Manager
 Life, Physical, or Social Science Technician
 Financial Analyst
 Chemist

 Automotive Body and Related Repairer
 Customer Service Representative
 Network Systems and Data Communications Analyst
 Social and Community Service Manager

Employer

Self-Employed
 Self-Employed
 Self-Employed
 Self-Employed, Business Enterprise Program
 Self-Employed, Business Enterprise Program
 Self-Employed, Business Enterprise Program
 Self-Employed
 Self-Employed
 Self-Employed
 Self-Employed
 Self-Employed
 Social Security Administration
 Sound Telecom
 South Colby Elementary School
 Spokane School District
 St. Joseph's School
 St. Martin's University
 Starbucks
 Sunnyside School District
 Swedish Medical Center
 Symetra Financial
 Taco Time
 Target
 The Container Store
 The Last Frontier

 Travel Inn
 United Way of King County
 US Fish and Wildlife
 US General Accounting Office
 US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
 istration
 VIP Auto
 Virginia Mason Medical Center
 Volt
 WA State Employment Security Department

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Job Title

Adaptive Physical Education Specialist
Preschool Teacher
Special Education Teachers, Secondary School
Customer Service Representative
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurse
Customer Service Representative
Employment Interviewer
Elementary School Teacher
Fitness Trainer/Aerobics Instructor
Massage Therapist

Employer

WA State Migrant Council
WA State Migrant Council
Walla Walla School District
Washington State University
Western State Hospital
Whidbey SeaTac Shuttle
WorkSource
YMCA
YMCA
YMCA

The background features a large, light-colored watermark of the Seal of the State of Washington. The seal is circular and contains a portrait of George Washington. The words "SEAL OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON" are written around the perimeter of the seal.

Christine Gregoire
Governor

Brad Owen
Lieutenant Governor

Jay Manning
Chief of Staff

Lou Oma Durand
Executive Director

For more information or an accessible version of this report contact:

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