

DORS 2010 Annual Report

COVER

A Year of Transitions
Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services

INSIDE COVER

Greetings to our consumers, colleagues, business partners, and community

This past year was one of transitions for the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services.

In May of 2010 the State Board of Education appointed Suzanne Page to the position of Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), following the retirement of Robert Burns. We welcome Sue to the position and know that her appointment assures continuing strong leadership and a smooth transition.

The highlights of 2010 are our consumers' personal stories of transition. Their successful transitions to work and independence underscore the value of public vocational rehabilitation services.

The stories contained in this report are but a few examples of the successful rehabilitations of more than 2,400 DORS consumers. In spite of difficult economic

times and high unemployment in Maryland, DORS helped 1,075 people move from public benefits into employment. These new employees added \$35.2 million to Maryland's economy.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is proud that its consumers, its staff, and its community and business partners have all contributed to so many successful transitions.

Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

I am pleased and honored to be the new Director of the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Throughout this year of transition, DORS employees have demonstrated outstanding public service to the citizens of Maryland, and we are proud of our accomplishments. We have preserved our mission of employment, economic self-sufficiency, and independence for persons with disabilities.

Through continued dedication to providing quality services, promoting strong partnerships with Maryland employers and community providers, and improving internal efficiencies, DORS will continue to respond to the changing needs of our consumers, changes in technology, and our changing resources.

Suzanne Page
Assistant State Superintendent in Rehabilitation Services

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Transitioning From Welding to Wheels DORS Field Offices, Changing Lives

In 2002, Scott Davey sustained a brain injury and was not able to continue working as an independent welder. He found himself struggling to cope with the new challenges in his life. “I was absolutely lost,” Scott recalls. In 2003, he was referred to DORS. “That’s when my world changed for the better.”

At DORS, Scott was assessed, his Individualized Plan for Employment was developed, and he began working with (then Field Counselor) Sharon Plump in the Westminster DORS office. Scott also received cognitive rehabilitation services from Dr. Rick Parenté and Dr. Mary Stapleton, participated in Sinai’s RETURN! program, and worked with employment specialist Sue Klunk, of Mosaic’s Vocational Pathways program.

As Scott considered employment, he explored DORS’ Workforce & Technology Center’s programs and took a course at Carroll Community College, but nothing seemed to fit. “One day Sharon asked me, ‘What do you like?’ and I said, ‘I like bikes.’ So, I went to White’s Bicycles.” White’s Bicycles has been in business on Main Street in Westminster for over 20 years. Manager Brad

White listened to Scott's story and agreed to let him work and train in the shop as a volunteer. Scott was eventually hired by White's and, last September, he moved to a position working for Larry Black at Mount Airy Bicycles.

This job expanded Scott's skill set and offered new challenges, including organizing three warehouses. At first, Scott was reluctant, "But I kept an open mind...and [now,] I love it." Larry agrees. "Scott has a talent for organization...and he likes variety."

When asked about any challenges that come with working with an employee with a brain injury, Larry responds, "I treat him like any other type B personality, meaning organized and methodical. He likes things written down, and so I do what works for him."

Sharon says Scott's determination and positive attitude have played an important role in his rehabilitation. "Scott worked very, very hard...he had to learn to deal with his chronic headaches, and a lot of stress." She also has praise for his wife, Kelly, and the rehabilitation providers. "It's nice when [a consumer] has that much support at home... There were good partnerships."

Scott gives DORS much of the credit. "DORS [assistance] gave me my independence back, with life, with everything. They sent me back to get my license...I'm contributing to the household again. It's a good feeling...DORS changed my life."

Picture: Larry Black & Scott Davy in front of Mt. Airy Bicycles

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WTC Consumer Transitions to TIME OUT

Workforce & Technology Center Staff Specialist Kathy Schwabeland is always looking for employment opportunities for her consumers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. So, when she spotted a “Help Wanted” sign in the window of Time Out for Sports, Inc. on Belair Road, she decided to check it out. Time Out is a family-owned business specializing in team uniforms, and embroidering and screen printing. Owner Nancy Sommer told Kathy about their open position in the screen printing department.

When Kathy learned the job requirements, she thought of DORS consumer Jared Hoel. She had observed Jared during a recent WTC community service activity at the food bank. Kathy says these activities are useful in matching consumers to jobs. “I can see their strengths, weaknesses and their skills in action...and Jared was a good leader.”

Nancy agreed to interview Jared and was impressed enough to offer him the job last August, but she had concerns about the on-the-job communicating. Kathy explained that DORS would provide an interpreter and other support services. Nancy’s son, co-owner J.B.

Sommer, says this assistance made a world of difference. “We were hesitant at first...but it was a big help to have Denise [the interpreter] here.” Interpreter Denise Speight provided interpreting during Jared’s 30-day training period. She also provided basic sign language training, information about Deaf culture and communication, and other aids for Jared’s co-workers. Jared says his co-workers helped, too. “[The management] didn’t mind that I was deaf...they were willing to work with me. The people here are good communicators... we use white boards, [some] sign language, and a video relay service at meetings.”

Previously, Jared had completed training as a welder and Time Out’s environment is similar to a welding shop: noisy, dirty, fast-paced, and sometimes hot. Jared’s main duty is preparing the screens; he also helps with quality control. Jared’s supervisor, Jarett Shoefield, says Jared is a natural, “He picks up everything...if these things aren’t [noticed] we can have customers return whole jobs.” Jared sees similarities to the accuracy required in welding, “The quality control is the same. If you notice an imperfection, you have to pick it up.”

J.B. Sommer concludes that having Jared on their staff is not much different than having any other capable employee. “I don’t even think about it...he’s just one of the guys.” Asked if other employers should hire DORS consumers, he recommends it. “It’s never been a burden at all. It’s been a smooth process.”

Picture: Jared Hoel, Time Out for Sports employee, screen printing t-shirts

The Maryland DDS: With Change Excellence Prevails

Fiscal year 2010 was a year of transition and challenges for the Maryland Disability Determination Services (DDS). Ms. Dayle Smith became the new Director of the DDS in August, and her appointment assured a smooth transition in the leadership of the DDS.

The most significant challenge that the DDS faced was the persistently high volume of new applications for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits filed by Maryland citizens. Even during this challenging time, DDS continued to provide excellent public service by making accurate, timely, and cost-effective disability determinations. In fiscal year 2010, the Maryland DDS adjudicated a record 70,794 disability claims, maintaining an impressive quality rate of 97.7%.

Picture: DDS' New Director, Dayle Smith

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OBVS - Tabatchnick Transitions - and -
Transportation!

In 2008, Eastern Shore field counselors began working to place DORS Office for Blindness and Vision Services (OBVS) consumers in jobs at the Cambridge Food Swing plant. They partnered with Lower Shore Enterprises, a community rehabilitation program, so consumers could tour the facility, learn about the work, and interview for positions. The partnership paid off and, last January, four OBVS consumers were hired by Tabatchnick Fine Foods.

Tabatchnick makes kosher food products and the OBVS consumers help produce chicken broth and tomato soup. They work in a variety of areas, including: measuring, weighing, hopper loading, and quality control. Currently, six OBVS consumers work part-time at Tabatchnick. And, while the work can be demanding, consumer Jane Turner likes working there. "It's not stressful...I enjoy being a part of it."

Owner Ben Tabatchnick was so pleased with his OBVS hires that he went out of his way to remove an obstacle to their continuing employment. As part of its supportive employment services, DORS was paying consumers' transportation costs. So, when Field Counselor Katie Perry told Mr. Tabatchnick that the transportation money was running out, he said, "I can fix that." He moved a van from his New Jersey plant to Maryland and hired the husband of a DORS consumer to be the driver. Katie is amazed by this generosity. "I don't know how our consumers would have been able to get to work without this support... it's truly a Godsend!"

To show its appreciation for Tabatchnick Fine Foods' flexibility and belief in the mission of DORS, the Division presented Mr. Tabatchnick and plant supervisor, Walter Stanton, with its 2010 Employer Award.

Tabatchnick plans to hire additional OBVS consumers and Walter says there are no special problems associated with having hired from the program. "These employees have the same challenges at work that a sighted person does." In fact, he notes that their strong desire to work is an asset. "Without this program, these people might be sitting at home doing nothing. And, I enjoy the heck out of working with them because they are very happy to be here."

Picture: Tabatchnick employees in their white lab coats. Left to right, Pam Jenkins, Ray Jackson, Jane Turner, Milton Walls, Travis Cephas, Walter Stanton and Frances Cooper.

DORS and Financial Management Services, U.S. Department of Treasury, partnered last summer in an internship program to provide federal work experience for individuals with disabilities. College students or recent graduates were eligible to apply. Most of the interns returned to college this semester to work towards completing their degree. This comment from one of the interns sums up the experience: "The experience was absolutely rewarding. I had the chance to learn...through

cutting edge technology and make...contacts that will be of great benefit for my future job search.”

Picture: Seydou Kone & Sharonda Johnson-Wilkes

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American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and An SOS Transition

Humanim’s Start on Success (SOS) program is a partnership between DORS, Humanim, Harford County Public Schools, and employer partner Upper Chesapeake Health (UCH). The project is funded by a \$150,000 ARRA grant (\$75,000 per year, for two years) through DORS.

The SOS project targets youth with disabilities exiting Harford County Public Schools for several reasons; one of the most significant is that there are limited services for transitioning youths. SOS gives students the opportunity to participate in paid work while in school and helps facilitate a smooth transition into employment and/or postsecondary education after graduation.

The students have a variety of disabilities, including learning disabilities, mental health diagnoses, autism spectrum disorders, and intellectual disabilities. Humanim works with the students by first doing vocational assessments and work samples and then using the data to match students with UCH internships.

The students worked for 16 weeks, 10-15 hours per week, at UCH facilities. They attended morning classes at their schools and were transported to the internship sites for the afternoons. Each student had a hospital mentor (a hospital employee who volunteered), support from Humanim staff working at the site, and life skills class sessions.

After students completed their internships, a Humanim staff member continued to work with them for 90 days to help find employment. Kathy Proctor, Humanim's SOS Program Supervisor for Harford County, does a lot of cold calls to businesses looking for open positions. "I tell them, I have these great kids...and I ask, 'Is there an opportunity here?'"

While the SOS program has had a number of successful transitions, it is the tale of the two Brown brothers that is a shining example of what the SOS program set out to accomplish.

Chiminic Brown interned in UCH Security and he enjoyed the work. "I got to stretch my legs and walk. I saw every part of the building, even the morgue!"

Last fall Kathy talked with the manager at the Bel Air Waffel House restaurant. She agreed to give Chiminic a chance and he began work in September. He now works 28 hours per week, waiting on customers, cleaning-up, and helping with shift changes.

Waffle House District Manager, Bob Orsburn was open to participating in SOS, saying he had no concerns. “I figured if anything, it would help us, and it actually has.”

Things are also going well for Chiminic’s brother, Dominic Brown. Dominic’s hospital internship was in nutrition services. After the internship ended, he tried two restaurants, but wanted something different. He told Kathy that he enjoyed being with his young cousins, so she decided to inquire at some day care centers. Brighter Beginnings Day Care owner was intrigued by the idea of hiring a young man because most of her day care employees are female. Dominic’s interview went well and he began working there in early November.

While there are challenges, including corralling little ones who “don’t listen,” Dominic has found many rewards as well. “I’ve learned a lot of patience. Sometimes I’m angry with them, but then I look in their faces and I see angels.” Jessica Bennett, Dominic’s supervisor, says the feeling is mutual. “The kids love him!”

Picture: Chiminic Brown in an apron and cap standing behind the front counter of a restaurant. Caption: Chiminic Brown has mastered Waffle House’s ordering system. “Scattered, smothered, chunked...I learned it pretty quick.”

Picture: Dominic Brown stands in a day care surrounded by empty cribs. Caption: Dominic Brown starts his days at 6:30 and spends the time with messy “angels.”

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Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

Volunteer members of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC) contribute many hours working with DORS to bring the most effective programs and services to Maryland citizens with disabilities. This year the MSRC was an integral part of the team that planned and conducted the required triennial comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities in the state.

Picture: 18 members of the MSRC

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BUDGET FY 2010

SOURCE OF FUNDS

STATE FUNDS

State Matching Funds.....	12,729,605
State Non-matching Funds.....	794,429
TOTAL.....	13,524,034

FEDERAL FUNDS MATCHING FUNDS

Basic Program	35,445,419
Basic Program - ARRA.....	5,901,591
Independent Living (Older Blind) - ARRA	850,270
Independent Living (Older Blind).....	324,480
State Independent Living Services	258,811

State Independent Living Services – ARRA 249,474
 Training 168,374
 SUB TOTAL.....43,198,419

FEDERAL NON-MATCHING FUNDS

Social Security Administration/DDS..... ..30,076,161
 Social Security Reimbursement..... 2,349,498
 Seamless Transition Collaborative.....608,745
 Supported Employment State Grants..... 492,804
 Client Assistance Program.....197,818
 SUB TOTAL.....33,725,026
 TOTAL..... 76,923,445

SPECIAL FUNDS

Business Enterprise Program for the Blind....3,173,262
 Third Party..... 93,565
 TOTAL..... 3,266,827
 TOTAL COMBINED FUNDS AVAILABLE
 93,714,306

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

Disability Determination Services.....30,076,161
 VR Client Services Program 19,581,255
 Case Services.....17,698,007
 Workforce & Technology Center 11,787,906
 Basic Program ARRA..... 5,278,967
 Administration..... 4,602,925
 Business Enterprise Program for the Blind.... 3,187,964
 Seamless Transition Collaborative.....714,823
 Independent Living (Older Blind) ARRA..... 557,298
 State Independent Living Services ARRA 229,000

TOTAL FUNDS EXPENDED 93,714,306

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Persons Rehabilitated Number by Primary Disability

Rehabilitated

Psychiatric.....	902
Cognitive.....	676
Orthopedic.....	152
Deaf & Hard of Hearing.....	187
Other Physical Disabilities..	286
Blind & Vision Impairments ..	166
Communication Impairments.....	28
Respiratory Impairments.....	11
TOTAL.....	2,408

Persons Rehabilitated by Occupation at Case Closure

Service.....	1,181
Clerical, Sales.....	457
Professional, Technical, Managerial	344
Production, Construction, Operating, Materials Handling	197
Homemaker	186
Farming, Fishery, & Forestry	34
Unpaid Family Worker.....	6
Vending Operator/Worker.....	3
Miscellaneous, NEC.....	0
TOTAL.....	2,408

Students Served by Primary Disability

Psychiatric.....	2,005
Cognitive.....	4,078
Orthopedic.....	274
Deaf & Hard of Hearing.....	461
Other Physical Disabilities.....	418
Blind & Vision Impairments	208
Communication Impairments.....	162
Respiratory Impairments.....	17
TOTAL.....	7,623

Rehabilitation promotes self-sufficiency

Percentage of individuals with wages as their primary source of support:

- At application 14%
- After rehabilitation service 78%
- Average wage \$10.91 per hour

Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative

Picture: MSTC Kick-Off Event - Baltimore City Public Schools Jason Hartling (Northwestern High School), Alice Cole (YouthWorks), Ann Deschamps (TransCen, Inc.), Michael Breeden & Sue Page (DORS), Sylvia Hall (Reginald F. Lewis High School), Donnae Bushrod & Joseph Anastasio (Baltimore City Public Schools), Christy Stuart (TransCen, Inc.)

2010 marked the 3rd year of the Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative (MSTC), a special demonstration grant funded by the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration and designed to assure that high school

students with disabilities achieve employment. A partnership of DORS, local school systems, TransCen, Inc. and community agencies, MSTC includes the following key features: self-determination and self-advocacy instruction, leadership activities, establishment of linkages to adult provider agencies prior to exit from high school, family support and participation, and paid work experiences.

School systems participating in MSTC through 2010: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Calvert County, Carroll County, Charles County, St. Mary's County and Washington County.

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DORS Bids Farewell to Long-Time Director Bob Burns

Picture: DDS employee and former DORS consumer Paul Nelson (left) greets out-going DORS Director Bob Burns at his retirement celebration.

From the time Bob Burns became DORS Director in 1993, he focused the Division on, in his words, "three things: employment, employment, employment!" Bob believed that a job in the competitive labor market was pivotal to individuals with disabilities achieving independence and self-sufficiency.

A passionate advocate and committed partner, Bob Burns led DORS to national recognition for programs for youth with disabilities transitioning from school to work or higher education, research-based practices in supported employment for individuals with significant mental illness, effective services for consumers who are blind and vision impaired, and quality adjudication of Social Security disability claims, as well as emerging practices supporting employment for individuals with acquired brain injuries.

Upon his retirement in June 2010, Bob Burns looked back on what he called “a wonderful 31+ years” of his life. “The wonder of those years was due to my belief in the importance and value of public service, a belief in DORS mission and a belief in DORS ability to make a profound and positive difference in the lives of persons with disabilities.” He expressed his regard and “profound gratitude” to staff of the Division.

Bob will be remembered for his charismatic leadership and his constant commitment to the employment, independence and self-sufficiency of Marylanders with disabilities.

DORS – Helping Marylanders Transition to Work in 2010

- DORS helped 2,408 individuals with disabilities go to work in MD businesses, adding \$35.2 million to MD’s economy.

- 1,075 people moved from public benefits into employment.
- If past record is any indication, 84% of DORS consumers will still be working a year from now – the highest retention rate of any MD workforce program.
- DORS served 7,623 students with disabilities to prepare them for employment, higher education, or career training.
- 252 high school students with disabilities earned work experience in paid summer employment programs, many of them funded through American Recovery & Reinvestment Act grants.
- DORS assisted 124 Maryland businesses with worksite reviews so they could hire new employees or keep valued employees with disabilities.

Picture: A teenage girl in a wheelchair and a woman standing.

Danielle Bustos of Silver Spring's Northwood High School received WTC's Mark L. Stancil Technology Award. Danielle had to overcome many physical barriers to fully participate in her education. She came to DORS in search of assistive technology solutions that would allow her to attend college to study chemistry. It was determined that a portable solution would be best for

Danielle, so DORS purchased her a Tablet PC and installed Dragon NaturallySpeaking software and a small keyboard. Danielle exemplifies the benefits of using assistive technology as a tool to achieve great things in education. She had a very successful high school career and was accepted at Bucknell University.

INSIDE BACK COVER

DORS employment specialists match pre-screened, job-ready individuals with disabilities to job openings in Maryland's businesses.

Go to www.dorsworks.org to post a free job announcement with DORS.

We will send the information to our network of employment specialists. They will review our job-ready candidates to see if we know of a candidate who possesses the experience and education needed for the position.

BACK COVER

Martin O'Malley, Governor

James H. deGraffenreidt, Jr., President, Maryland State Board of Education

Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

Suzanne Page, Assistant State Superintendent in Rehabilitation Services

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DORS field and OBVS counselors are located in 22 field
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