

Report of the Nebraska

# State Rehabilitation Council

2 0 1 8 - 2 0 1 9



*A consumer controlled council committed to  
ensuring quality rehabilitation services*

**Contact information:**

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) values the input and involvement of all citizens in Nebraska regarding rehabilitation services. All SRC meetings are open to the public and are a great opportunity for the public to voice concerns and opinions.

**Meetings:**

Meeting dates, times, and locations are posted on the Nebraska VR website at [vr.nebraska.gov](http://vr.nebraska.gov)

**Write:**

State Rehabilitation Council Chairperson  
Nebraska Department of Education  
301 Centennial Mall South  
P.O. Box 94987  
Lincoln, NE 68509

**Call:**

Angela Fujan  
402.679.6298  
877.637.3422

**Fax:**

402.471.0788

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the SRC Chairperson.....	1
SRC Committee Reports .....	2-3
SRC Members.....	2-4
Message from the Nebraska VR Director .....	4
Nebraska VR Funding.....	5
Return on Investment.....	5
Annual Program Costs.....	5
Individuals Served by Nebraska VR.....	6
Partnerships with Employers & Nebraska VR .....	7
Nebraska VR Successful People .....	8



## State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education

November 15, 2019

As Past Chair of the Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), I'm honored to present this report that summarizes the accomplishments the SRC made in fiscal year 2019. During this past year's quarterly meetings, SRC members heard reports from the Client Assistance Program Director, the Statewide Independent Living Council, Assistive Technology Partnership and the Nebraska Youth Leadership Council. At each meeting Nebraska VR's Director provided an up-to-date report of current projects and partnerships, providing the council with opportunities to contribute feedback.

Actions supported by the SRC:

- Disability Employment & Inclusion Awards in October 2018.
- Focused on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's provision to reserve 15% of allotted funds for the delivery of pre-employment transition services.
- Senator outreach at the Nebraska State Capital in May 2019.

This was a year of challenge with new clients placed on an immediate wait list. While the cause was out of the control of Nebraska VR and the SRC, it enabled a more focused approach to the cost of providing services without undermining quality. Appreciating the challenges that came with the wait list, it also ensured conversation was open and transparent. It could not have been successful without the collaboration, advocacy, and support from the dedicated members of the Nebraska SRC and Nebraska VR Staff. As the chair of the SRC, I would like to recognize the work of the SRC and the commitment the members have in working to ensure Nebraskans with disabilities have access to meaningful employment opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Scott".

David Scott

Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council



Lonnie Berger–York

Lonnie joined the SRC representing business, industry, and labor. He is the manager of the Wendy's in York, NE.



Crystal Booker–Lincoln

Crystal is a Manager, HR Operations at Ameritas. She represents business, industry, and labor.



Jerry Bryan–Lincoln

A required council member, Jerry is the Director of the Client Assistance Program.



Christine Gaspari–Kearney

Chris serves as a current or former applicant for, or recipient of vocational rehabilitation services.



Deanna Henke–Lincoln

Deanna represents the Statewide Independent Living Council. It is a required seat of the SRC.



Susan Madsen–Lincoln

Susan is the General Manager at The Cornhusker, A Marriott Hotel. She represents business, industry, and labor.

# SRC Committees and Accomplishments

## Transition Services Committee

Members: Sandra Peterson, Alice Senseney, JD Simmons (chair), Casidy Wall, Cami West, Carly Weyers, and Brigid Griffin, Nebraska VR Advisor.



J.D. Simmons–Doniphan

### Transition Services Committee Chairperson – J.D. Simmons

J.D., a retired Nebraska VR counselor, represents the category of member at large on the council.

The Transition Services Committee discussed the positive working relationship between the Nebraska Department of Education's Office of Special Education (SPED) and Nebraska VR, noting the collaboration has provided students with disabilities increased opportunities. The collaboration included SPED's support and funding of 18 Summer Transition Programs across the state. Increased summer programming delivered by Nebraska VR staff members was also discussed.

The Committee was briefed on plans to again survey teachers and school staff in May to gather important feedback. Survey questions were revised from the previous year based on input from the Committee and staff members. Survey results were shared at the August meeting.

In addition, the Committee heard about updates to the Pre-Employment Transition Services Consent and Release Form and the production of an orientation video to help students, their parents or guardians, and teachers understand the services available. Recommendations were made about meeting with students and families to discuss an application for VR services two years prior to graduation due to wait list concerns.

## Client Services Committee

Members: Jerry Bryan, Gayle Hahn (chair,) Jonathan Moeller, Diane Owen-Downs, Adriana Springer and Angela Fujan, Nebraska VR Advisor.



Gayle Hahn–Hastings

### Client Services Committee Chairperson – Gayle Hahn

As a Community Benefits & Benefits Coordinator for Easterseals Nebraska, Gayle serves as a community rehabilitation program service provider.

The Client Services Committee reviewed the Client Satisfaction Survey results. The Committee analyzed the number of surveys completed,

percentage still employed, reasons clients are no longer employed, whether jobs met current needs, which VR service was most helpful, and if clients were likely to recommend Nebraska VR to a friend or family member.

Recommendations made for the survey included contacting a VR Office Director or the Client Assistance Program with concerns reported during the phone survey and monitoring the number of “Other” answers to identify any possible trends. The Committee also recommended to the Client Assistance Program reactivating the Consumer Input Committee for the purpose of seeking client feedback about changes to policy and procedures.

## Employer Services Committee

Members: Lonnie Berger, Crystal Booker, Michael Bursaw (chair), Chris Gaspari, Susan Madsen, John McNally, Vicki Newman, Tobias Orr, David Scott and Mary Matusiak, Nebraska VR Advisor.



Michael Bursaw–Ravenna

### Employer Services Committee Chairperson – Michael Bursaw

HR Director for West Pharmaceutical Services, Michael serves on the SRC as a business, industry, and labor representative.

The Employer Services Committee was updated on the Pre-Employment Transition Services Job Fair held at the Lancaster Event Center on April 30, 2019. The event provided work-based learning experiences for 350 students. Volunteers included staff members from Nebraska VR, Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership, the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, resource partners, and area businesses. Approximately 50 businesses conducted mock interviews, hosted an information booth at the Business Expo or provided skills assessments for students preparing for the world of work.

The Committee discussed and welcomed the York General Hospital Project SEARCH site resuming after being on hiatus for one year. They also discussed the Project SEARCH recommendation to implement Steering Committees and Business Advisory Councils. The Committee provided suggestions for improvements to build an effective and well attended Business Advisory Council (BAC) for all the Project SEARCH sites across the state. Suggestions included expansion of the BACs from five sites to nine.

Discussions continued regarding the Disability Employment and Inclusion Awards held in October for National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The four categories for recognition (large business, small business, entrepreneur, and champion) were expanded to include a fifth category, new business partner, for next year. Awardees for 2019 were selected by the Employer Services Committee from nominations submitted by VR staff.

The Committee, after reviewing employer questionnaires, recognized the need of retention services and made recommendations for the coming year.



John McNally-Lincoln

John, Deputy Director for the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs, is the State Workforce Investment Board representative.



Jonathan Moeller-Grand Island

Jonathan is a current or former applicant for, or recipient of, vocational rehabilitation services.



Vicki Newman-Lincoln

Vicki is on the SRC having been a former recipient of vocational rehabilitation services.



Tobias Orr-Lincoln

In his role as Director of Assistive Technology Partnership, Tobias is a provider of community rehabilitation program services.



Diane Owen-Downs-Norfolk

Diane works at the Norfolk Nebraska VR office. She serves on the SRC as a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor.



Sandra Peterson-Omaha

Sandra is the SRC Chair. She works for the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI). PTI Nebraska is a required member of the council.



Alice Senseney-Lincoln

Alice is an Education Specialist with the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education.



David Scott-LaVista

David served as the SRC Chairperson. He is the Director of Sales & Marketing with The Peregrine Hotel, Curio by Hilton.



Adriana Springer-Macy

Adriana works with the Omaha tribes. She is a community rehabilitation program service provider.



Cassidy Wall-Ashland

Photo unavailable

Cassidy is an SRC member who is a current or former applicant for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services.



Camie West-Elm Creek

Cami is a representative of a disability advocacy group and member at large on the SRC. She is a Senior Lecturer at UNK.



Carly Weyers-Lincoln

Behavioral Health Coordinator with the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Carly is a trained disability advocate.

## Director's Message

As the year draws to a close, I proudly reflect on many accomplishments Nebraska VR has made with support of the State Rehabilitation Council. Some of these accomplishments include:

- aligning agency priorities with the Nebraska Department of Education's Vision and Direction Strategic Plan and the national Vision 2020 initiatives;
- seeking ways to coordinate with other programs and plans (e.g., Perkins V and Part B State Performance Plan) to maximize resources while reducing duplication;
- completing case reviews with all service teams in an effort to celebrate success and continuously improve service delivery;
- and conducting videoconference trainings presented by internal staff and external partner content experts

All these efforts were made while balancing the complexities of implementing an Order of Selection.



Lindy Foley-Director  
Nebraska VR

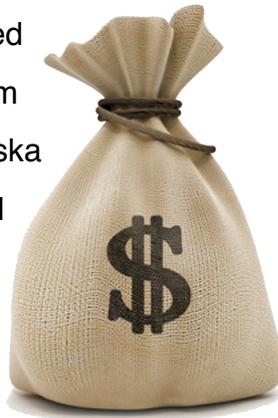
The agency's dedication to keeping clients, partners, and the SRC informed about Order of Selection is one to be recognized. Although Order of Selection is not an easy process to work through, or to describe, staff members have done it with leadership and transparency.

Looking ahead to next year, Nebraska VR will continue to implement strategies which support an aggressive approach to removing individuals from the wait list. Nebraska VR will celebrate innovation as the new four-year Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan is developed and the national VR program commemorates 100 years. Exciting opportunities are before us and with continued SRC consultation, it is certain to be another productive year!

*Lindy Foley*  
*Director, Nebraska VR*

# Nebraska VR Funding

Every \$1.00 appropriated to Nebraska VR from the State of Nebraska earns \$3.69 in Federal Funding for services to Nebraskans with disabilities.



# Return on Investment for the Nebraska VR Program

Average Cost of Nebraska VR Services per Person:	\$ 29,348.34
Average Annual Earnings after Nebraska VR Services:	\$ 23,281.68
Estimated Annual Taxes on Earnings:	
Federal Income Tax	\$ 1,163.00
State Income Tax	\$ 542.00
State/Local Sales Tax	\$ 485.00
Social Security Tax	\$ 1,781.00
Average Total Taxes per Year	\$ 3,971.00
Average Return to Taxpayers over 30 Remaining Years of Employment	\$ 119,130.00

On average, a successfully employed person Returns \$4.06 to the taxpayers for every \$1 Spent through Nebraska VR services.

# Annual Program Costs

	Cost of Program
<b>Administration</b>	\$ 1,751,701

## Client Services

	Cost of Program
Provided by VR Staff	\$ 11,353,615
Purchased from Community Rehab Programs	\$ 603,979
Purchased from Other Vendors	\$ 3,844,393
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 15,801,987</b>

## Purchased for Clients

	Cost of Program
Assessment	\$ 1,344,288
Diagnosis & Treatment of Impairments	\$ 1,377
Graduate College or University Training	\$ 70,122
Four-Year College or University Training	\$ 739,957
Junior or Community College Training	\$ 175,126
Occupational or Vocational Training	\$ 766
On-the-Job Training	\$ 17,713
Apprenticeship Training	\$ 7,593
Basic Academic Remedial or Literacy Training	\$ 0
Job Readiness Training	\$ 210
Disability Related Skills Training	\$ 3,880
Miscellaneous Training	\$ 25,672
On-the-Job Supports-Time Limited	\$ 617,824
On-the-Job Supports-Supp. Employment	\$ 808,877
Transportation	\$ 33,077
Maintenance	\$ 26,149
Rehabilitation Technology	\$ 423,257
Reader	\$ 3,859
Interpreter	\$ 12,175
Technical Assistance	\$ 0
Benefits Counseling	\$ 56,968
Customized Employment	\$ 61,000
All Other Services	\$ 18,481
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,448,371</b>

# Individuals Served by Nebraska VR

## 2019 Nebraska VR Employment Program

### Clients Served by County

County .....	Total	County .....	Total
Adams .....	71	Jefferson.....	12
Antelope .....	5	Johnson.....	0
Arthur.....	1	Kearney.....	6
Banner .....	1	Keith .....	4
Blaine.....	0	Keya Paha.....	0
Boone .....	7	Kimball.....	2
Box Butte.....	8	Knox.....	4
Boyd .....	5	Lancaster .....	485
Brown .....	5	Lincoln .....	83
Buffalo .....	118	Logan.....	3
Burt.....	8	Loup.....	4
Butler.....	34	Madison .....	71
Cass .....	16	McPherson .....	3
Cedar .....	15	Merrick.....	8
Chase .....	2	Morrill .....	6
Cherry .....	3	Nance.....	5
Cheyenne .....	19	Nemaha.....	5
Clay .....	10	Nuckolls .....	5
Colfax.....	4	Otoe.....	27
Cuming.....	7	Pawnee .....	2
Custer.....	12	Perkins .....	1
Dakota .....	7	Phelps.....	11
Dawes .....	13	Pierce .....	8
Dawson.....	40	Platte .....	60
Deuel .....	1	Polk.....	9
Dixon .....	2	Red Willow.....	21
Dodge .....	44	Richardson .....	5
Douglas.....	409	Rock .....	3
Dundy .....	3	Saline.....	21
Fillmore.....	7	Sarpy.....	115
Franklin.....	8	Saunders.....	20
Frontier .....	5	Scotts Bluff .....	72
Furnas .....	5	Seward .....	14
Gage.....	22	Sheridan .....	2
Garden .....	4	Sherman.....	4
Garfield .....	5	Sioux.....	0
Gosper .....	4	Stanton .....	6
Grant .....	2	Thayer.....	9
Greeley.....	1	Thomas .....	0
Hall .....	131	Thurston .....	2
Hamilton .....	13	Valley .....	9
Harlan .....	0	Washington.....	9
Hayes.....	1	Wayne .....	14
Hitchcock .....	6	Webster.....	7
Holt.....	17	Wheeler.....	0
Hooker.....	3	York.....	19
Howard .....	5	Out of State .....	19
		<b>Total Served.....</b>	<b>2304</b>

Applied for Services	2210
Received Services	2304
Successfully Employed	690

### Successfully Employed Nebraska VR Clients



**52%** of clients are employed full-time.

Average hourly wage for 2019 is **\$13.81**

### 2019 Occupation & Earnings for Competitively Employed Clients

Occupations	Percent	Average Hourly Earnings
Service	26.67%	\$10.18
Professional	21.88%	\$17.47
Office Support	14.06%	\$12.41
Sales	11.16%	\$13.11
Transportation & Material Moving	6.38%	\$13.90
Installation, Maintenance, & Repairs	5.65%	\$15.62
Production	5.51%	\$13.48
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	3.62%	\$13.90
Management, Business, & Finance	3.33%	\$21.27
Construction & Extraction	1.74%	\$19.36

# Partnerships with Employers & Nebraska VR

## You Make a Difference Business Award Recipients

Presented to partners who provided real-life skills and experiences to develop employability for students with disabilities.

- 2nd Street Market
- Alpine Village Community Daycare
- Applied Connective Technology
- Axxent Buildings, LLC
- Beatrice Good Samaritan Society
- Boost
- Bradley Law Office, P.C.
- C3 Hotel
- Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership in Columbus & Schuyler
- City of Lincoln Parks and Rec
- Cobalt Credit Union
- Columbus Motor Company
- Cornhusker Auto Center
- Flyover Brewing Company
- Food Cupboard
- Fresh Ideas
- Good Samaritan Society in Osceola
- Gordon Memorial Health Services
- Gothenburg Times
- Grocery Kart
- H & R Market
- Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles
- Holdrege Memorial Homes
- HyVee Lincoln #5
- HyVee-Papillion
- Jackson's Car Corner
- Mid Plains Community College
- Mrs Robinson's Café
- Nemnich Automotive
- Northside, Inc. in David City
- Paradise Car Wash & Detail Center
- Pheasant Bonanza Hunt Club & Kennel
- Prairie Animal Hospital
- Royal Engineered Composites
- Sandhills Physical Therapy
- Speed's Apple Market
- St Paul's Lutheran Church – Maintenance Department
- Tabitha Garden Square
- The Plainsman
- University of Nebraska- Bureau of Sociological Research
- Wayne Pizza Hut
- Wisner Care Center



Axxent Buildings LLC-Cozad



Alpine Village Community Daycare-Verdigre



Grocery Kart-Broken Bow



Mrs Robinson's Café -Callaway



HyVee-Papillion



Sandhills PT-North Platte



Wisner Care Center-Wisner

# Nebraska VR Successful People

The Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) honored four businesses for their role in creating inclusive workplaces and advocacy for disability employment. The annual event was held on October 9, 2018 at the State Capitol in Lincoln.

## Entrepreneur Award—Toby Mickelson, Old West Radon

The Entrepreneur Award for Disability Employment and Inclusion was presented to Toby Mickelson, owner of Old West Radon in Kearney, where he specializes in radon measurement and mitigation. After completing the necessary coursework through the Kansas State University, he received his certification and licensing in Nebraska. He worked with Nebraska VR Employment Specialist Marcia Haynes to coordinate a feasibility study and create a business plan. The self-employment services he received supported Toby's strengths, skills, and abilities, enabling him to turn a profit in his second year of business.



Toby Mickelson - Old West Radon and Marcia Haynes, Nebraska VR Employment Specialist

## Small Business Recognition—Columbus Care and Rehabilitation Center

The Small Business Recognition Award for Disability Employment and Inclusion was given to the Columbus Care and Rehabilitation Center in Columbus. With both long and short-term nursing care and an assisted living wing, they have partnered with Nebraska VR to meet staffing needs over the course of several years. They have provided many work-based learning experiences including job shadows, business tours, informational interviews, and on-the-job evaluations. The Center hired five clients in the previous year, making the business a model to other employers who seek to foster an inclusive workplace and fill positions with qualified job candidates.



Columbus Care and Rehabilitation Center staff and Jill Hunzeker, Nebraska VR Office Director

## Large Business Recognition—West Pharmaceutical Services, Inc.

The Large Business Recognition Award for Disability Employment and Inclusion was presented to West Pharmaceutical Services, Inc. The Kearney location has hired more than ten Nebraska VR clients in the past year and have referred more than twenty existing employees to Nebraska VR's Career Pathways Advancement Project Grant to help incumbent workers advance within the company. Human Resource Director Mike Bursaw participated in employer panels, presented employer perspectives at the local service office, and hosted disability awareness training. The company ensures accommodations are in place, when needed, as part of an overall commitment for applicants and employees to have equal access to meaningful work.



Michael Bursaw, West Pharmaceutical Services and Zach Arter, Nebraska VR Employment Specialist

## Individual Champion—Dr. John J. Curran

The Individual Champion for Disability Employment and Inclusion Award was given to Dr. John J. Curran of Norfolk. He has worked closely with Nebraska VR staff members, applicants, and clients for more than 30 years providing psychological evaluations in northeast Nebraska. The assessments have been a valuable tool in identifying client needs and required supports for successful employment. Additionally, he provided training to staff and follow-up consultations. In a partnership spanning over three decades, his professional contributions have helped hundreds of individuals.



Dr. John Curran and Lisa Mitchell, Nebraska VR Office Director

## Office Locations

### Columbus serves counties:

Butler, Colfax, Nance, Platte and Polk  
3100 23rd Street, Ste. 5, Columbus, NE 68601  
(402) 562-8065, (877) 505-0866  
VR.InfoColumbus@nebraska.gov

### Fremont serves counties:

Dodge and Washington  
827 North D St , Fremont, NE 68025  
(402) 727-2900, (888) 585-5439  
VR.InfoFremont@nebraska.gov

### Grand Island serves counties:

Fillmore, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Howard, Merrick,  
Nuckolls, Thayer and York  
203 E Stolley Park Rd, Ste. B  
Grand Island, NE 68801  
(308) 385-6200, (800) 862-3382  
VR.InfoGrandIsland@nebraska.gov

### Hastings serves counties:

Adams, Clay and Webster  
2727 W. 2nd Street, Ste 326  
Hastings, NE 68901-4683  
402-462-0160, 800-852-3382  
VR.InfoHastings@nebraska.gov

### Kearney serves counties:

Blaine, Buffalo, Custer, Franklin, Furnas, Garfield,  
Harlan, Kearney, Loup, Phelps, Sherman and Valley  
315 W 60th Street, Ste 400, Kearney, NE 68845  
(308) 865-5343, (800) 262-3382  
VR.InfoKearney@nebraska.gov

### Lincoln serves counties:

Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe,  
Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Saunders and Seward  
3901 N 27th Street, Ste 6, Lincoln, NE 68521  
(402) 471-3231  
(800) 472-3382  
VR.InfoLincoln@nebraska.gov

### Norfolk serves counties:

Antelope, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Cedar, Cuming,  
Dixon, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Rock,

### Stanton, Wayne and Wheeler

1212 W. Benjamin Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701  
(402) 370-3200, (800) 442-3382  
VR.InfoNorfolk@nebraska.gov

### North Platte serves counties:

Arthur, Chase, Cherry, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Gosper,  
Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan,  
McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow and Thomas  
200 South Silber, Bldg. #2, North Platte, NE 69101  
(308) 535-8100, (800) 272-3382  
VR.InfoNorthPlatte@nebraska.gov

### Omaha-Downtown serves counties:

Cass, Douglas and Sarpy  
1313 Farnam on the Mall, Omaha, NE 68102  
(402) 595-2100, (402) 595-2107  
(800) 554-3382  
VR.InfoOmahaDowntown@nebraska.gov

### Omaha-West serves counties:

Douglas  
12011 Q Street, Omaha, NE 68137  
(402) 595-1212, (877) 240-4445  
VR.InfoOmahaWest@nebraska.gov

### Scottsbluff serves counties:

Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden,  
Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan and Sioux  
505A Broadway, Ste 500, Scottsbluff, NE 69361  
(308) 632-1321, (800) 292-3382  
VR.InfoScottsbluff@nebraska.gov

### South Sioux City serves counties:

Dakota and Thurston  
510 W. 13th Street, Suite C  
South Sioux City, NE 68776  
(402) 494-2265, (877) 659-7899  
VR.InfoSouthSiouxCity@nebraska.gov

### State Office (located in Lincoln):

301 Centennial Mall South, PO Box 94987,  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987  
(402) 471-3644, (877) 637-3422  
VR.InfoStateOffice@nebraska.gov



## State Rehabilitation Council

Department of Education

State of Nebraska

P.O. Box 94987

Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987