



A CONSUMER CONTROLLED COUNCIL COMMITTED TO  
ENSURING QUALITY REHABILITATION SERVICES

REPORT OF THE NEBRASKA

**State Rehabilitation Council**

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**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 web site at [vr.nebraska.gov](http://vr.nebraska.gov)

**WRITE:**

State Rehabilitation Council Chairperson  
Nebraska Department of Education  
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**CALL:**

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**State Rehabilitation Council**  
Nebraska Department of Education

October 1, 2016

As Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), I'm honored to present the 2015-2016 report on the performance & activities of the Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council. This report highlights the partnership between the SRC and Nebraska VR to ensure quality services and advocacy for individuals with disabilities in Nebraska.

- The SRC had a presence at the State Capitol in the month of October highlighting Nebraska VR Services during National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This was a vehicle to inform Nebraska State Senators of the employment services provided to individuals with disabilities and to businesses seeking to hire individuals with disabilities.
- The SRC presented the Entrepreneur of Distinction Award to three self-employment business owners while also recognizing two past recipients with alumni awards for continuing to grow their businesses.
- The Executive Committee of the SRC continued recruitment of new members, filling the seats vacated by outgoing members.
- The Client Services Committee reviewed and analyzed Nebraska VR consumer satisfaction survey results. In addition, the committee was involved with Nebraska VR's Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Latino Committees.
- The Transition Services Committee worked diligently to make the proposed changes of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) a reality by focusing on the Transition Planner and the Transition Guide.
- Members of the Employer Services Committee continued to work with employers throughout the state to facilitate improved employer satisfaction with Nebraska VR services. This committee also plans to reach out to the twelve newly elected State Senators to educate them on Nebraska VR services.

I would like to congratulate the SRC for all the input and recommendations they provided this year.

Sincerely,

*Kipp Ransom*

Kipp Ransom, Chairperson  
Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council

# SRC Committees and Accomplishments



Pam Baltzer—Omaha

Pam is a small business owner and a former Nebraska VR client. She is a member of the Transition Services Committee.



Brenda Chappell—Omaha

Brenda works as a disability advocate at the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She was a member of the Transition Services Committee.



Gina Geiger—York

Gina has been a client of Nebraska VR. She was a member of the Transition Services Committee.



Rita Hammitt—Omaha

Rita works in the Special Populations Office of the Nebraska Department of Education. She was a member of the Transition Services Committee.



John Hogue—Falls City

John is a recipient of Nebraska VR services. He was a member of the Client Services Committee.



John McNally—Lincoln

John is the Deputy Director for the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs and a member of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board. He served on the Employer Services Committee.

## Client Services Committee

Members: John Hogue, Brad Meurrens, Jonathan Moeller, Kipp Ransom, Vicki Rasmussen, and Joni Thomas (Chair).

Angela Fujan, Nebraska VR Advisor.

The committee reviewed and updated the Client Satisfaction Survey which is conducted by Easter Seals after a client's case is inactivated from the Nebraska VR program. Scores were very positive, showing individuals currently employed increased from 90% to 94% and all areas were showing improvement. Survey question updates are planned to determine the specifics of why jobs did not work out. The Client Satisfaction Survey was updated and will be used beginning October 2016, the new fiscal year.

An SRC Client Services committee member serves and acts as a liaison for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Committee, which meets quarterly to coordinate activities with Nebraska VR, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and other community organizations.

Nebraska VR participated in the Latino Project which involved service offices across the state self-identifying a need for training and assessment of staffing patterns. These offices were then provided with contracted training and assessment services through El Centro de las Americas.



Joni Thomas—Lincoln

## Client Services Committee Chairperson — Joni Thomas

Joni is the Executive Director of the Center for Independent Living of Central Nebraska.

## Employer Services Committee

Members: April Isaacs (Chair), John McNally, Vicki Newman, Tobias Orr, Mark Schultz, and David Scott.

Lindy Foley, Nebraska VR Advisor.

The Employer Services Committee provided ongoing feedback about Nebraska VR's partnerships with businesses and Project SEARCH sites.

The committee discussed and provided feedback on the Nebraska VR marketing materials. They offered suggestions to include a list of current business partners which would encourage new businesses to work with Nebraska VR. The committee discussed ideas to increase and build feedback with employers. This included adding success stories to the outreach materials to create an emotional connection with potential employers.

The committee sponsored the Annual Entrepreneur of Distinction Awards held at the Capitol in October 2015. The business owners were selected by the State Rehabilitation Council in recognition of their entrepreneurial spirit and outstanding business success.



April Isaacs—Unadilla

### Employer Services Committee Chairperson — April Isaacs

April is the Human Resource Business Partner and Recruitment Specialist with Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center.

## Transition Services Committee

Members: Brenda Chappell, Gina Geiger, Gayle Hahn (Chair), Rita Hammitt, Sandy Peterson, and JD Simmons.

Brigid Griffin, Nebraska VR Advisor.

The Transition Services Committee provided feedback and suggestions on the Nebraska Transition Guide. The Guide features the new federal WIOA transition guidelines and resources available based upon a consumer's age. The intent is that school districts, agencies, parents, and students will use the Guide as a resource.



Gayle Hahn—Hastings

### Transition Services Committee Chairperson — Gayle Hahn

Gayle a Community Work Incentive Coordinator at Easter Seals Nebraska.



Brad Meurrens—Lincoln

Brad serves on the Nebraska Independent Living Council. He was a member of the Client Services Committee.



Jonathan Moeller—Grand Island

Jonathan experiences a disability and received Nebraska VR services. He was a member of the Client Services Committee.



Vicki Newman — Lincoln

Vicki was a former VR client. She was a member of the Employer Services Committee.



Tobias Orr—Lincoln

Tobias is the Director of the Assistive Technology Partnership. He was a member of the Employer Services Committee.



Sandy Peterson—Omaha

Sandy works for PTI Nebraska (Parent Training and Information for Families of Children with Disabilities). She was a member of the Transition Services Committee.



Kipp Ransom—Lincoln

Kipp is the Lead Counselor on the Spinal Cord Injury Unit at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. He served as the SRC Chairperson and on the Client Services Committee.



Vicki Rasmussen—Lincoln

Vicki was the Director of the Nebraska Client Assistance Program (CAP). She was a member of the Client Services Committee.



Mark Schultz—Lincoln

Mark is the Director of Nebraska VR and a required member of the SRC. He is a member of the Employer Services Committee.



David Scott—LaVista

David is the Director of Sales for Embassy Suites Omaha-LaVista. He joined the SRC to share with others the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. He was a member of the Employer Services Committee.



J.D. Simmons—Doniphan

J.D. is a Nebraska VR Employment Specialist in the Grand Island field office. He was a member of the Transition Services Committee.

# 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:	\$ 9,614.59
Average Annual Earnings after Nebraska VR Services:	20,342.68
Estimated Annual Taxes on Earnings:	
Federal Income Tax	\$ 1045.05
State Income Tax	\$ 460.46
State/Local Sales Tax	\$ 458.18
Social Security Tax	\$ 1261.20
Average Total Taxes per Year	\$ 3224.89
Average Return to Taxpayers over 30 Remaining Years of Employment	\$ 96,746.70

On average, a successfully employed person returns **\$10.06** to the taxpayers for every **\$1** spent through Nebraska VR services.



# Message from the Nebraska VR Director



“Nebraska VR, where your future begins.” It’s more than a tag line. It’s only when we stop defending the sanctity of the past that we can begin pointing ourselves to the future. The

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) certainly requires us to look ahead and refocus our priorities and resources to become a better workforce system partner, to see business as our customer, and to build on the strengths of the VR program to serve those with the most significant disabilities.

To assist the State Rehabilitation Council to become a stronger partner in this process of change, the SRC made the decision to join the National Association of State Rehabilitation Councils this past year. Understanding how other state VR programs and their SRCs have worked together to implement the requirements of WIOA will enhance and inform the work of the Council in deliberations and discussions of policy, procedure and practice. I am glad they are taking a bigger view of what might be possible and I appreciate the commitment of the SRC members to be involved, to be informed, and to provide input on our development of strategies for pre-employment transition services, business account managers, rapid engagement, and organizational changes to name just a few.

Winston Churchill said, “there is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction.” Are we headed in the right direction? We believe so but only time will ultimately give us the answer. The SRC becoming involved with others at a national level will help us make better decisions in Nebraska as we learn what has worked or not worked well in other states. This is where our future begins.

*Mark Schultz, Director*

*Nebraska VR*

# Annual Program Costs

	Cost of Program
<b>Administration</b>	<b>\$3,308,962</b>
<b>CLIENT SERVICES</b>	
	Cost of Program
Provided by VR Staff	\$12,565,959
Purchased from Community Rehab Programs	\$884,134
Purchased from Other Vendors	\$6,029,441
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,479,534</b>
<b>PURCHASED FOR CLIENTS</b>	
	Cost of Program
Assessment	\$659,557
Diagnosis & Treatment of Impairments	\$48,513
Graduate College or University Training	\$37,080
Four-Year College or University Training	\$870,185
Junior or Community College Training	\$605,028
Occupational or Vocational Training	\$288,138
On-the-Job Training	\$95,934
Apprenticeship Training	\$166,679
Job Readiness Training	\$2,250
Disability Related Skills Training	\$5,735
Miscellaneous Training	\$24,025
On-the-Job Supports-Time Limited	\$64,944
On-the-Job Supports-Supp. Employment	\$1,184,539
Transportation	\$325,830
Maintenance	\$178,830
Rehabilitation Technology	\$1,710,052
Reader	\$5,394
Interpreter	\$42,863
Technical Assistance	\$41,150
Benefits Counseling	\$161,059
All Other Services	\$395,790
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,913,575</b>

# Nebraskans Served by Nebraska VR

## CONSUMERS SERVED BY COUNTY

County	Total	County	Total
Adams.....	274	Johnson .....	1
Antelope.....	21	Kearney.....	30
Arthur.....	0	Keith .....	18
Banner .....	1	Keya Paha .....	0
Blaine.....	5	Kimball .....	10
Boone .....	21	Knox .....	22
Box Butte.....	19	Lancaster .....	1439
Boyd .....	4	Lincoln.....	251
Brown .....	6	Logan.....	2
Buffalo .....	254	Loup .....	7
Burt.....	19	Madison.....	370
Butler.....	62	McPherson.....	6
Cass .....	34	Merrick.....	42
Cedar .....	28	Morrill .....	13
Chase.....	2	Nance.....	30
Cherry .....	4	Nemaha .....	9
Cheyenne.....	27	Nuckolls.....	12
Clay.....	33	Otoe.....	59
Colfax.....	27	Pawnee.....	9
Cuming .....	30	Perkins.....	3
Custer .....	45	Phelps.....	22
Dakota .....	47	Pierce.....	36
Dawes.....	31	Platte .....	312
Dawson.....	117	Polk .....	28
Deuel .....	7	Red Willow .....	47
Dixon .....	32	Richardson.....	21
Dodge .....	135	Rock.....	4
Douglas .....	1272	Saline.....	52
Dundy .....	3	Sarpy .....	233
Fillmore.....	30	Saunders .....	48
Franklin.....	12	Scotts Bluff.....	229
Frontier.....	10	Seward.....	43
Furnas.....	13	Sheridan .....	4
Gage .....	60	Sherman .....	18
Garden .....	3	Sioux.....	0
Garfield.....	15	Stanton.....	24
Gosper .....	10	Thayer.....	15
Grant.....	1	Thomas.....	1
Greeley.....	7	Thurston .....	26
Hall .....	366	Valley .....	18
Hamilton.....	29	Washington .....	39
Harlan .....	3	Wayne.....	39
Hayes.....	1	Webster .....	17
Hitchcock.....	16	Wheeler .....	3
Holt.....	39	York .....	84
Hooker.....	1	Out of State.....	70
Howard .....	21		
Jefferson .....	36		
		<b>Total Served</b>	<b>6999</b>

## 2016 NEBRASKA VR EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Applied for Services	5432
Received Services	6999
Successfully Employed	2026

## SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED NEBRASKA VR CLIENTS



**61%** of clients are employed full-time.

Average wage for 2016 is **\$11.81**.

## 2016 OCCUPATION & EARNINGS FOR COMPETITIVELY EMPLOYED CONSUMERS

Occupations	Percent	Average Hourly Earnings
Service	26.80%	\$9.63
Office Support	13.13%	\$10.97
Professional	13.08%	\$16.06
Production	12.04%	\$11.86
Sales	11.50%	\$9.83
Transportation & Material Moving	8.29%	\$12.24
Construction & Extraction	5.28%	\$13.02
Installation, Maintenance, & Repairs	4.39%	\$14.17
Management, Business, & Finance	3.21%	\$16.93
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	2.27%	\$15.59

# Partnerships with Employers & Nebraska VR

## SOME OF THE EMPLOYER PARTNERS WORKING WITH NEBRASKA VR

### AGRICULTURE

Cargill  
T&L Irrigation

### BANKING/INSURANCE

First National Bank  
United Bank & Trust

### CAR MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Anderson Auto\*  
Certified Transmission\*  
Firestone\*  
Graham Tire\*  
Husker Auto Group\*  
Jensen Tire & Auto\*  
Jiffy Lube\*  
Kia Motors\*  
Pittman\*  
Sears Auto\*  
Southeast Community College\*  
Tires Plus\*  
TO Haas\*  
Walker Tire & Auto\*

### CLEANING SERVICES

ABM  
Executive Janitorial  
FBG  
Fish Window Cleaning

### DISTRIBUTION

Amcon Distributing Co.  
Sysco  
Walmart Distribution Center+

### FOOD PROCESSING

Hormel  
Smart Chicken

### FOOD STORES

Bag 'N Save  
Fresh Foods  
Fresh Ideas  
Gary's Super Foods  
Hy-Vee

Safeway  
Super Saver

### HOTELS

Comfort Inn  
Days Inn & Suites  
Embassy Suites+  
Hampton Inn  
Hyatt  
Quality Inn  
Ramada Inn

### HUMAN SERVICES

Goodwill Ind. of Greater NE, Inc.  
Habitat for Humanity  
Simon House  
United Way  
YMCA  
YWCA

### HVAC

A-1 United\*  
Accurate Heating & Cooling\*  
DuctMedic\*  
Frazier Company\*  
Fred's Heating & Air\*  
SOS Heating & Air\*  
Standard Heating and Air\*

### INFORMATION SERVICES

InfoUSA (now Infogroup)  
Lincoln Journal Star  
Gallup  
PayPal+

### MANUFACTURING

Behlen Mfg. Co.  
Columbus Hydraulics  
Lindsay Manufacturing Co.  
Molex  
TMCO, Inc.

### MANUFACTURING/WELDING

Access Electric\*  
Agri-Products\*

Allmand Bros\*  
Bamsesberger Blacksmith & Welding\*  
Case New Holland CNH\*  
Chief Industries, Inc.\*  
Cyclonaire\*  
Donner Steel Works\*  
Filter Specialist Inc\*  
Heartland Electric\*  
IES Commercial Inc\*  
Messersmith Electric\*  
Metal-Tech\*  
Mid-Plains Power\*  
Middleton Electric\*  
Valmont Industries+

### MEDICAL/HEALTH CARE

Central District Health Dept.  
CVS  
Columbus Community Hospital+  
Faith Regional Health Services+  
Good Samaritan Hospital+  
Home Instead Senior Care  
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital  
Mary Lanning Hospital+  
Mercy Medical Center+  
Nebraska Medicine+  
Northfield Retirement Communities  
Omaha Children's Hospital+  
St. Elizabeth-CHI Health+  
St. Francis Medical Center+  
Tabitha  
University of NE Medical Center+  
Waverly Care Center  
York General Health Care+

### PHARMACEUTICALS

Novartis  
Pharmaceutical Technologies, Inc.  
West Pharmaceuticals

### RESTUARANTS/FOOD SERVICE

Applebee's

Catfish Corner  
Dickey's Barbecue Pit  
Five Guys Burgers & Fries  
IHOP  
Lincoln Highway Diner  
Old Chicago  
Panera Bread  
Parthenon  
Pizza Hut  
Popeyes  
Sodexo+  
Voodoo Taco

### RETAIL

Best Buy  
Bosselman's Travel Center  
Cabela's Inc.+  
Earl May  
Gordmans  
Hobby Lobby  
Home Depot  
Home Goods  
Lowe's  
Marshalls  
Menards  
Oriental Trading Company  
Orscheln  
Petco  
Shopko  
Staples  
Target  
TJ Maxx  
Walgreens  
Walmart Stores

\* Certificate Program Partner

+ Project SEARCH Site Host

## PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT VIDEO SERIES

This year Nebraska VR released the Pathway to Employment Video Series featuring clients at their jobsites with business partners. In each of the stories, staff members share the services provided to meet the employment needs of both. See all the videos at: <http://vr.nebraska.gov/videos/>

# Nebraska VR

# Successful People

ENTREPRENEUR OF DISTINCTION AWARDS  
OCTOBER 2015



The Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) recognized three Nebraska business owners at the 2015 Entrepreneur of Distinction Awards. The business owners were selected by the SRC in recognition of their entrepreneurial spirit and outstanding business success.

David Ficke, owner of Babyboomers' Cycles, Seward. David started his business in 2013 with the ability and skills to repair and maintain anything mechanical, electrical or electronic.

Mike Hersh, owner of Patriot Family Chiropractic, Omaha. Two months after starting his business in January 2012, Mike's business generated a profit.

Pam Baltzer, owner of Ascent Tutoring, Omaha. Since August 2012, Pam has tutored K-12 and homeschooled students, college students, adults, and students with disabilities in the subjects of math and science.

The 2015 Entrepreneur of Distinction Alumni Award was presented this year to two recipients chosen because of their continued business success and contributions to their communities.

Jake VanHorn, owner of VanHorn Saddlery, Ogallala. Since Jake received the 2011 Entrepreneur of Distinction Award, he has continued to expand his business.



From left to right: SRC Chair Kipp Ransom, VR Director Mark Schultz, Jake VanHorn (hat), Vern Roso, David Ficke, Governor Pete Ricketts, Mike Hersh, Pam Baltzer, and Commissioner of Education Matt Blomstedt



Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts spoke at the SRC sponsored event.

Vern Roso, owner of Upholstery Rescue, Lincoln. Vern received the 2009 Entrepreneur of Distinction Award and continues to increase his client list through referrals from satisfied, repeat customers.

Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts, Nebraska Education Commissioner Matt Blomstedt, and Nebraska VR Director Mark Schultz recognized the accomplishments of the award winners.

"These individuals were able to take an idea for a business, and with the appropriate information and support, make their goal of self employment a reality. Their dedication and persistence is a model for others and the recognition they are receiving is well deserved," Nebraska VR Director Mark Schultz said.

## OFFICE LOCATIONS

### Columbus serves counties:

Butler, Colfax, Nance, Platte and Polk  
3100 23rd Street, Ste. 5, Columbus, NE 68601  
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VR.InfoColumbus@nebraska.gov

### Fremont serves counties:

Dodge and Washington  
827 North D St , Fremont, NE 68025  
(402) 727-2900, (888) 585-5439  
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### Grand Island serves counties:

Fillmore, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Howard, Merrick,  
Nuckolls, Thayer and York  
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Grand Island, NE 68801  
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### Hastings serves counties:

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### Kearney serves counties:

Blaine, Buffalo, Custer, Franklin, Furnas, Garfield,  
Harlan, Kearney, Loup, Phelps, Sherman and Valley  
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### Lincoln serves counties:

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Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Saunders and Seward  
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### Norfolk serves counties:

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Dixon, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Rock,

### Stanton, Wayne and Wheeler

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### North Platte serves counties:

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Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan,  
McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow and Thomas  
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### Omaha-Downtown serves counties:

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### Scottsbluff serves counties:

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Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan and Sioux  
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South Sioux City, NE 68776  
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