

Oregon State Rehabilitation Council



2004 Annual Report

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State Rehabilitation Council

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
500 Summer Street NE E87
Salem OR 97301-1120

Voice: (503) 945-6256
TTY: (503) 945-5894
Toll Free: (877) 277-0513
FAX: (503) 947-5025

December 2004

Honorable Governor Ted Kulongoski and Joanne Wilson, RSA Commissioner:

It is our pleasure to submit this Annual Report of the Oregon State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). This document contains information highlighting the activities and accomplishments of the SRC this past year.

The SRC remains committed to preserving the integrity of the public vocational rehabilitation program in Oregon. This has been a year of changes in leadership for both the SRC and the program. Our thanks go to Tim Holmes, past SRC Chair, Tina Treasure, who served as Acting OVRs Administrator, and Ted Swigart, who followed as Interim OVRs Administrator, for the great work they did, and for leaving such a positive legacy for all of us, including Stephaine Parrish Taylor, the new OVRs Administrator.

We are pleased that our continuing surveys of consumer and employee satisfaction show positive trends. We are further grateful for the support and understanding that has been evidenced by the new leadership within DHS.

We hope that this report shows the passion and commitment of the SRC, and all its members, to improve employment outcomes for Oregonians with disabilities. It is also our hope that, as the economic and employment picture continues to brighten in our state, we can improve upon these outcomes with the support of all our partners.

Respectfully,

John Dziennik
SRC Chair

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Oregon State Rehabilitation Council

Council Purpose

The purpose of the Oregon State Rehabilitation Council is to provide the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) with an external, consumer-oriented perspective. The Council advises OVRs on the needs of Oregonians with disabilities concerning programs, policy, services and other issues.

The Council also provides rehabilitation services consumers with a formal mechanism to influence the direction of rehabilitation programs in Oregon at the systemic and policy level.

Council Authority and Initiative

The State Rehabilitation Council is authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. This federal legislation identifies the required functions of the Council, which include:

- Work in partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) regarding essential planning and service delivery intended to result in meeting the employment potential of Oregonians with disabilities.
- Review and analyze program effectiveness, create and analyze consumer satisfaction materials, render concerns and recommendations to OVRs derived from performance standards and measurements of rehabilitation services.
- Advise the Governor and state agencies on the performance of vocational rehabilitation in Oregon regarding eligibility, program effectiveness and effect on individuals with disabilities. This includes preparation and distribution of this Annual Report.
- Coordinate the work of the State Rehabilitation Council with the activities of other disability-related councils in the state. This includes establishing and maintaining a positive working relationship with the Oregon Disabilities Commission and the State Independent Living Council.

Council Structure

The full Council meets four times a year. These sessions occur throughout the state and are structured in order to:

- Listen to and hear from consumers and others;

- Learn about programs, activities and needs specific to each region of the state;
- Build/Support collaborations with public and private partners involved in rehabilitation and employment in Oregon; and
- Conduct the business of the Council in a public setting.

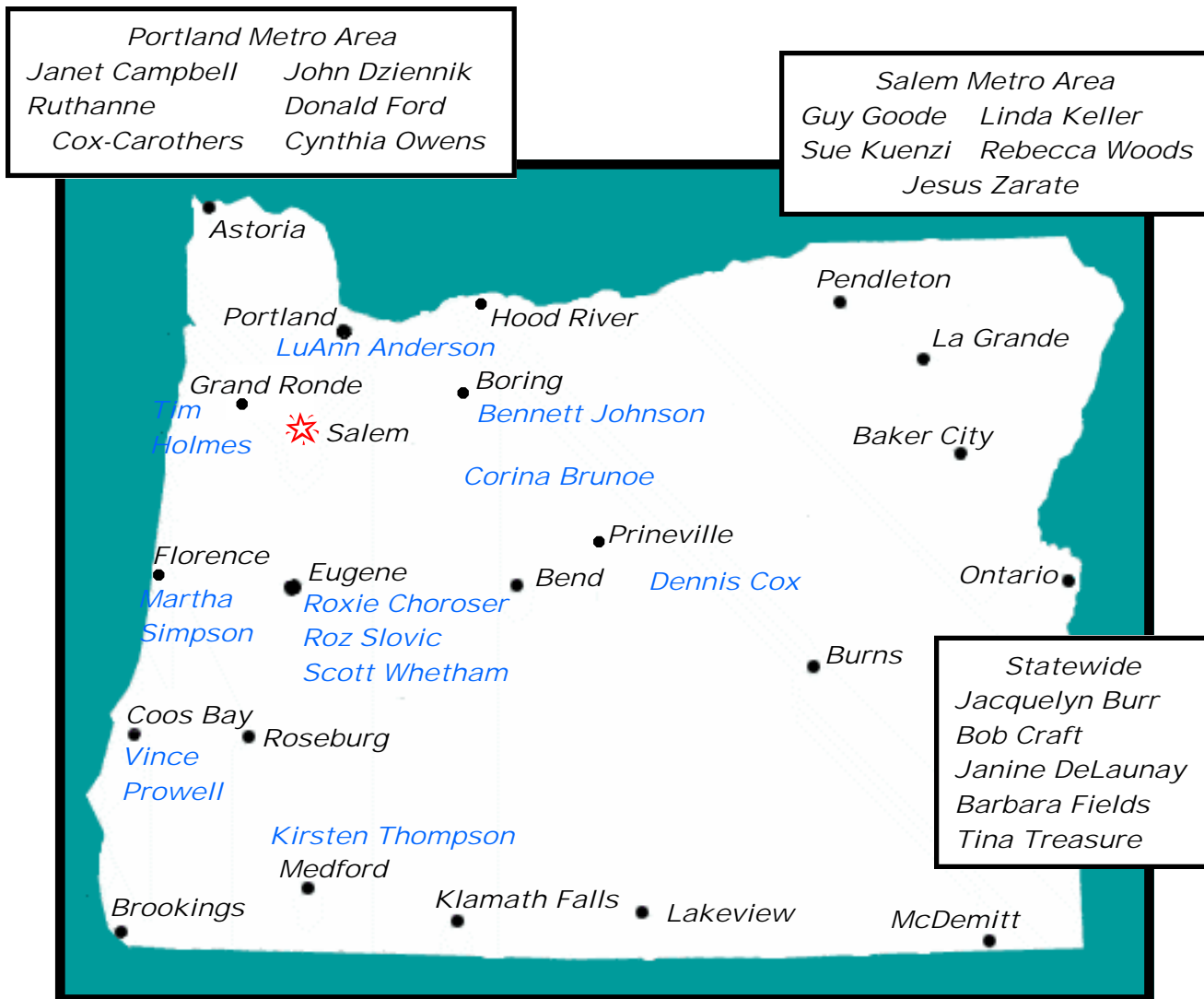
Standing Committees work with a customer/consumer-driven focus to honor the Mission of the Council. The committees and their functions are:

- The Business Committee advises OVRs on strategies to strengthen its relationships with and effectiveness of services to Oregon's employers. It assisted in the development of the Oregon Business Leadership Network, with the mission to assist local businesses in promoting the participation of persons with disabilities in the workplace and in the marketplace. This committee will continue to act in a key advisory role to the Oregon Business Leadership Network.
- The Evaluation Committee reviews, analyzes and issues reports on OVRs' services and outcomes in the areas of program effectiveness and consumer satisfaction. It also collaborates with OVRs on needs assessments related to program effectiveness and consumer satisfaction.
- The Legislative Committee has the responsibility to coordinate a legislative strategy and to review bills before the legislature and may propose legislation related to the work of OVRs.
- The Membership Committee interviews and recommends the appointment of the candidates to replace members who are exiting the Council; develops orientation materials and programs in coordination with the Council Coordinator; monitors, encourages and rewards the mentoring efforts of the Council; arranges for necessary Council member training with the Council Coordinator; and sees that each SRC member is trained in Council duties and helped to be as effective as possible.
- The Policy Committee works in partnership with the OVRs to review proposed policies and offers advice regarding any potential impact on the disability community. It ensures that Council members are informed of and trained in their SRC role as identified by the Rehabilitation Act. This committee also reviews Independent Hearings Officer's decisions, and provides feedback to the OVRs Administrator regarding any trends SRC members might identify as having implications for future training needs of the field staff.
- The Executive/Diversity Committee develops the Council's quarterly meeting agenda,

recommends Council policies, regularly confers with OVRS administration, designates representation at disability-related events and forums, is accessible to the Governor's office, and deals with issues raised by Council committees and others in the interim between quarterly Council meetings. The committee drafts individual letters of support for grant opportunities and also responds on behalf of the Council to preserve the intent and content of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It also provides guidance and input into OVRS' efforts to improve cultural sensitivity and competence in its staff and consumer service delivery.

Council Membership

During 2004, with appointments by the Governor, the Council had 26 members representing persons with disabilities, advocates, service providers, employers, vocational rehabilitation staff and the community. The 2004 Council had 58% persons with disabilities and 11.5% minority representation. The Council is proud of its demonstrated commitment to geographic, cultural and disability representation and is in the process of actively recruiting for more members with disabilities and those with culturally diverse backgrounds.



State Rehabilitation Council Members

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM</u>	<u>REPRESENTATION / COMMUNITY</u>
LuAnn Anderson	01/03 - 11/05	Education Advocate / Salem
Brunoe, Corina	12/04 - 11/07	121 Program / Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Burr, Jackie *	12/04 - 11/05	Education / Statewide
Jan Campbell *	04/01 - 11/05	Advocate / Portland
Roxie Choroser *	12/04 - 12/07	Advocate, Consumer / Portland
Dennis Cox *	02/01 - 09/04	Advocate, Consumer / Prineville
Ruthanne Cox-Carothers	11/02 - 11/05	Business / Portland
Bob Craft	12/04 - 11/07	Workforce Investment Board / Statewide
Janine DeLaunay *	10/00 - 09/04	Oregon Disabilities Commission /Statewide
John Dziennik *	05/04 - 11/06	Advocate / Portland
Barbara Fields *	10/00 - 11/06	Client Assistance Program / Statewide
Donald Ford	05/04 - 11/07	Business / Banks
Guy Goode *	12/04 - 11/07	Voc Rehab Counselor / Salem
Tim Holmes *	03/99 - 06/04	121 Program / Grand Ronde
Bennett Johnson	03/00 - 11/05	Community Rehab Provider, Business / Boring
Linda Keller *	11/97 - 11/04	Education, Family Member w/ Disability / Monmouth
Sue Kuenzi *	05/02 - 11/04	Voc Rehab Counselor / Salem
Cynthia Owens	05/04 - 11/06	Advocate, Family Member w/ Disability / Portland
Vince Prowell	08/03 - 04/04	Business / Coos Bay
Martha Simpson *	02/01 - 11/06	Advocate / Portland
Roz Slovic	10/02 - 11/05	Advocate, Family Member w/ Disability, Rehab Ed Rep / Eugene
Kirsten Thompson	05/04 - 11/06	Parent & Training Info Ctr / Central Point
Tina Treasure *	07/04 - 11/07	Independent Living Council / Statewide
D. Scott Whetham *	12/01 - 11/04	Community Rehab Program / Eugene
Rebecca Woods	12/04 - 11/07	Advocate / Salem
Jesus "Tony" Zarate *	08/03 - 11/06	Advocate / Monmouth

* Individuals with disabilities

State Rehabilitation Council Committees

Business Committee

1. Ruthanne Cox-Carothers, Chair
2. Bob Craft
3. Kirsten Thompson

Evaluation Committee

1. LuAnn Anderson, Chair
2. Corina Brunoe
3. John Dziennik
4. Barbara Fields
5. Bennett Johnson
6. Rebecca Woods
7. Tony Zarate

Executive/Diversity Committee

1. John Dziennik, Chair
2. Roz Slovic, Vice-Chair
3. Ruthanne Cox-Carothers
4. Tina Treasure
5. Scott Whetham
6. Vacant
7. Vacant

Legislative Committee (Ad hoc)

1. Vacant, Chair
2. LuAnn Anderson
3. Martha Simpson
4. Tony Zarate

Membership Committee (Ad hoc)

1. Martha Simpson, Chair
2. Roxie Choroser
3. Donald Ford
4. Scott Whetham
5. Vacant

Policy Committee

1. Barbara Fields, Chair
2. LuAnn Anderson
3. Jan Campbell
4. Bob Craft
5. Guy Goode
6. Cynthia Owens
7. Ulee Yanok *

*Auxiliary Member(s)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Mission

The mission of the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is to assist Oregonians with disabilities achieve and maintain employment and independence.

Overview of 2004

2004 has been a year of significant progress. We have recruited, hired and trained many new staff. We have met our federal performance expectations and maintained the rate of successful employment outcomes achieved by the Oregonians with disabilities we serve. This is a time of growing stability for OVRs. We appreciate the smooth transition from Ted Swigart serving as Interim Administrator to welcoming Stephaine Parrish Taylor as the OVRs Administrator in April.

Our focus continues to be on providing timely, effective, accessible, and culturally competent Vocational Rehabilitation services to our clients and potential clients across the state. While Oregon's economic environment is showing signs of improvement, job seekers with disabilities are still challenged in finding jobs that offer health insurance benefits and wage growth that leads to real career opportunities. We have undertaken a comprehensive needs assessment to guide our program development and provision of services.

Employment Outcomes

From October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services assisted 18,057 individuals statewide; with 2,725 individuals with disabilities gaining employment, earning an average wage of \$9.84 an hour and working an average of 30 hours per week. During this reporting period, OVRs has met the required key federal evaluation performance measures.

Please refer to the descriptive chart in the following section for additional information on the people we serve.

Key Policy Initiatives

Throughout 2004, OVRs and the State Rehabilitation Council worked collaboratively on a number of key policy initiatives. In coordination with the Department of Human Services, OVRs has successfully implemented a process of criminal background checks for community rehabilitation providers. To assure continued fiscal accountability, OVRs implemented a financial needs test to provide a fair mechanism for clients to financially contribute to the cost of their services. OVRs also implemented a procedure for both clients and OVRs to seek an impartial review of decisions resulting from fair hearings.

Partnering

We have continued to partner with school districts and community colleges across the state through our nationally recognized Youth Transition Program (YTP) and Occupational Skills Training (OST) program. We actively participate in and provide leadership on the state and local levels, sharing disability-related employment strategies with our partners in Oregon's One Stop workforce system.

OVRs has multiple projects underway which support innovation and on-going excellence in providing services, including:

Supported Employment Activities

Oregon's Vocational Rehabilitation program is honored to be one of six programs recognized nationally by the Johnson & Johnson Company in delivering supported employment services for people with severe psychiatric disabilities. Supported employment assists people whose disabilities pose significant barriers to employment and who have on-going intensive support needs to obtain and maintain appropriate employment. OVRs has several Supported Employment projects in process and here are the results for 2004:

- Dartmouth Project: This pilot project serves 110 clients with chronic mental illness in Polk, Jackson and Douglas counties under a multi-state Johnson & Johnson grant, coordinated through Dartmouth College.
- Options for Southern Oregon Program: Provides placement and support services in competitive jobs to 43 OVRs clients with severe psychiatric disabilities living in Josephine County, using IPS+ demonstration grant funds from DHS' Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services.
- Life Works NW: Provides placement and supports for competitive jobs for 24 individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who live in Washington County, using IPS+ demonstration grant funds from DHS' Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Staley Settlement Activities

Through training, planning and local collaboration, OVRs and the ten Self-Directed Support Brokerages, plus a network of personal agents continue to focus on better serving the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. As a result of this collaboration, an increased number of clients with developmental disabilities have found and kept jobs that match their interests and skills.

Joint Collaboration with Centers for Independent Living

With creative leveraging of state and federal funds, OVRs and the network of ten Centers for Independent Living are working together to enhance our joint capacity to meet the employment and independent living needs of persons with disabilities. As a

result, mutual clients are better prepared to access services successfully and benefit from vocational rehabilitation.

Annual Rehabilitation Training held August, 2004

The Oregon Rehabilitation Action Network (ORAN) again collaborated with OVRs, the Commission for the Blind and other rehabilitation partners to host this year's successful training. Drawing more than 200 vocational rehabilitation professionals from around the state, the theme "Living and Working with Chronic Conditions" provided a timely and well-received focus for the array of training topics, strategies and resources presented. An exemplary resource made available to all participants is a workbook created by Sue Kuenzi (SRC member and OVRs vocational counselor) on the personal journey associated with disability-related grief and loss.

Promoting Continuing Education

In addition to partnering to assure the continuation of the annual in-service training conference, OVRs has maintained good working relationships with the rehabilitation long-term training programs at Western Oregon University, Portland State University and Western Washington University. The programs in Region X use a variety of approaches to engage today's learner, including distance learning, weeklong intensive programs as well as traditional classes. OVRs and Washington VR are partnering with Western Oregon University with an emphasis on preparing graduate program participants through internships.

Renewed Funding for Native American VR Programs

Nationally and throughout Region X, the public vocational rehabilitation program is honored to have positive relationships with leaders and advocates of the Native American vocational rehabilitation programs. With funding renewed for the upcoming five years, the programs with both the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Warm Springs are partners with OVRs and well represented on both the State Rehabilitation Council and the State Independent Living Council.

RSA Systems Change Grant Ends September 30, 2004

The focus of the RSA Systems Change Grant has been to promote the employment of persons with disabilities who receive public support. Through OVRs leadership and with key partners, the planned activities of this federal grant awarded to Oregon in 1998 have now been successfully completed. Working together with employers, partners and staff, grant resources have served as a catalyst to launch the Oregon Business Leadership Network as a non-profit organization. Trainings on youth leadership, state government hiring and disability awareness have been conducted. An exciting array of training and awareness tools has been disseminated including public service announcements, an employer resource manual, an employment awareness poster and success stories booklet, training curricula and desktop resources.

Focusing on Employers

At the state and local level, OVRS is focusing on the development of positive business partnerships. Staff and partners have participated in recent regional and national conferences with a focus on developing the VR – business partnership. As a result of the RSA systems change grant, OVRS now has a variety of tools that were developed with employer input. The tools will be used to promote the employment of persons with disabilities. The “Cool Tools” include:

FlexAbility 2004 Toolkit- Developed and reproduced by the RSA Systems Change grant, in partnership with the Oregon Business Leadership Network. This includes a hard copy manual and accessible CD in downloadable format; the FlexAbility Toolkit is a proven resource for employers in recruiting, hiring and retaining employees with disabilities. Additional copies are available upon request from the Oregon Business Leadership Network (www.obln.org).

WorkAbility Poster- Ideal for posting in any public location, the WorkAbility poster helps provide a welcoming environment and promotes employment of persons with disabilities and reasonable accommodation.

WorkAbility Booklet- A resource celebrating the employment of persons with disabilities for job seekers with disabilities, counselors, employers and other partners, this booklet tells the stories of individuals who have disabilities and are successfully employed, and also includes print-version public service announcements.

WorkAbility Public Service Announcements- An audio CD with radio-ready and streaming PSAs about employment of people with disabilities. Featuring Oregon Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, OBLN President Jilma Meneses, workers and managers, this entire audio CD or individual PSA(s) can be posted on your website, sent to your local radio stations and track two (English) or three (Spanish) can be played at staff meetings or other public forums.

Employer Resource Guide- An excerpt from the FlexAbility 2004 Toolkit, this guide lists resources employers can access to help hire and retain employees with disabilities.

Community Resources for Youth- A guide to resources for young people with disabilities.

TTY Tips- A desktop reference to post near your TTY to help guide staff and others in making and receiving TTY telephone calls with individuals who have a hearing or speech impairment.

JAWS Tips & Tricks - A desktop reference to post near any public computer with JAWS installed. These tips were developed to support staff in working with customers who use JAWS at your worksite.

Talking About Your Disability in the Interview- A guide for applicants regarding talking about disability-related job issues in employment interviews. Placement staff, career counselors or job seekers with disabilities will find this to be useful.

Oregon Youth Leadership Forum- A brochure for dissemination to youth between 16-19 years old (in June 2005) who have a disability and want to increase their leadership skills.

Distributed by the Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Systems Change Project, Grant Award #H989A980001-01

September 30, 2004

Results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment

OVRS and the State Rehabilitation Council recently completed a comprehensive needs assessment to assist us in developing and improving vocational rehabilitation programs and services. A number of new approaches and improvements to existing programs and services have been recommended. Throughout 2005, we will identify ways to enhance the impact of vocational rehabilitation programs and increase the employment of persons with disabilities. From the needs assessment report, the five key areas of need are: 1) increased understanding, awareness and interest of Oregon businesses in employing people with disabilities; 2) enhanced understanding of the skills and abilities of people with disabilities and effective communication and matching of these skills to employment opportunities; 3) improved transitional and on-the-job support services that increase job retention of people with disabilities; 4) better access to and improved services from vocational rehabilitation services by people with significant disabilities and those from racial, ethnic, or cultural minority groups; and 5) better coordination of workforce and vocational rehabilitation programs so that people with disabilities have better access to and are better prepared for employment opportunities.

We look forward to the year ahead! As Oregon continues to face economic challenges, we are confident that the public vocational rehabilitation program is uniquely qualified to assist employers and job seekers with disabilities in contributing to the vitality of our communities and our economy.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004 Consumer Profiles

Age	Quantity	Percent
Under 20	1,121	6.2
20 to 29	3,601	19.9
30 to 39	3,690	20.4
40 to 49	5,198	28.8
50 to 59	3,694	20.5
60 Plus	753	4.2
Totall	18,057	100

Education	Quantity	Percent
None	39	0.2
Grades 1 - 7	747	4.1
Grades 8 - 11	2,501	13.9
Special Education	938	5.2
Grade 12	7,447	41.2
Grade 13 - 15	5,017	27.8
Grades 16 & Higher	1,368	7.6
Total	18,057	100

Race & Ethnicity	Quantity	Percent
African American	79	4.4
American Indian	506	2.8
Asian	307	1.7
Hispanic & Latino	740	4.1
White	15,710	87.0
Totall	18,057	100

Gender	Quantity	Percent
Male	9,335	51.7
Female	8,722	48.3
Totall	18,057	100

Primary Disability	Quantity	Percent
Alcohol & Drug	705	3.9
Cognitive	2,762	15.3
Deaf/Hearing Loss	1,101	6.1
Developmental	906	5.0
Orthopedic	7,115	39.4
Other Mental	1,046	5.8
Psychiatric	2,480	13.7
Respiratory	156	0.9
Specific Learning	1,426	7.9
Traumatic Brian Injury	360	2.0
Totall	18,057	100

Occupations	Quantity	Percent
Managerial	55	2.0
Professional	257	9.4
Health & Technical	139	5.1
Sales	233	8.6
Clerical & Support	553	20.3
Service	834	30.6
Agricultural & Timber	42	1.5
Production & Trades	187	6.9
Self-Employment	87	3.2
Machinists	338	12.4
Totall	2,725	100

2004 State Rehabilitation Council Impact

- SRC members made visits to the local Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) offices, listening to concerns and offering encouragement and support.
- SRC Exec Committee met with OVRs Exec Staff regarding the results of the SRC Field Visits. SRC sent the field visit report to all OVRs as well as the response to the report from OVRs Admin.
- SRC Evaluation and Executive Committees developed an OVRs Employee Survey and Results Report, which is included in this report.
- The SRC continues to be concerned about how well OVRs fits within the Department of Human Services - keeping in mind the importance of protecting and preserving the integrity of the public vocational rehabilitation program, as mandated in the Rehabilitation Act.
- SRC continues to have questions of the Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding Cost Allocation and how it affects OVRs client service dollars.
- The SRC is concerned about possible changes to the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) and how it might affect the future of the vocational rehabilitation program.
- The SRC continues to have concerns about the issue of confidentiality for OVRs consumers, as well as how counselors feel they are violating their professional code of ethics by delivering services in integrated settings.
- The SRC Executive Committee is in the process of planning a joint meeting with the SILC Executive Committee to prepare for the 2005 legislative session.
- The SRC has representation at the Oregon Cross Disability Coalition (ORCDC) meetings as well as the recent Medicaid Grant Stakeholders meetings.
- The SRC works closely with the State Independent Living Council (SILC), Oregon Disabilities Commission (ODC), Oregon Commission for the Blind (OBC), Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (ODDC) and other advocacy groups.
- Members of the SRC have met with Oregon legislators to educate them about the role of the State Rehabilitation Council and the public vocational rehabilitation program.

- The Oregon SRC has been asked to participate on both regional and national committees that are looking at training opportunities for SRC's nationwide.
 - Assisted in the recruitment and appointment of new Council Members.
 - The SRC regularly responds to requests for information regarding OVRs services, and also responds to consumer complaints.
 - The SRC Business Committee works closely with the Oregon Business Leadership Network (OBLN), and is largely responsible for getting the OBLN up and running again in the Portland area.
 - The SRC Evaluation Committee worked with OVRs on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
 - The SRC Policy Committee reviewed numerous proposed changes to the administrative rules for vocational rehabilitation services and provided input. The committee reviewed and discussed OVRs policies and practices for job developers and for allowing clients to change employment goals. They also reviewed a document that describes the OVRs policy development process and submitted a revision that OVRs adopted. They have reviewed decisions of the Impartial Hearing Officers and revised the form it uses to guide these reviews.
 - SRC had a vendor booth at the Oregon Independence Fairs held across the state.
 - SRC had five representatives attend the ORAN Conference in Portland, August 24-25, 2004. The SRC also had a vendor booth and shared space with the SILC.
 - SRC was represented at the Oregon Disabilities Commission (ODC) Awards Ceremony, October 2004. Janine DeLaunay, SRC member received the Eugene Organ Lifetime Achievement Award.
 - Participated in the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Annual 107 Review, December 2004.
-

SRC Committee Reports

Business Committee

Ruthanne Cox-Carothers, Chair; Jan Campbell;
Bob Craft; Kirsten Thompson



**Ruthanne
Cox-Carothers**

- In January 2004 the State Rehabilitation Council Business Committee assisted the Department of Education Rehabilitation Service Administration with the Region X Employment Conference January 26-28, 2004. The committee contacted Oregon Business Leadership Network employers and small businesses to participate on two conference panels. Three of the businesses on the Small Business Panel were owners with disabilities and the fourth was a minority owner. The Employer Panel “Best Practices in Hiring and Retention of Individuals with Disabilities” included NIKE, SEH, Portland General Electric, Oregon Department of Transportation and Live Bridge.

- The SRC Business Committee Members and their auxiliary agency members also solicited gift donations and presented gift baskets to all RSA Region X conference, employer presenters. Extra gifts were used for drawings and distributed to individuals that attended the conference. The SRC Business Committee members assisted the Oregon Business Leadership Network with the employer reception that took place the first evening of the conference.



Kirsten Thompson

- During the month of May the SRC Business Committee coordinated a lunch time Disability Accommodation Fair at SAFECO in Portland and ten agencies participated.
- The State Rehabilitation Council worked with DHS OVRS and RSA Systems Change grant staff to revise the OBLN FlexAbility Tool Kit. The tool kit is an employment disability resource guide for Oregon Business. It is available to businesses through the Oregon Business Leadership Network, OVRS and community partners. It will also be distributed at employment and disability related conferences.



Jan Campbell

Evaluation Committee

Lu Ann Anderson, Chair; Corina Brunoe; John Dziennik;
Barbara Fields; Bennett Johnson; Rebecca Woods; Tony Zarate

- The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Evaluation Committee met regularly this past year. The activities of the committee were to maintain an ongoing dialogue regarding the Client and Staff surveys, which were conducted, data analyzed and reports completed. This data was discussed at length with OVRS Executive Staff and the SRC Executive Committee, as well as the full Council. The data obtained from these surveys was also disseminated to field staff. Ongoing discussion among all stakeholders about the information obtained from the data will continue and portions of the items will likely be incorporated in the 2005 surveys for longitudinal comparisons.



LuAnn Anderson



Corina Brunoe

- The committee also participated in a Needs Assessment conducted by Kennedy Consulting. This report has been completed and is being finalized at this time. The result of the Needs Assessment correlates with the information obtained in the client and staff surveys and will be used to enhance OVRS services to clients and staff alike.

Thank you to the members of the Evaluation Committee for giving so generously of their time and talents and to Aaron Hughes for his support and data expertise.



Rebecca Woods

Executive/Diversity Committee

Tim Holmes, Chair; John Dziennik, Chair; Roz Slovic, Vice-Chair;
Ruthanne Cox-Carothers; Tina Treasure; Scott Whetham



John Dziennik

- The State Rehabilitation Council's Executive Committee has been diligent in working on behalf of the Council to preserve the integrity of vocational rehabilitation services in Oregon. The committee met monthly and more often as needed. The following are issues the committee worked on during this past year:

- **Budget and Cost Allocation:** On behalf of the SRC, the Executive Committee sent numerous letters to DHS, requesting information on the OVRs budget. The Council continues to ask what effect cost allocation has on service delivery dollars. It remains a serious concern that OVRs is not able to obtain information regarding their budget, and does not have control over their fiscal resources, as mandated in the Rehabilitation Act.



Roz Slovic

- **Field Visits:** Members of the Executive Committee visited various field offices, listening to concerns and offering encouragement and support when needed.

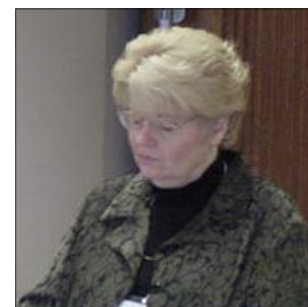
- **New Administrator:** Members of the Executive Committee were actively involved in the recruitment and selection of the new OVRs Administrator, Stephaine Parrish Taylor.



Tina Treasure

- **Confidentiality Issues:** The committee continues to have dialogue with OVRs regarding counselors interviewing consumers in non-confidential settings, thus not respecting the consumer and also violating the counselors' professional code of ethics.

- **Facility Issues:** The committee asked for and reviewed information regarding OVRs facilities, e.g. what are the numbers of offices located with non-DHS partners and how is rent paid in these offices? What is the total rent and what does OVRs pay? Does OVRs Administration have the ability to relocate its staff outside of DHS facilities if necessary?



Linda Keller

- **Comprehensive System Personnel Development (CSPD):** The Council shared their concern with OVRs regarding the possibility of future changes to the current CSPD Policy. The SRC strongly supports the higher level of qualifications for counselors set forth in current CSPD Policy.



Scott Whetham

- **107 Review:** Members of the Executive Committee participated in the federal 107 Review with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).



Roxie Choroser

- Recruitment: Worked with the Membership Committee and the Governor's office on the recruitment and appointment of new members.
- Employee Survey: Executive Committee members worked on the Employee Survey/Report with the Evaluation Committee. Thanks to all who worked on this report and to OVRS employees for their candid assessments of both the successes and ongoing

concerns in working to make the VR program in Oregon one of the best in the nation.

- Partnership: Worked closely with OVRS to keep the SRC fully informed of the challenges facing the program, and empowering all our members to effectively advocate for the best client services available.
- The Executive Committee would like to thank all SRC members for their dedication and commitment. This is a volunteer driven Council, and Oregon is very fortunate to have such dedicated, educated and motivated State Rehabilitation Council members.



Martha Simpson

Membership Committee

Martha Simpson, Chair; Roxie Choroser; Donald Ford; Scott Whetham

- Due to term limits and other circumstances, the Council must continue to actively recruit new members, always keeping in mind the mandated membership representation required in the Rehabilitation Act.



Donald Ford

- New members this year include: Corina Brunoe, Jackie Burr, Roxie Choroser, Bob Craft, John Dziennik, Donald Ford, Guy Goode, Cynthia Owens, Kirsten Thompson, Tina Treasure and Rebecca Woods.
- Those who left due to term limits and other circumstances were: Dennis Cox, Janine DeLaunay, Tim Holmes, Linda Keller, Sue Kuenzi and Vince Prowell.

- The Council is committed to its geographic, cultural and disability representation and is in the process of actively recruiting for more members with disabilities, those with culturally diverse backgrounds, youth as well as representation from the eastern part of the state.
-

Policy Committee

Janine DeLaunay, Chair; Barbara Fields, Chair; Lu Ann Anderson; Jan Campbell; Bob Craft; Guy Goode; Cynthia Owens; Ulee Yanok



Barbara Fields

- In the past year, the SRC Policy Committee has met regularly on the third Thursday of the month:
- Reviewed and discussed decisions of Impartial Hearing Officers and the Reviewing Official, and further revised the form used to guide these reviews;
- Reviewed and discussed proposed changes to OVRs and BOLI administrative rules and provided written comments on one occasion to OVRs;
- Selected two committee members who served on a panel of four that scored responses to the Request for Proposals to select Hearings Officers;
- Reviewed and provided input on the OVRs Annual Update to the State Plan;
- Analyzed and discussed several issues about job developers and clients who change employment goals and drafted recommendations for OVRs;
- Reviewed and discussed with OVRs the issues identified in the Client Assistance Program's Annual Report;
- Reviewed the OVRs Policy Development Process and recommended revisions that OVRs adopted.



Guy Goode



Cynthia Owens

State Rehabilitation Council Resource Plan

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services has continued its commitment of resources to support the effective functioning of the State Rehabilitation Council. Resources include:

1. Adequate funding to support full member participation and consumer involvement across the state.
2. Continued dedicated staff support for full Council and committee activities. Costs include salaries & benefits for Council Coordinator & clerical support. (These costs, totaling \$85,427, are reflected in another portion of the VR budget.)
3. Annual budget for 2004 is \$70,000. The approved budget for the second half of the biennium is planned at the same level.

<u>Resource Plan Category</u>	<u>2003-2004 Budget Expenditures</u>
Quarterly Meetings	\$35,190
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes meals, meeting accommodations, facilitators, member travel, member per diem, attendant care, reasonable accommodations	
Member Training & Involvement	\$17,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes teleconference calls, committee meeting costs, travel, regional & national meetings	
Major Council Activities	\$12,225
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes annual report, member recruitment, client & employee surveys	
Supplies & Services	\$5,085
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes materials & supplies, staff travel, postage & printing	

2004-2005 Quarterly Meeting Schedule

Winter: February 6, 2004 - Roseburg

Spring: May 7, 2004 - Bend

Summer: August 6, 2004 - Portland

Fall: November 5, 2004 - Newport

Winter: February 4, 2005 - Salem *

Spring: May 6, 2005 - Salem *

Summer: August 5, 2005 - Klamath Falls *

Fall: November 4, 2005 - Eugene *

* Meeting dates and / or locations subject to change.



**Sue Kuenzi &
Jesus "Tony" Zarate**



Vince Prowell



Dennis Cox



Sue Kuenzi

Acknowledgements

The Council would like to make the following acknowledgements:

- Youth participants in the 6th Annual Youth Leadership Forum conducted in June, 2004 at Western Oregon University.
- Oregon Disabilities Commission for leadership with the Annual Governor's Awards Program recognizing outstanding employers, advocates and persons with disabilities.
- Janine DeLaunay for her outstanding leadership as Director of the Oregon Disabilities Commission, member of the SRC and recipient of the 2004 ODC Eugene Organ Lifetime Achievement Award.



Janine DeLaunay



Tim Holmes

- Tim Holmes for his extraordinary leadership as Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council during challenging times.
- Ted Swigart for outstanding leadership in his role as interim OVRS Administrator.
- Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Region X staff for their commitment to ensure that public vocational rehabilitation programs in Region X are operated in accordance within the law, spirit and intent of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Susan Lincoln for her many years of clerical support to the SRC.



State Rehabilitation Council

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
500 Summer Street NE E87
Salem OR 97301-1120

Voice: (503) 945-6256
TTY: (503) 945-5894
Toll Free: (877) 277-0513
FAX: (503) 947-5025

April, 2004

OVRs Employees:

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) would like to thank each of you for the tremendous work you do to serve the clients of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. We know you work long hours in challenging situations and we want you to know your work is important and appreciated by many.

As you know, SRC members conducted field visits during the months of December 2003 and January and February 2004. They were not able to visit every office, but did manage to visit or talk to more than half of the field offices. We asked field staff to share with the SRC their thoughts on what was and wasn't working in their areas as well as any ideas or suggestions they had for improvements. Currently the SRC Executive/Diversity Committee is working closely with OVRs' executive team to answer any questions or issues that resulted from these field visits. Please know the SRC will honor their promise to you in keeping names of OVRs staff confidential. We hope to have a report for you on the results of these visits along with OVRs Administration's comments on how they plan to address your concerns in the near future.

The SRC would appreciate you taking the time to complete the enclosed survey. This information will compliment the information learned from the field visits. For your convenience we've enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope for your use in returning this survey.

Thank you again for your commitment and dedication to the clients you serve!

Sincerely,

State Rehabilitation Council

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Employee Survey

The State Rehabilitation Council wants to provide direct feedback to OVRS to identify what's working and/or where improvements are needed. The Governor appoints the State Rehabilitation Council, of which a majority are persons with disabilities. The SRC, with this survey, intends to measure employees' perceptions and opinions relative to the efficiency and effectiveness of OVRS service delivery. Please feel free to include additional comments on any of these questions in the space provided at the end of this survey or on additional paper. ***Your responses will be kept confidential. The State Rehabilitation Council will provide only aggregate information.***

My job category is:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MANAGEMENT	SUPPORT STAFF	COUNSELOR	OTHER

EFFECTIVENESS OF OVRS SERVICE DELIVERY

1. Service delivery to OVRS clients is effective.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STRONGLY AGREE	<i>Agree</i>	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NO OPINION/ DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

2. I am currently enabled to provide the best possible service.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STRONGLY AGREE	<i>Agree</i>	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NO OPINION/ DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

3. Working in a shared entry/lobby environment has improved the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STRONGLY AGREE	<i>Agree</i>	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NO OPINION/ DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

4. Working in a shared office environment has improved the accessibility of services to individuals with disabilities.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE

5. Working in a shared office environment has maintained the same level of safety as a stand-alone environment.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE

6. People are being referred to OVRs in an appropriate manner.

ALWAYS *Most of* SOMETIMES NO OPINION/ SELDOM NEVER
the Time DON'T KNOW

IMPROVING OVRs SERVICE DELIVERY

7. The current work environment contributes to improved OVRs service delivery.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE

8. How would you change your current work environment to improve OVRs service delivery?

9. Shared responsibilities among OVRs and other DHS programs have increased the efficiency of OVRs service delivery.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE DISAGREE

10. Significant barriers to effective service delivery currently exist.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE DISAGREE

If you agreed with this statement, please describe the barriers: _____

11a. Implementing the practice of “service integration” has improved OVRs capacity to work with its workforce partners.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE DISAGREE

11b. Implementing the practice of “service integration” has improved service delivery for OVRs clients.

STRONGLY *Agree* SOMEWHAT NO OPINION/ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE STRONGLY
AGREE AGREE DON'T KNOW DISAGREE DISAGREE DISAGREE

**State Rehabilitation Council of the
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

State Rehabilitation Council Evaluation Committee

Employee Survey Report

July 2004

State Rehabilitation Council - Evaluation Committee Members

Introduction

The State Rehabilitation Council is a governor-appointed administrative body, of which fifty percent of the members are people with disabilities. The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides direct feedback to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs), which is also known as the Designated State Unit (DSU). All OVRs employees were given an opportunity to complete the survey and we had a 55.66 percent return rate. The purpose of the survey was to identify what was working and where overall improvements are needed. It is the opinion of the SRC that measuring employees' perceptions and gathering their opinions is vital to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the program.

Under Title 1 of The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, section 105(c) clarifies the scope and focus of the Council's review and analysis related to the effectiveness and consumer satisfaction with services of the DSU and public and private entities including employment outcomes achieved and benefits connected with the outcomes. In Oregon, the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) continue to look at how we currently provide vocational rehabilitation services and what we can do to improve the delivery of services. OVRs is bound by Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA) requirements, but each state DSU has flexibility in how it conducts its business taking into account our unique circumstances, priorities, and philosophy. RSA also provides an array of choices so that OVRs can determine what it considers to be best practice.

Background

In an effort to develop a best practice, the SRC Evaluation Committee designed an "Employee Survey" to be completed by current OVRs employees (Appendix A). The survey was mailed out to every active employee: (the entire population was sufficiently small to make this action feasible), in an effort to obtain everyone's perceptions and opinions. This type of research is called a *census* study because data was gathered on every member of the population. Therefore, this is not a sampling but a measurement of the population of OVRs' employees and tests for dispersion were not necessary.

Given the geographic size, a mail survey was used because it was cost effective. Because there is no interviewer involved in this method, there was no possibility of interviewer bias.

Methodology

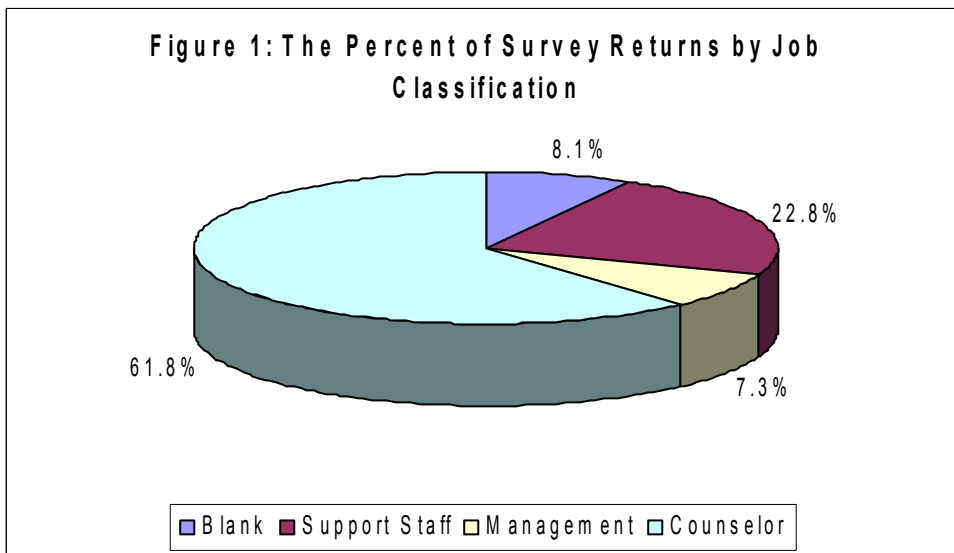
On April 19, 2004, the State Rehabilitation Council mailed the survey entitled "Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services - Employee Survey" to all active employees. There were a total of 221 surveys addressed to every active employee and mailed to each employee at their OVRs work site. The stamped envelopes were returned to a post office box rented by SRC. There were a total of 123 completed surveys that were analyzed for this report. The response rate was 55.66% for those surveyed; and this is an atypical response rate.

The survey included *nominal* data (i.e. job category), *interval* data (i.e. effectiveness of service delivery), and asked for comments. The results format of the survey allows for a comparison between management, support staff and counselor responses.

The returned surveys were compiled in an Excel worksheet and then analyzed using SPSS software. The survey results were statistically analyzed using frequency, descriptive, and cross tabulation functions and the outcomes were summarized and charted in Excel.

Survey Results

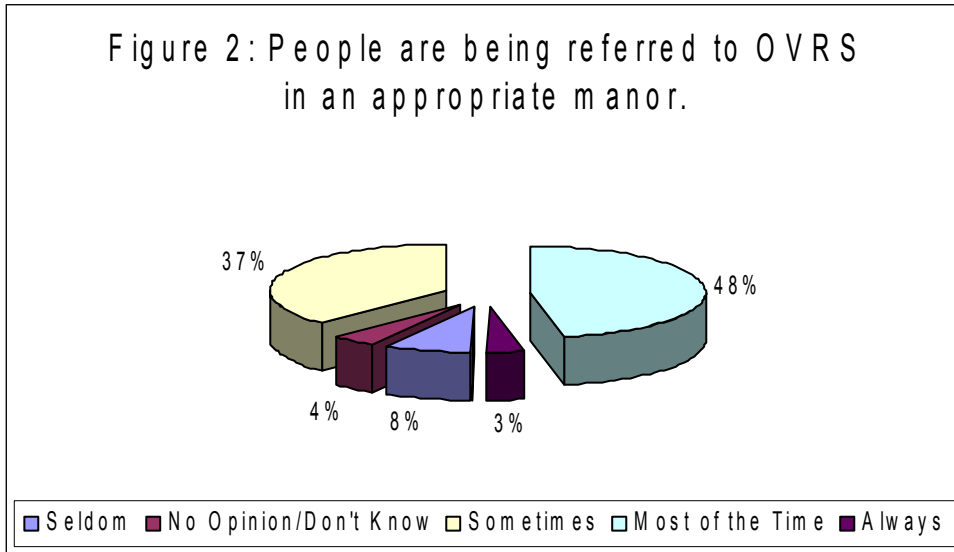
At the time of the mailing, the survey was mailed to all active employees and collected over a four-month period. OVRs was comprised of a Central Administrative Office and fourteen Branch Offices. As a program, we employed 76 Support Staff, 122 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and 23 Managers, for a total of 221. The percent of all staff employed by position was as follows: 37% were Support Staff, 39% were Managers and 62% were Counselors. There were a total of 123 surveys returned; of those there were 28 completed by Support Staff, 9 completed by Managers and 76 completed by Counselors. Figure 1 represented those who completed the survey by job classification. As you will note, survey completers were consistent for Counselors and Support Staff but under represented by Managers as compared to all employees. Also, there were 10 surveys, representing 8 percent of all respondents, returned without a box checked to identify their Job Classification and this could be viewed as an error rate.



Appendix A includes a copy of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services - Employee Survey. The survey used a modified Likert scale and each scale used the same labels so that there was a balance through consistent phraseology except for statement 6. Therefore, Statement 6 “People are being referred to OVRs in an appropriate manor” was not compared with

the other survey statements.

The Employee Survey asked, “People are being referred to OVRS in an appropriate manor.” Figure 2 shows a summary of the response by percent.



Approximately fifty-one percent of survey returns indicated people are being referred to OVRS in an appropriate manor with eight percent of survey returns indicated people are seldom being referred to OVRS in an appropriate manor. In figure 3, we have the results to “People are being referred to OVRS in an appropriate manor” charted by their self reported job classification. The numbers along the x-axis refer to the following: two was seldom, three was no opinion, four was sometimes, five was most of the time and six was always. Managers provided the narrowest range of responses and counselors provided the most favorable responses.

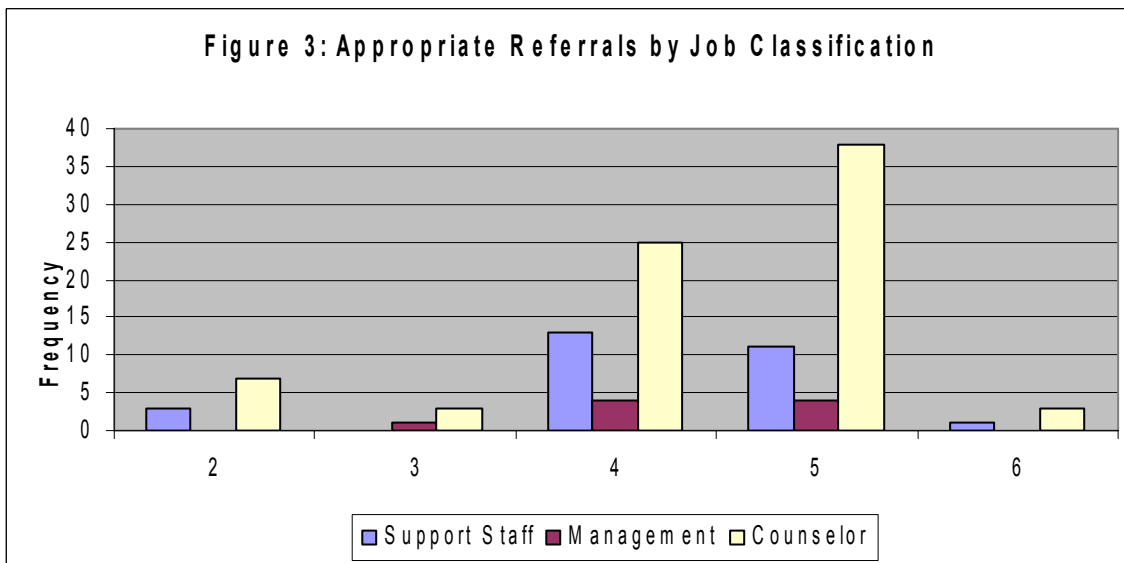


Figure 4 compares frequencies across the eleven survey items. In Figure 4, the x-axis lists

numbers from 1 to 11 and they correspond to various items in the survey. The y-axis was the frequency or the number of responses in three general categories, per survey item. The chart grouped somewhat agree, agree and strongly agree responses as “agree”, somewhat disagree, disagree and strongly disagree as “disagree” and blank and no opinion/don’t know as “other.” For example, in figure 4, number 1 refers to item “Service delivery to OVRS clients is effective” and the results were: 101 agreed, 18 disagreed and 4 other in this item. The results for number 2, “I am currently enabled to provide the best possible service” were; 89 agree, 31 disagree and 3 other. For number 3, “Working in a shared entry/lobby environment has improved the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities” and the results were; 21 agree, 64 disagree and 38 other. The results for number 4, “Working in a shared office environment has improved the accessibility of services to individuals with disabilities” were; 34 agree, 60 disagree and 29 other. For number 5, “Working in a shared office environment has maintained the same level of safety as a stand-alone environment” and the results were; 20 agree, 59 disagree and 44 other. The results for number 6, “The current work environment contributes to improved OVRS service delivery” were; 55 agree, 53 disagree and 15 other. For number 7, “Shared responsibilities among OVRS and other DHS programs have increased the efficiency of OVRS service delivery” and the results were; 38 agree, 63 disagree and 22 other. For number 8, “Significant barriers to effective service delivery currently exist” and the results were; 89 agree, 24 disagree and 10 other. The results for number 9, “Implementing the practice of service integration has improved OVRS capacity to work with its workforce partners” were; 59 agree, 50 disagree and 14 other. For number 10, “Implementing the practice of service integration has improved service delivery for OVRS clients” and the results were; 49 agree, 56 disagree and 18 other. The results for number 11, “I have been able to maintain privacy and confidentiality while working with OVRS clients” were; 80 agree, 39 disagree and 4 other.

Figure 4: Comparisons of Frequencies Across Statements

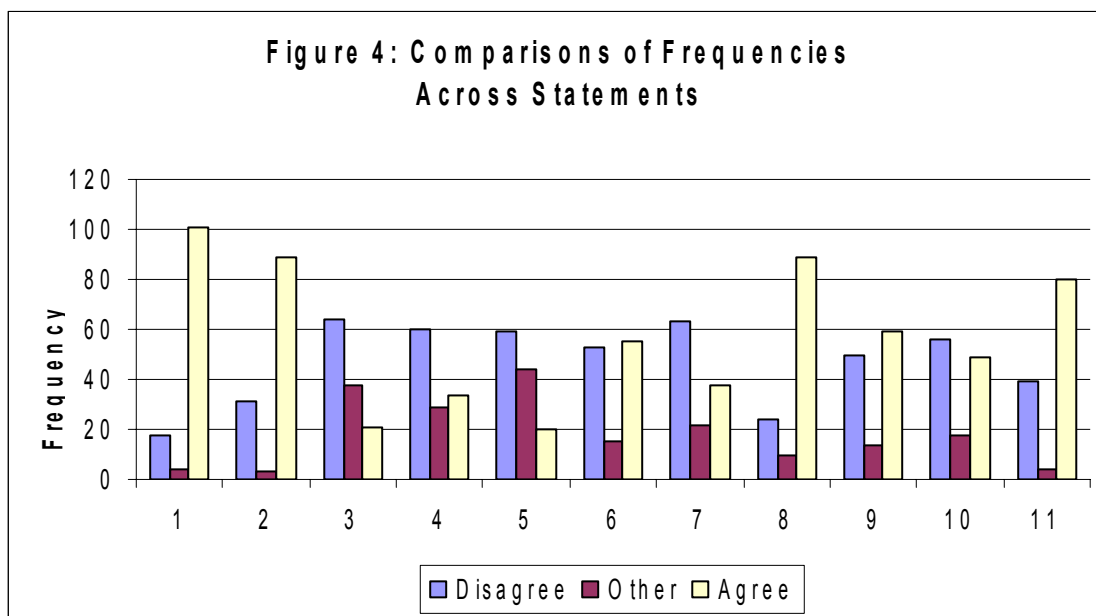
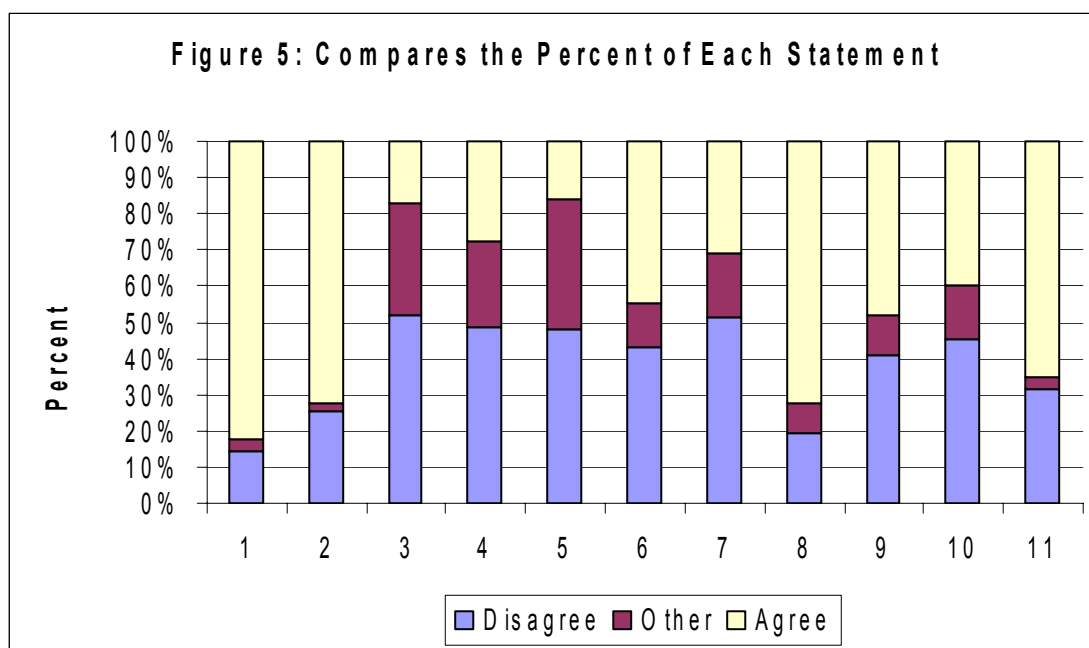


Figure 5 compares the percent of each statement across eleven survey items. There were 123 completed surveys and every item totaled 100 percent for all eleven items. The items with the greatest amount of blanks and no opinion/don't know responses were items 3 (Working in a shared entry/lobby environment has improved the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities), 4 (Working in a shared office environment has improved the accessibility of services to individuals with disabilities) and 5 (Working in a shared office environment has maintained the same level of safety as a stand-alone environment). Items 1 (Service delivery to OVRS clients is effective), 2 (I am currently enabled to provide the best possible service) and 11 (I have been able to maintain privacy and confidentiality while working with OVRS clients) were outputs that employees felt the program was operating most efficiently. In item 8, employees typically identified that there currently existed significant barriers to effective service delivery.



The survey asked for employees to comment regarding their work environment, barriers effecting services, and privacy and confidentiality effecting clients. See Addendum B for employee comments.

Observations & Conclusions

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services values the opinions of their employees and relies on them to provide suggestions and voice concerns to improve services, to identify staff training needs, and for program planning. The data is also valuable to help improve vocational assistance to OVRS consumers through improved partnerships with community providers.

The survey items with the greatest positive polarities were: “Service delivery to OVRS clients is effective” (82.1%) and “I am currently enabled to provide the best possible ser-

vice” (72.4%), which demonstrate that. Employees do believe they are empowered and currently provide effective services to people with disabilities. However, the majority of OVRS employees also are of the opinion (72.4%) that there exist significant barriers in providing effective services for clients. There were many comments regarding this, such as: the need to improve communications and partnerships with various agencies, address demographic changes, technology and facility concerns, large caseloads, improve communication within the program, increase skills needed by staff to better serve consumers. Sixty five percent of responders felt they were not able to maintain privacy and confidentiality while working with OVRS clients. See Addendum B for additional information.

There was a small percent (8.1%) of employees who reported a problem with people who were being referred to the OVRS program and 37.4 percent who responded that sometimes there are inappropriate referrals. Where there is never a perfect referral system this would suggest that OVRS is functioning well overall but needs to continue to strive to improve in this area.

There was less than a fifty percent response who indicated that integration had improved their capacity to work with workforce partners or improve service to consumers. The results would suggest that the SRC might wish to address OVRS Administration and its employees to further explore this topic.

Conducting an annual employee survey is beneficial to the well being of the program. This survey provides important information for the OVRS program to help improve services for people with disabilities and it has been a standard practice by OVRS Administration to welcome SRC recommendations on program improvements.



To request additional copies, or alternate formats of this publication, or for more information about the Oregon State Rehabilitation Council, please contact:

Oregon State Rehabilitation Council

Attn: Rhoda Hunter

500 Summer Street NE E-87

Salem OR 97301-1120

(503) 945-6256 (Voice)

(877) 277-0513 (Toll-Free)

(503) 945-8991 (Fax)

(503) 945-5894 (TTY)

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/vr/oregonrehabcncl/>