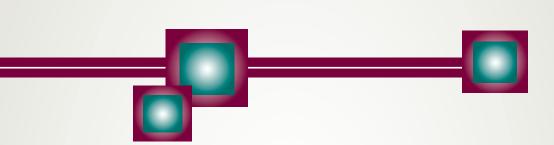
State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report 2010







Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

Providing the freedom to live

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Mission Statement

It is the express mission of the State of Mississippi Rehabilitation Council to ensure that Mississippians with disabilities have a strong role in shaping the vocational rehabilitation programs of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services.



Vision Statement

The vision of the State of Mississippi Rehabilitation Council is to ensure that the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services provides Mississippians with disabilities empowerment through informed choice, inclusion through equal access and full participation, independence through employment opportunities, and integration through advocacy.

Dear Governor Barbour and Members of the Mississippi Legislature:

On behalf of the members of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), I am pleased to present you with our 2010 Annual Report. This report is designed to inform you all of the status of vocational rehabilitation programs in Mississippi. Our council has met regularly to produce this report for you and could not have accomplished our work without the extremely capable support staff at MDRS.

The SRC was created in 1992 by the United States Congress as part of the Rehabilitation Act. The council's charge is to review and advise the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the supports and services and programs impacting persons with disabilities in our state. The majority of the members of our council are individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities. We know how important these services are to us all and take our voluntary service quite seriously.

This year has been a year of challenges due to budget constraints and we also participated in a federal visit from our National funding source (RSA) I am happy to report that we faired well during and after our visit and received complements on the innovative programs we have to support those most significantly impacted by disability.

Working together with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, we have continued to enhance the vision of empowerment through informed choice and inclusion. We have also experienced some success this year by "just doing the right thing" helping folks find jobs and a place to belong, and helping employers realize how beneficial it can be to hire a person with a disability. I am proud to serve as your chairperson and look forward to another successful year ahead. I do hope you find this report helpful and enlightening.



Dear Governor Barbour and Members of the Mississippi Legislature:

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you a few of the many accomplishments of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council in 2010. Our partnership lends to carrying out our mission of providing services to individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner. I would like to thank the members for their service, guidance, and valuable input in the agency's work to provide quality services to Mississippians with disabilities.

In 2010, the Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation and Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind have served over 21,000 people, successfully placing 4,557 individuals with disabilities in competitive employment. Once again, our agency has achieved outstanding ratings in client satisfaction surveys, with an overall rating of 4.4 out of a possible 5. We continue to develop new relationships within our federal partner agency, the Rehabilitation Services Administration, and we look forward to working with them in the next year.

The highlights of our report are the success stories of our consumers. The individuals featured in these stories deserve our recognition and appreciation for striving to work and live independently in our community. These successes, along with our others, could not be achieved without the dedication and hard work by the staff of the MDRS in consultation with the members of the State Rehabilitation Council, the Governor, and the State Legislature. We look forward to this continued partnership and another year of successful outcomes.



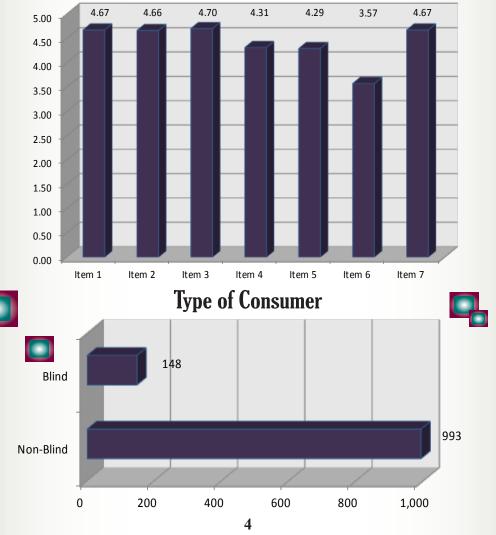
H.S. McMillan, Executive Director MS Department of Rehabilitation Services



Consumer Satisfaction Survey

The ratings for the various services consumers received are presented below using the average (mean) score given to each item by all respondents interviewed. The respondents were asked to rate the following items on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very bad and 5 being very good. Thus, a high score indicates that the service was good and a low score that it was bad.

- *ITEM 1:* The help the VR staff provided at the time you applied for VR services.
- **ITEM 2:** The help from the VR staff during the planning of your services.
- *ITEM 3:* The help from the VR staff when you were receiving your VR services.
- ITEM 4: The help you received from other agencies or service providers.
- **ITEM 5:** Your employment outcome.
- *ITEM 6:* Employment benefits provided by your new employer.
- **ITEM 7:** Overall, how do you rate the services you received?



Average Consumer Rating

SRC Comments & Recommendations

SRC Member: (The Order of Selection) "...seems to follow federal guidelines. (Agency policy states) 'An IPE cannot be developed... however ... (this) does not preclude delivery of non-purchased/non-\$ services ... is confusing. Can't develop an IPE but can serve?"

Agency Response: The purpose of the Order of Selection is to ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities are served in times when funding is not available to provide services to all people with disabilities requesting services. If a person in a closed priority category is in need of services that can be paid for through a third party – such as cataract surgery through the Mid-South Lions Sight Service – the rehabilitation counselor can facilitate the provision of that service without creating an IPE.

SRC Member: Consider purchasing services from (the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Vocational Rehabilitation Services) to serve Choctaws who have disabilities who wouldn't otherwise be eligible for MBCI VRS due to residency.

Agency Response: We value our relationship with MBCI VRS and would be interested in a discussion on services that could be purchased from them.

SRC Member: (In terms of obtaining consumer input into the State Plan), "Try to get counselors to talk to their consumers about the process and encourage consumers to give input into the State Plan.

Agency Response: Good suggestion. We will ensure counselors have access to information to share as soon as possible.

SRC Member: Add all SRC meeting dates to website as early as set so consumers can plan to attend as desired.

Agency Response: Good suggestion. We will make a concerted effort to post as soon as dates are set.

SRC Member: Having Category 3 getting help. Monies are tight and 1 & 2 are being served very well but are we falling short on 3?

Agency Response: Once a person is deemed eligible, their priority category does not impact their level of service.

SRC Member: Mobility Medical is doing a great job helping clients while still waiting on monies to come in.

Agency Response: Glad to hear it.

SRC Comments & Recommendations

SRC Member: I believe that use of a Financial Needs Analysis serves as a disincentive to individuals to work and be as best as they can and earn as much as they can. The more a person earns the less services they can receive.

Agency Response: With funds being limited and facing the prospect of additional budget cuts, MDRS can either provide a great many services to a few people or, by asking individuals to contribute to their rehabilitation case as possible, provide needed rehabilitation services to more people.







Guide Through The System

<u>Step One</u> :	Referral — I provide contact information to VR to arrange a meeting.
<u>Step Two</u> :	Orientation — I learn what VR is about and if it is right for me.
<u>Step Three</u> :	Application — I declare that I intend to work and need assistance in getting or keeping a job.
<u>Step Four</u> :	Assessment and Evaluation — My counselor collects information about how my disability affects work, including medical information from my doctors, to determine my strengths and limitations.
<u>Step Five</u> :	Determine Eligibility — The counselor reviews all the information to decide if I am eligible for VR services.
<u>Step Six</u> :	Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP) — Together, my counselor and I design the roadmap to help me go to work - a plan to reach a job goal that is right for me.
<u>Step Seven</u> :	Action — Along with my counselor and other VR staff, I work my plan to reach my job goal.
<u>Step Eight</u> :	Employment — I've reached my job goal!
<u>Step Nine</u> :	Case Closure — I am employed for at least 90 days.
<u>Step Ten</u> :	Post Employment Services — If I have problems at my job, I can contact my VR counselor to help me stay employed.



Vocational Rehabilitation

The total number of individuals served in 2010 was 21,324, and the total number of successful employment outcomes was 4,557. After receiving services through MDRS, the average client income increased by \$12,162.94. The total increase in income for all VR clients was \$55,426,517.58.



Maria Penister, a 26-year old graduate of the Mississippi School for the Deaf, uses American Sign Language for communication. With a son in her care, Maria strives hard to be a good role model. In October 2008, Maria, with no previous work experience, decided to seek assistance through MDRS to find a job in Jackson. Her VR Counselor assisted her in job development, purchasing hearing aids, studying for her driver's test,

and interpreting. After completion of training, Maria, with the assistance of a VR staff interpreter, interviewed at Olive Garden and was hired to roll silverware. Maria continues to work at Olive Garden and has been given increased responsibilities. The manager praises Maria for her enthusiasm and eagerness to learn, as well as her great attitude. Maria enjoys her work environment and her co-workers, who strive diligently to communicate with her and include her in all activities. She has proven that, with hard work and the right attitude, success for the hearing impaired is truly possible.



During FFY 2010, AbilityWorks served a total of 3,066 MDRS clients, placing 986 in employment opportunities, which resulted in 759 successful employment outcomes.



William Clark, after undergoing a year of recovery, received a Vocational Evaluation at AbilityWorks of Laurel. A spinal cord injury at the C6 level had resulted in quadriplegia for William, causing him to be initially uncomfortable interacting with others. Angelia Boykin, Job Placement Instructor, helped William develop his job skills and find employment. An interview with ASAP Ambulance Service resulted in the Manager offering trial work to William as a dispatcher. Entering

the building was difficult for William, so Angelia loaned the company a portable ramp to help William access the building. When William began his tryout, he observed a dispatcher at work; but, it was not long before William, a quick learner, was able to assume the duties and work independently. A permanent ramp was designed for William and a special headset purchased for the telephone system so that William could perform more efficiently. He continues to be successfully employed in that position.

Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind

Of the 4,557 successful employment outcomes by VR, 597 were achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB).



In June 2006, Wiley King sought services from MDRS after undergoing several surgeries to remove a tumor from his brain near an optic nerve, leaving him visually impaired. At 17, a senior in high school, Wiley was now faced with the fact that he would have to adapt to a new lifestyle. In 2007, he began blindness services at Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Services for the Blind.

He became a beneficiary of the Make A Wish Foundation and began services with St. Jude Hospital, where he participated in designing car art for NASCAR events. He was thrilled when his artwork was displayed on the winning car and was interviewed on ESPN as a result. It was obvious that Wiley had a propensity to shine in the spotlight, so St. Jude decided to do a syndicated television program, 3 Wide Life, with Wiley as a reporter interviewing the NASCAR elite. His parents built an office for Wiley, and MDRS provided the necessary equipment for his work in posting blog entries and interview videos on the accompanying website. He has completed his first full NASCAR season and is signing sponsors for the next season. He also makes public appearances for St. Jude charity events and does radio interviews for Make A Wish. His story exemplifies "Attitude Over Adversity", the fuel necessary to win any race.

Business Enterprise Program

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides full-time self-employment opportunities for 37 legally blind Mississippians. The BEP entrepreneurs operate a variety of businesses including vending machine routes, snack bars and even cafeterias on military bases.



Floyd Austin is an inspiration to every entrepreneur! He first became a BEP vendor in 1991 at the Gentry Gallery Snack Bar in a furniture factory in Ripley, MS, serving between 350 to 500 employees. In 1993, he moved to the Quartet Mfg. Cafeteria in Booneville, serving 1200 employees and servicing 100 vending machines at 18 locations in the factory. In 1997, Floyd was selected as the BEP vendor at Keesler AFB in

Biloxi and is now in his third 5-year term as sole operator there. Using Air Force standards, Keesler has received efficiency ratings ranging from 4.96 to 4.99 out of 5.00. As a result of Keesler accomplishments, he now operates 6 other military installations in 4 states as a partner/mentor for other blind vendors. In 2004, the Keesler AFB food service was recognized as the top food service worldwide when, for the first time, it won the Air Force's coveted Hennessy Award. Floyd won the Hennessy again in 2008 for his food service at Tyndall AFB, Panama City, FL. His third Hennessy Award was in 2010, again at Keesler. Doing business as Austin & Associates, he now employs over 1200 people.



Transition

In FFY 2010, the Transition Program served approximately 3,057 students and placed 426 in successful employment outcomes.







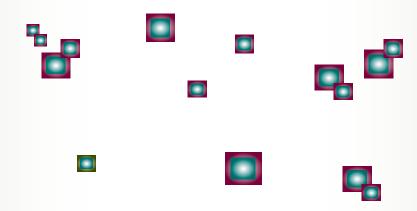
Supported Employment

During FFY 2010, 842 individuals received Supported Employment services, and 94 resulted in successful employment outcomes.



Amanda Lunsford, who came to Supported Employment in June of 2009 as a referral from her Transition Counselor, was lacking in self-confidence and socially inactive. She was only comfortable around family members, so the development of her social skills was the first goal. Amanda was taught the expectations of an employer and how to dress appropriately on the job. This effort began in January 2010, and a big change

was seen by June in her self-confidence and ability to interact with others. In August, she was placed with a job coach at Valley Foods at Meridian Community College. Now, Amanda is working on her own, and her manager states that he is very happy with both her job skills and her interaction with other workers.

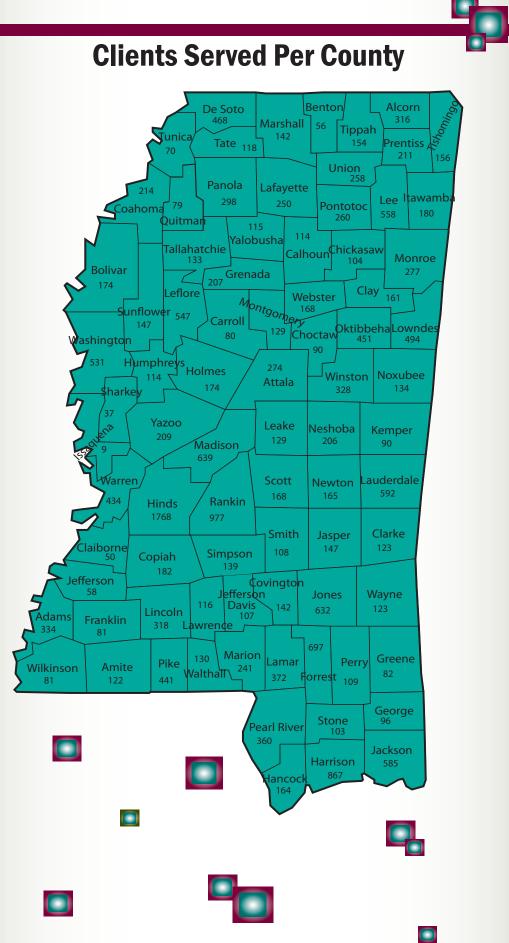


THE AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER REHABILITANT FOR 2010 WAS \$3,750.45.



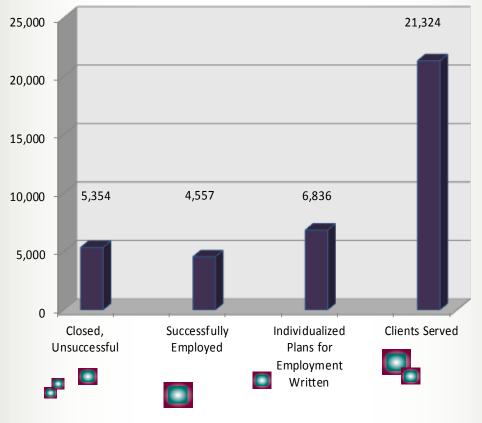






Facts at a Glance

Clients Served and Closed for 2010



Spotlight on Success



Kayla King, a 19-year old Transition student with a learning disability, entered the AbilityWorks program after high school with no previous work experience. She knew, however, that her love of animals would enable her to be a good worker for an animal clinic. Working around her school schedule, Kayla prepared herself for the business world with Job Readiness classes. She regularly attended classes, demonstrating

dedication, pride in her work, and enthusiasm.

Knowing that Kayla's dream was to work with animals, her case manager made contact with a local veterinary clinic, requesting a job tryout. The request was granted, and Kayla was hired, thus beginning a career in her dream job. She proved to be a very good worker, reportedly outworking many other employees at the clinic. Kayla is now a full-time employee, enabling her to finally purchase her own car---a classic Ford Mustang.

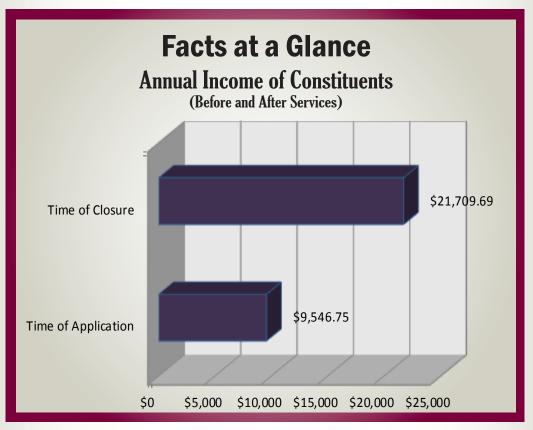


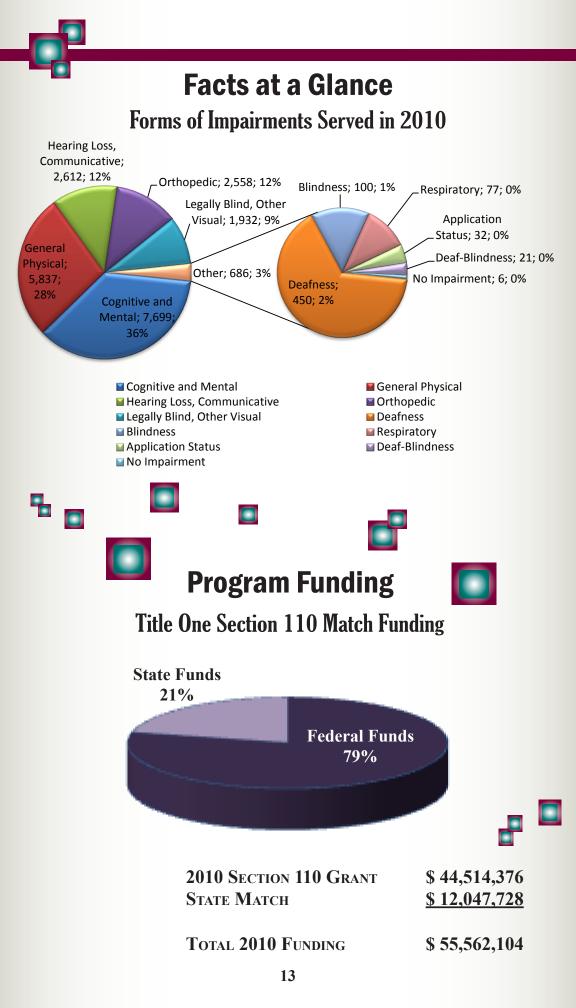
Spotlight on Success



Ronnie Shade, while repairing a sewer line for the City of Gulfport, was severely injured, having his legs crushed by tires, bottles, cans, etc. when the ground caved in around him. His co-worker was crushed and died as a result, leaving Ronnie to deal with depression from the loss of his legs, his friend, and his job. After surgery, Ronnie received care in a nursing home while his wounds healed enough to

get prostheses for his legs. While there, he notes that he did what he could to inspire other residents who were despondent and ready to give up on life. MDRS was able to help Ronnie through the use of a wheelchair to make him ambulatory indoors and also through assistive technology, used to assist Ronnie in driving his own vehicle. After rebuilding his strength, along with his self-confidence, Ronnie was able to obtain a job as cashier for Goodwill Industries. Delinda Hanson, VP of HR for Goodwill, states that she is impressed with Ronnie's work ethic and his positive attitude, which has endeared him to everyone employed there. Ronnie's dreams do not stop there, however. He is now working part-time while pursuing his GED, after which he plans to pursue a degree in Medical Billing and Claims at the MS Gulf Coast Community College. Ronnie has overcome depression by reaching out to others, enriching the lives of those around him. As a result of his positive outlook, Ronnie continues to move forward, striving to reach all of his goals.





Field Office Locations

District I

51 County Road 166 Oxford, MS 38655 OVR: (662) 234-3171 OVRB: (662) 234-6092

District II

2620 Traceland Drive Tupelo, MS 38803 OVR: (662) 842-1010

613 Pegram Drive Tupelo, MS 38802 OVRB: (662) 844-5830

District III

201 Highway 7 South Greenwood, MS 38930 OVR: (662) 453-6172 OVRB: (662) 455-1432

District IV

207 Industrial Park Road Starkville, MS 39760 OVR: (662) 323-9594

48 Datco Industrial Drive Columbus, MS 39704 OVRB: (662) 328-8807

District V

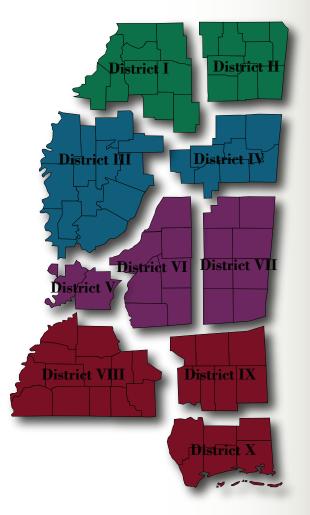
3895 Beasley Road Jackson, MS 39213 OVR: (601) 898-7004 OVRB: (601) 898-7023

District VI

1032 Center Pointe Blvd., Suite A Pearl, MS 39208 OVR: (601) 709-5601 OVRB: (601) 709-5625

District VII

1003 College Drive Meridian, MS 39304 OVR: (601) 483-3881 OVRB: (601) 483-5391



District VIII

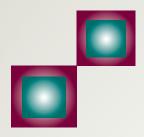
1400-A Harrison Drive McComb, MS 39649 OVR: (601) 249-2498 OVRB: (601) 684-3392

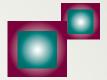
District IX

#17 John Merle Tatum Industrial Dr. Hattiesburg, MS 39404 OVR: (601) 545-5619 OVRB: (601) 545-5613

District X

13486 Fastway Lane Gulfport, MS 39503 OVR: (228) 575-3789 OVRB: (228) 575-3788







Your perspective is extremely valuable, and we greatly appreciate any and all feedback! Please send any comments or questions to:

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services Attn: Joyce White Post Office Box 1698 Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1698

> 1.800.443.1000 www.mdrs.state.ms.us





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