

State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report 2013



**Mississippi Department of
Rehabilitation Services**

Providing the freedom to live

WELCOME	3
IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB IN 2013	4
GUIDE THROUGH THE SYSTEM	7
PROGRAM FUNDING	7
CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY	8
SRC COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS	9
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	10
ABILITYWORKS	11
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION FOR THE BLIND	11
DEAF SERVICES	12
TRANSITION	12
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT	13
SUCCESS STORIES	13
CLIENTS SERVED PER COUNTY	16
FIELD OFFICE LOCATIONS	17

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 Bryant 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 2013. Our partnership is vital to carrying out our mission of providing quality 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.

Although the citizens of Mississippi have faced some tough economic times this year, at MDRS we continue to strive to meet the needs of Mississippians with disabilities who rely on our services to become successfully employed. In 2013, the Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation and Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind have served 21,544 job seekers with significant disabilities and achieved outstanding ratings in client satisfaction surveys. This year, we have achieved our goal of assisting over 4,500 people enter into the workforce and become successfully employed leading to economic independence.

In our report, we have included success stories of our consumers. These successes 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 and the consumers we serve. We look forward to this continued partnership and another year of successful outcomes.

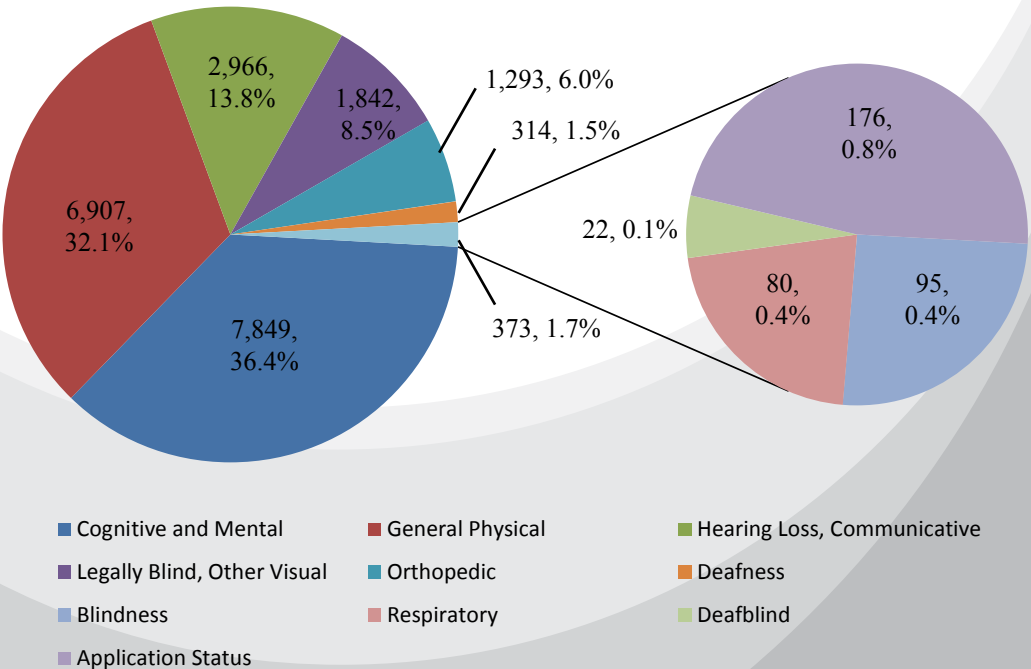
H.S. McMillan, Executive Director
MS Department of Rehabilitation Services



In Depth Look at VR & VRB in 2013

PERSONS SERVED BY PRIMARY DISABILITY

PRIMARY DISABILITY	NUMBER SERVED
Cognitive and Mental	7,849
General Physical	6,907
Hearing Loss, Communicative	2,966
Legally Blind, Other Visual	1,842
Orthopedic	1,293
Deafness	314
Blindness	95
Respiratory	80
Deafblind	22
Application Status	176
Total	21,544



In Depth Look at VR & VRB in 2013

DEMOGRAPHICS OF PERSONS SERVED

GENDER	PERCENTAGE
Male	47.80%
Female	52.20%

AGE AT APPLICATION	PERCENTAGE
10 - 20	20.51 %
20 - 30	17.03%
30 - 40	15.95%
40 - 50	18.90%
50 - 60	17.49%
60 - 70	7.64%
70 - 80	2.19%
80 - 90	0.29%
Average Age at Application	39

EDUCATION LEVEL AT APPLICATION	PERCENTAGE
No Formal Schooling	0.11%
Elementary Education (Grades 1-8)	3.33%
Secondary Education, no high school diploma	18.74%
High School Graduate or Equivalency Certificate	34.78%
Post-Secondary Education, no degree	14.58%
AA degree or Vocational Technology Certificate	7.24%
Bachelor's degree	5.85%
Master's degree or higher	1.95%
Special Education (completion or attendance)	13.34%
Education not listed	0.08%

RACE	PERCENTAGE
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.30%
Asian	0.30%
Black or African American	44.64%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.09%
Multi-racial	3.82%
White or Caucasian	50.81%
Race not listed	0.04%

In Depth Look at VR & VRB in 2013

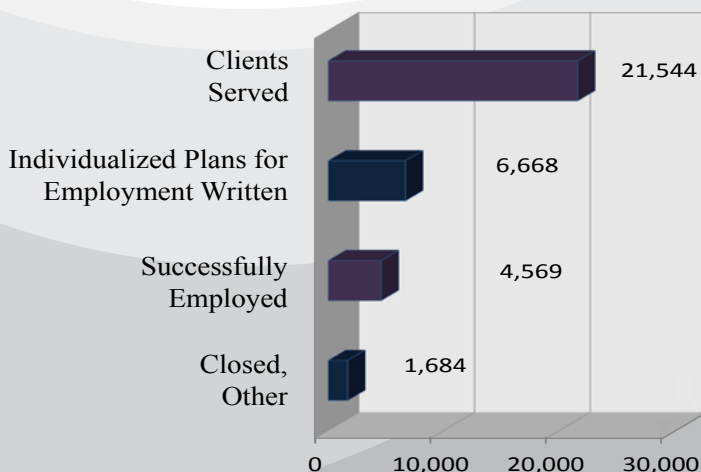
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS REHABILITATED

OCCUPATION	NUMBER EMPLOYED
Employment in Integrated Setting	3,732
Self-Employment (excluding BEP)	827
Homemaker	7
Vending Stand Operator	2
Unpaid Family Worker	1
Total	4,569

EMPLOYMENT IN INTEGRATED SETTINGS

OCCUPATION	NUMBER EMPLOYED
Service Worker	1,132
Sales	484
Skilled Craft	468
Secretarial/Office/Clerical	456
Laborer	392
Professional	305
Operative	240
Executive/Managerial	118
Technical/Paraprofessional	96
Production Occupations	10
Community and Social Service	6
Clerical and Administrative Support	5
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	5
Healthcare Support	5
Computer and Mathematical	4
Education, Training, and Library	3
Protective Service	3
Total	3,732

CLIENTS SERVED AND CLOSED FOR 2013

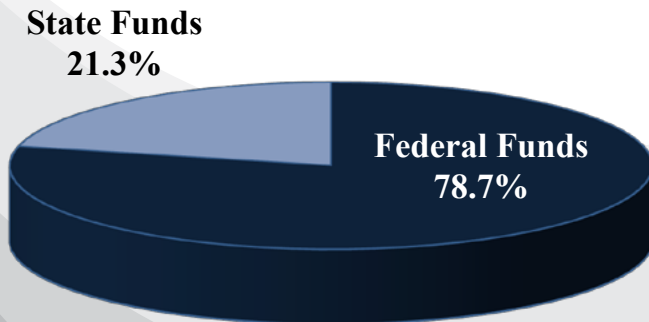


Guide Through The System

- STEP ONE:** **Referral** — I provide contact information to VR to arrange a meeting.
- STEP TWO:** **Orientation** — I learn what VR is about and if it is right for me.
- STEP THREE:** **Application** — I declare that I intend to work and need assistance in getting or keeping a job.
- STEP FOUR:** **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.
- STEP FIVE:** **Determine Eligibility** — The counselor reviews all the information to decide if I am eligible for VR services.
- STEP SIX:** **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.
- STEP SEVEN:** **Action** — Along with my counselor and other VR staff, I work my plan to reach my job goal.
- STEP EIGHT:** **Employment** — I've reached my job goal!
- STEP NINE:** **Case Closure** — I am employed for at least 90 days.
- STEP TEN:** **Post Employment Services** — If I have problems at my job, I can contact my VR counselor to help me stay employed.

Program Funding

Title One Section 110 Match Funding



2013 SECTION 110 GRANT	\$ 44,467,038
STATE MATCH	<u>\$ 12,034,916</u>
TOTAL 2013 FUNDING	\$ 56,501,954

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 by an independent third party 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.

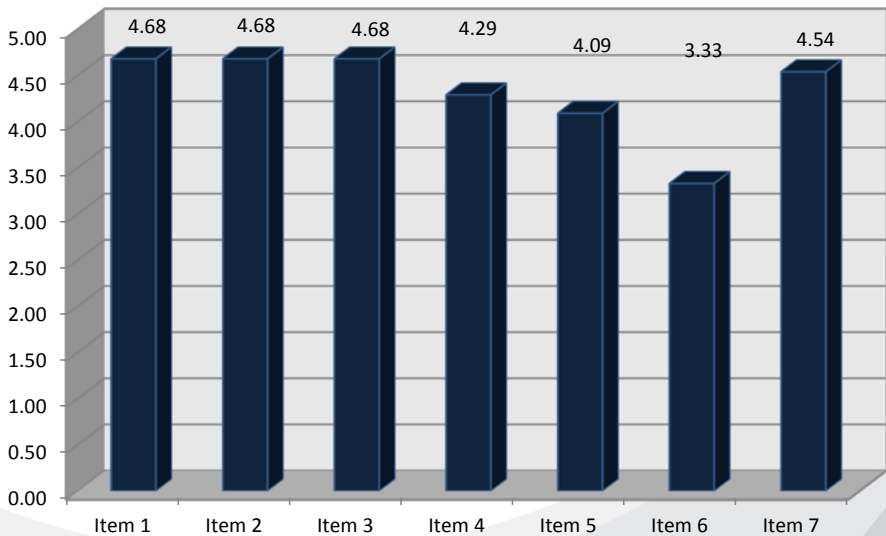
ITEM 4: The help you received from other agencies or service providers.

ITEM 5: Your employment outcome.

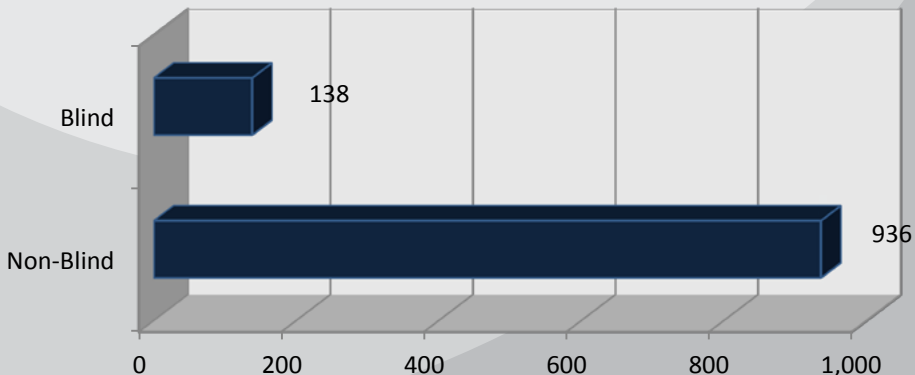
ITEM 6: Employment benefits provided by your new employer.

ITEM 7: Overall, how do you rate the services you received?

Average Consumer Rating



Type of Consumer Surveyed



SRC Comments & Recommendations

SRC comments and/or recommendations for input into the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services' Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (OVR/OVRB) service delivery system:

- MDRS was the only one of state WIPA grantees who successfully addressed the needs of Native American individuals with disabilities who received SSI or SSDI and who were seeking employment. However, I see in today's resource materials the new WIPA plan to begin 8/1/13. I would like to know the current plan of MDRS WIPA to meet the unique needs of Native Americans and provide services in a culturally relevant and accessible way..

Agency Response: *Although the barriers to serving Native Americans with disabilities are significant, they are not impossible to overcome. Our WIPA Staff is dedicated and committed to assist our Native American citizens in providing traditional WIPA services while adapting to the Native American needs. The best plan of action is our outreach in person visits to the areas where Native Americans live. Outreach will consist of advertising in tribal newspapers, having informational booths at tribal fairs, using posters and brochures, and similar activities. WIPA Staff will also enhance working relationships with the staff of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians who can then refer clients to WIPA and other resources in their local community. WIPA staff will visit the Choctaw Indian Reservation regularly and meet potential clients through coordination and collaboration with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. WIPA staff will provide services that are coordinated in a culturally appropriate manner, and typically will involve the client's family.*

SRC comments and/or recommendations concerning the results of consumer satisfaction surveys:

- Consumer satisfaction remains high indicating that service delivery is meeting consumer expectation/need.
- The report indicates good consumer satisfaction. Comments indicate that services are helping individuals achieve employment.

Agency Response: *MDRS appreciates the compliments. Information was given to the Members of the SRC showing that the consumers input is valued and appreciated. We continue to strive to address any concerns members may have.*

SRC comments and/or recommendations for input in terms of potential service providers or discussions on the performance of service providers currently being used by OVR/OVRB:

- I was happy to hear the discussion of consumer choice of vendors for orientation and mobility and other education for individuals with blindness.

SRC Comments & Recommendations

- I am not familiar thoroughly with the listing. Consider clients choices when economically feasible and when providers are judged to be high quality. Hearing overall staff comments and apparent concern for high quality services and their concentration on client satisfaction, I am sure this recommendation is being followed.

Agency Response: *MDRS appreciates your comments. MDRS will gladly address any specific concerns of individual service providers at any time throughout the year.*

SRC comments and/or recommendations concerning VR Policy, State Plan Development, and SRC business:

- I was unable to attend the State Plan hearing today. However, I was invited last February to work with staff committees. I was provided a complete draft of the upcoming State Plan and had ample opportunity to comment and ask questions as needed. The process was excellent to allow my participation.
- I would like to read the policies. The consumer was very effective in demonstrating the effectiveness of the services towards his employment.

Agency Response: *MDRS strives to keep all SRC members updated of all committees regarding the State Plan. MDRS appreciates all suggestions and input from SRC members. MDRS provided material for the member to read concerning the policies of the Alcohol and Drug Service Program.*

Vocational Rehabilitation

In 2013, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) assisted 21,544 eligible Mississippians with disabilities to receive services including, but not limited to, counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, physical and mental restoration, job training, assistive technology, and job placement.

Individuals served by VR have a wide array of disabilities including: hearing loss or deafness, amputations, mental and emotional disorders, epilepsy, developmental disease and disorders, traumatic brain injuries, orthopedic impairments, residuals from cancer, speech impairments, and the like.

The total number of successful employment outcomes for our VR consumers in 2013 was 4,569.

AbilityWorks

AbilityWorks is a network of 17 community rehabilitation programs that provides vocational assessment, job training, and actual work experience for individuals with disabilities. This is possible through a wide array of contract and subcontract services provided to local business and industry. AbilityWork's mission to clients is "to improve the quality of life, employment opportunities, and integration of people with disabilities into the community."

Its mission to business and industry through its subcontracting program is to provide fast turnaround times, high-quality workmanship, competitive rates, credit rates, credit terms and speedy delivery. Some of the services and products AbilityWorks offers include collating and sorting, packaging and handling, assembly work, product reworking, product reclamation, grounds maintenance, housekeeping and quality reviews.

During FFY 2013, AbilityWorks served a total of 2,932 MDRS clients, resulting in 942 successful employment outcomes.

Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind

Of the 4,569 successful employment outcomes by VR, 574 were achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB). VRB consumers received services such as counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, orientation and mobility training, job training, and assistive technology.

Itinerant Teachers work closely with VRB counselors to coordinate services, evaluate client needs, develop living-needs plans and instructional materials, and provide onsite training for consumers who are blind or visually impaired. In 2013, the Itinerant Teacher Program provided 74 services for VRB consumers.

The Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Center for the Blind provides traditional intensive evaluation, training, and adjustment services on the campus of the University of Mississippi Medical Center. In 2013, the Addie McBryde Center provided training to 169 consumers.

Independent Living Services for the Blind (ILB) enables eligible consumers to receive peer group counseling, assistive technology evaluation, adjustment services, orientation and mobility training, personal adjustment instruction and training in techniques for daily living. In 2013, ILB served over 2,800 consumers through indirect services such as health fairs, vision screening, peer groups, and outreach. Furthermore, ILB provided direct services to

Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind

760 consumers who are legally blind and either over the age of 55 or have a significant secondary disability by providing a variety of independent living services.

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides support for self-employment opportunities in the food service industry for Mississippians who are legally blind. These BEP entrepreneurs operate a variety of businesses including vending machine routes, snack bars and cafeterias on military bases. In 2013, forty (40) individuals operated successful businesses as BEP vendors.

Deaf Services

The MDRS Deaf Services Program continues to promote excellence by striving to assist new RCD's (Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf) to reach the required communications skills level on the Signed Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI), an American Sign Language assessment developed by the Rochester Institute of Technology. Adequate communication skills are a pre-requisite to meaningful counseling and guidance with people who are Deaf and use manual communication.

This skill, along with other specialized training, has been a vital factor in the successful rehabilitation of individuals with deafness or significant hearing loss. In FFY 2013, Deaf Services were provided to 3,183 Mississippians, resulting in 912 successful rehabilitations.

Transition

Through the Transition Services Program, the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services assists eligible secondary school students with disabilities to enable them to make the difficult transition from school to subsequent work environments. Working cooperatively with the Mississippi Department of Education and local school districts, MDRS counselors plan and implement programs designed to provide this training and assistance.

Examples of transition services are vocational-technical training, vocational evaluation, work adjustment training, on the job training, job search skills, and work experience programs. In FFY 2013, the Transition Program served approximately 3,150 students and placed 482 in successful employment outcomes.

Supported Employment

The Supported Employment Program is a specialized placement and training program to assist those individuals with severe disabilities in finding and maintaining employment. Choice of employment is based on such things as the individual's: unique strengths, interests, resources, capabilities, abilities, priorities, concerns, informed choice.

Working together, trained vocational counselors and job placement specialists provide support needed for the individual to prepare for and secure an appropriate job match, as well as to retain or regain employment. During FFY 2013, 996 individuals received Supported Employment services, and 119 resulted in successful employment outcomes.

Success Stories

OCH Partners with Local Program to Provide Work Experience/Build Self-Esteem

OCH REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER NEWS

WWW.OCH.ORG

WRITTEN BY MKIGHT

Nov. 6, 2013--OCH Regional Medical Center recently received recognition from the State Department of Rehabilitation for training and employing individuals with disabilities. The Medical Center is one of the local businesses that partners with Ability Works in Starkville to provide real work experience so that those with disabilities may retain employment and possibly live independently. Sometimes the temporary work experience turns into a full-time job for participants.

Jessie Hogan was a part of the rehabilitation program when he first came to OCH to gain valuable work experience within the environmental services department. "They made sure I was at work on time, got my job done and got along with other employees," explained Hogan.

"What stood out to me most about Jessie was his humble spirit and excellent work ethic," recalled Kennedy Neal, environmental services director. "Whenever he had a question, he would ask me because he wanted to make sure the job was done right," added Neal.

After his trial period at OCH, Hogan was hired as an environmental services tech, and seven years later, Hogan says the job is going great. "I enjoy the

Success Stories

work I do at the hospital and knowing that I'm helping people. Everyone is really nice and having this job means a lot to me," said Hogan.

Starkville Ability Works Facility Manager Marie Portera said there are 17 Ability Works locations throughout the state that function to help people develop good work habits and job skills and eventually find jobs. "We appreciate the people and businesses like OCH that take on contract workers so that they can get the work experience they need to become valuable employees," said Portera. "When we see people like Jessie come through the program and get a job, it makes us feel as though we're a part of their success story and what we're doing is making a difference," she added.

Neal said for the past ten years he's been accepting Ability Works' contract workers when he has an opening in his department and noted those individuals have been excellent employees. "When they first come here, some of them feel like they can't, but they can," said Neal. I have a love and passion for those people. I enjoy taking them under my wing to train them so that they can become productive citizens and give back to the community," he added.

Neal also pointed out that the program aids in building self-esteem for those individuals. Hogan agreed the job has made him feel good about himself. "This job has helped me provide for my family and pay my bills, and that's very important to me," he said.

Micah Morgan

In 2009, while in college at Delta State University, three days before her 20th birthday, Micah Morgan looked at her test and couldn't read it. The teacher wouldn't allow her to leave the classroom so she had to finish the test not being able to see it. One year later, Micah was legally blind.

Her brother, who has the same impairment, was a big support. He had received VRB services as well so Micah was familiar with the program and with counselor, Kathy Bowman. "Kathy was so responsive to my needs, it made it easy for me to reach my goal of becoming a teacher," Micah states.

During college, as soon as she got her schedule, she would go to meet her professors and explain her disability. She found them to be more than helpful and accommodating to her needs. The hardest part of adjustment during college was taking all of her necessary equipment to the various schools and classrooms while she was completing the observation work requirement for her degree. She had to carry a CCTV to all of her classes and people looked at her differently.

Success Stories

“I had to learn to look past it. For every person who made you feel uncomfortable, there are twenty who are understanding and are there to help.”

When she began her job hunt, she stressed over whether to self-identify to her potential employers. She went on several interviews and chose not to disclose her disability, however, she did tell her boss when offered the job at Sudduth. “I just wanted to prove to everyone that I could do it.” The teaching staff at her school offer a tremendous amount of support as well, especially during staff meetings.

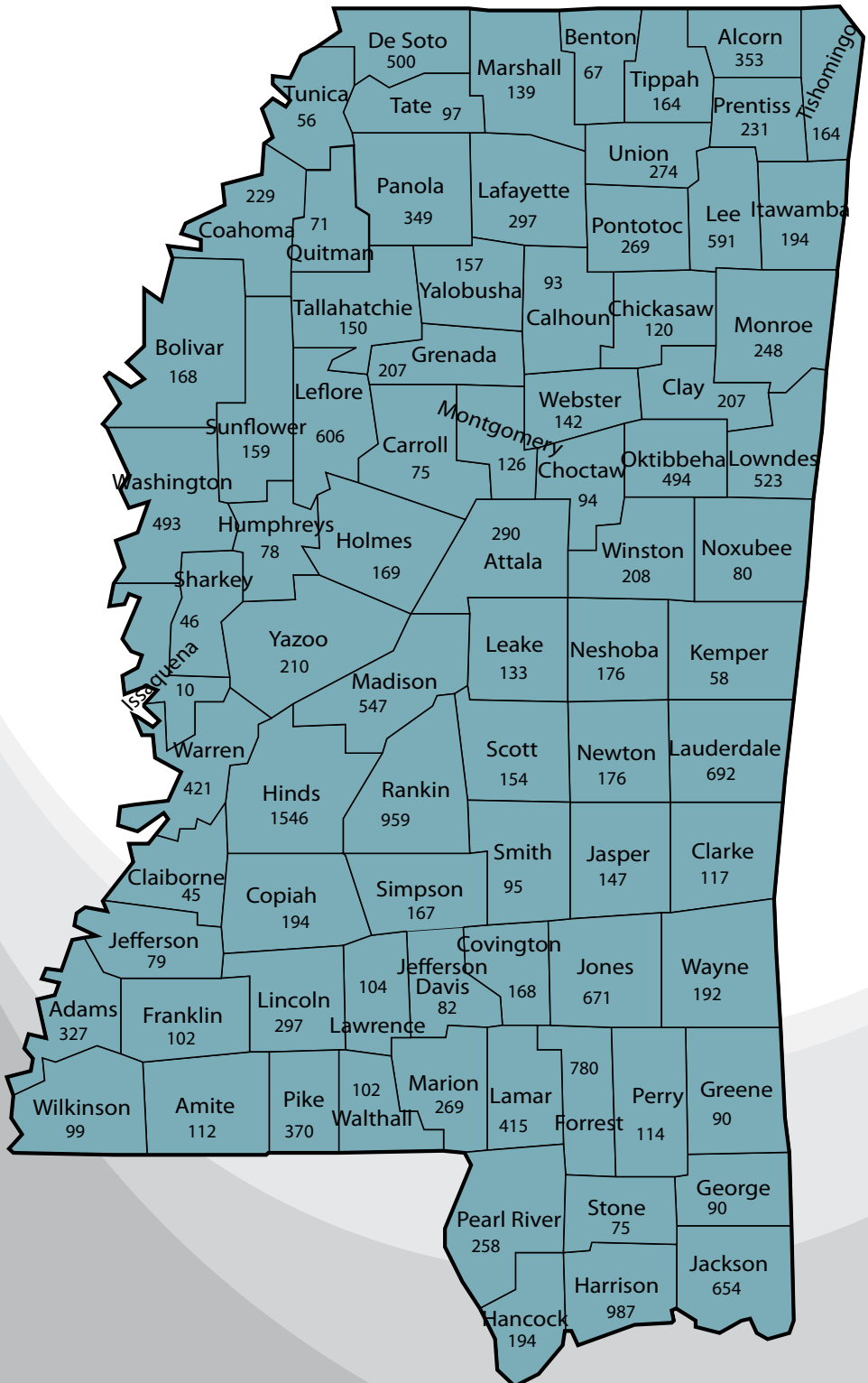
Micah’s disability is one reason she decided to become a teacher, and she states there are many students who have impairments that need extra help and who better to understand than someone who has experienced it first-hand, “I’m not disabled, I’m just differently abled.”

On her experience with MDRS and VRB services, Micah states, “They are just one call away. They will help see you through. Adjusting to vision loss is not an easy walk, but people will accept you and there are people who can help.” Micah’s message to employers, “Have faith in me, I can do it. Sometimes having a disability gives you an inside perspective that is beneficial to doing your job successfully.”

Clients Served Per County

A map of Mississippi divided into its 39 counties. Each county is labeled with its name and the number of clients served. The counties and their client counts are: De Soto (500), Marshall (139), Benton (67), Alcorn (353), Tunica (56), Tate (97), Tippah (164), Prentiss (231), Coahoma (229), Quitman (71), Panola (349), Lafayette (297), Union (274), Pontotoc (269), Lee (591), Itawamba (194), Bolivar (168), Tallahatchie (150), Yalobusha (157), Calhoun (93), Chickasaw (120), Monroe (248), Sunflower (159), Leflore (207), Grenada (207), Webster (142), Clay (207), Washington (493), Humphreys (78), Holmes (169), Carroll (75), Montgomery (126), Choctaw (94), Oktibbeha (494), Lowndes (523), Sharkey (46), Yazoo (210), Madison (547), Leake (133), Neshoba (176), Kemper (58), Issaquena (10), Warren (421), Hinds (1546), Rankin (959), Scott (154), Newton (176), Lauderdale (692), Claiborne (45), Copiah (194), Simpson (167), Smith (95), Jasper (147), Clarke (117), Jefferson (79), Lincoln (297), Lawrence (104), Jefferson Davis (82), Covington (168), Jones (671), Wayne (192), Adams (327), Franklin (102), Pike (370), Walthall (102), Marion (269), Lamar (415), Forrest (780), Perry (114), Greene (90), Wilkinson (99), Amite (112), Pearl River (258), Stone (75), George (90), Jackson (654), Hancock (194), Harrison (987).

County	Clients Served
De Soto	500
Marshall	139
Benton	67
Alcorn	353
Tunica	56
Tate	97
Tippah	164
Prentiss	231
Coahoma	229
Quitman	71
Panola	349
Lafayette	297
Union	274
Pontotoc	269
Lee	591
Itawamba	194
Bolivar	168
Tallahatchie	150
Yalobusha	157
Calhoun	93
Chickasaw	120
Monroe	248
Sunflower	159
Leflore	207
Grenada	207
Webster	142
Clay	207
Washington	493
Humphreys	78
Holmes	169
Carroll	75
Montgomery	126
Choctaw	94
Oktibbeha	494
Lowndes	523
Sharkey	46
Yazoo	210
Madison	547
Leake	133
Neshoba	176
Kemper	58
Issaquena	10
Warren	421
Hinds	1546
Rankin	959
Scott	154
Newton	176
Lauderdale	692
Claiborne	45
Copiah	194
Simpson	167
Smith	95
Jasper	147
Clarke	117
Jefferson	79
Lincoln	297
Lawrence	104
Jefferson Davis	82
Covington	168
Jones	671
Wayne	192
Adams	327
Franklin	102
Pike	370
Walthall	102
Marion	269
Lamar	415
Forrest	780
Perry	114
Greene	90
Wilkinson	99
Amite	112
Pearl River	258
Stone	75
George	90
Jackson	654
Hancock	194
Harrison	987



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
615-A Pegram Drive
Tupelo, MS 38801
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
2550 Peachtree Street
Jackson, MS 39296
OVRB: (601) 987-7403

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

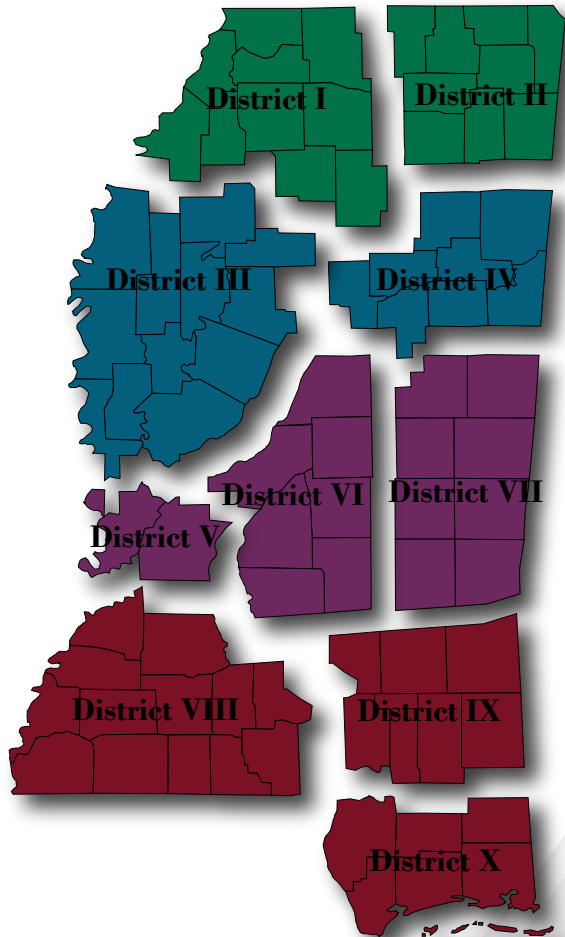
1400-A Harrison Avenue
McComb, MS 39649
OVR: (601) 249-2498
OVRB: (601) 684-3392

District IX

17 John Merle Tatum
Industrial Drive
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
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: BETSY SIMONEAUX

POST OFFICE BOX 1698

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39215-1698

1.800.443.1000

WWW.MDRS.MS.GOV



**Mississippi Department of
Rehabilitation Services**

Providing the freedom to live