
VIRGINIA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND AND VISION IMPAIRED
(SRC)
Quarterly Meeting

Final Minutes
November 8, 2024
397 Azalea Avenue,
Richmond, VA 23227

SRC Members in Attendance

David Andrews, Hampton, Representative of a Current/Formal Recipient of Rehabilitation Services
Christine Appert, Charlottesville, Current/Formal Recipient of Rehabilitation Services
Susan Bowmaster, Annadale, Representative of a Disability Advocacy Group
Rebecca Ceja, Richmond, Representative of the Virginia Department of Education
Lasonya Jackson, Crozet, Representative of a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
Beth Klein, Stafford, Representative of the Virginia Disability Law Center of Virginia (dLCV)
Heidi Lawyer, Henrico, Representative of Parent Training & Information Center (PEATC)
John Leopold, Richmond, Business/Labor/Industry Representative
Chanthen Nene, Manassas, Representative of an Applicant or Recipient of Rehabilitation Services
Mark Roane, Richmond, Applicant or Recipient of Rehabilitation Services
Rachael Rounds, Midlothian, Representative of Community Rehabilitation Services Program
Beth Sellers, Harrisonburg, Parent/Guardian of a Person with a Disability
Milford Stern, Roanoke, Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor
Gary Talley, Petersburg, Statewide Independent Living Council Representative (SILC)

SRC Members Not Able to Attend

Gerald Meredith, South Chesterfield, Representative of a Disability Advocacy Group (Personal Matter)

DBVI Staff Present

Rachel Dancy, Executive Assistant, Commissioner's Office
Rick Mitchell, Richmond, Commissioner, DBVI, Ex-Officio Member
Megan Hall, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Services
Maggie Mills, Executive Assistant to Commissioner Mitchell
William Sutton, Pre-ETS Specialist dedicated to outreach
Ashley West, Executive Assistant to Deputy Commissioners – Recorder of Minutes

Guest

Catherine Harrison, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs (DARS)

ASL Interpreters

Kristin Dunstan
Elaine Hernandez

Public

No public present

Call to Order / Welcome and Introductions

Chair Stern called the meeting to order. Ms. Ashley West conducted roll call. Quorum was met.

Adoption Agenda

Mr. Nene moved to adopt the proposed agenda; Mr. Roane seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Adoption of August 9, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Ms. Appert moved to adopt the August 9, 2024, SRC Quarterly Meeting minutes as amended, Mr. Nene seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Commissioner's Report – Commissioner Rick Mitchell

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

Commissioner Mitchell reported that the DBVI Bristol office in South West Virginia did not sustain any damage as a result of hurricane Helene.

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program received a federal grant on October 1st and has until September 30, 2026 (two years) to spend these funds. The VR program is in a good place with funding and has a projection of a nine month carry over of these funds. The Rehabilitation Services Administration looks at how quickly and or how slowly these funds are spent. As an agency, DBVI is working to spend these funds quickly to ensure that there is not a great deal of carry over which could affect funds in the upcoming year. Currently, DBVI is moving the case management system, AWARE into the cloud with the help of Alliance AWARE developers. Currently, Virginia's Title IV partners, DBVI and the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) are sharing the cost and maintenance of the case management system. This cost saving measure does have it disadvantages with one being that a feature cannot be turned on for just one agency at a time, both agencies have to agree on the features that will be turned on and off and when that update will occur. Starting in 2025, Alliance will work with both DBVI and DARS to separate the two agency's use of the program and will assist DBVI in ensuring that the system is properly moved to the cloud, maintained and updated as necessary. It is projected that DBVI will have a completely independent system by January 2026. This change will have additional costs and DBVI has confirmed that we have the resources to cover these costs. It will be beneficial to the agency to have their own system and will be better suited for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to utilize.

The Rehabilitation Teaching program just finished a draft of a new policy manual. A lot of changes took place in manual as the last full re-write and update of the manual occurred many years ago. The original manual had approximately 140 pages, and the new manual is down to 70. This shortening of the manual to only include processes related to the provision of services adheres to the Governor's Executive Directive number one (2022) to reduce regulation/regulatory process by 25% across State agencies.

Virginia Industries for the Blind (VIB) recently added a Navy ship stores program. Each Naval ship has at least one (sometimes multiple) "convenience" stores that provides sailors the opportunity to purchase food, drinks, branded apparel, etc. The multi-year roll out plan will begin with VIB providing the goods for the stores on all ships departing from Norfolk Naval Air Station beginning December 1, 2024. Along with the sale of goods, this opportunity will create warehousing, customer service and admin support positions for Virginian's who are blind, vision impaired or deafblind.

Renovation projects are underway utilizing Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) funds. These funds will be utilized to renovate the VIB Charlottesville plant to include a new fire alarm system and constructing a new freight elevator. If funds permit, lighting, electrical work, HVAC system upgrade, a roof top breakroom and office space downstairs will be upgraded. These ARPA funds and projects must be completed by December 1, 2026.

ARPA funds will also be utilized for the construction for an outdoor classroom at the Virginia Rehabilitation for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VCRBVI). This outdoor classroom will be located between the VRCBVI administration building and the dorm on the Azalea campus.

All working drawings for the DBVI Library and Resource Center (LRC) renovation located on the Azalea campus have been completed and will be going out for bid soon. Once this project is completed there will be warehousing space for both talking and braille books, a conference center that includes a large conference room and flexible meeting space, and a smaller conference room that DBVI and other agencies will be able to utilize. The estimated cost for this project is 19 million dollars, with a projected construction start date of late winter 2024 / early spring 2025.

In the Services Division, all field offices are fully staffed. Currently, there is one O&M instructor position open at VCRBVI. This position was repurposed from another position so there will now be four O&M instructors at VRCBVI. The LRC has an Administrative Support Position open.

DBVI is 99% complete on the ongoing video project, with one video left to finish editing. These agency videos can be found on the agency website, dbvi.virginia.gov. There you can click on a link that will take you to DBVI's YouTube page, where there are 15/16, 60 second videos on various DBVI programs. These videos are all audio described and captioned.

The Deputy Commissioner for Services position has not been filled, however, Kathy Malone (Senior Regional Manager at the DBVI Bristol regional office has been appointed by the Commissioner to serve as Acting Deputy Commissioner for Services until this position is filled. Kathy will continue her work as Senior Manager to ensure coverage of both areas. This position has been advertised and a couple of recruitment efforts have been made but have been unsuccessful.

DBVI is in the beginning phases of looking into how artificial intelligence (AI) can be utilized in the VR program. Currently there are challenges with AI and the current administration has very specific guidelines to follow when considering the use of AI. In relation to that, DBVI has started to receive a few requests for purchasing Meta smart glasses (glasses that utilize AI to interpret and provide information from the environment) and these requests are being evaluated on an individualized basis. The agency is developing a policy for the provision of AI related hardware and software.

Deputy Commissioner's Report & VR Program Update– Megan Hall

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

DBVI has lost a dear friend and colleague, LaPearl Smith who had four years of dedicated service to the agency.

October was National Disability Employment Awareness month. DBVI kicked off with a Celebrating Abilities in the Workplace program which highlighted success stories, and business. Ms. Ernesha Pinder, Vice President, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging with CVS Health was the keynote speaker.

As announced at the Celebrating Abilities event, CVS and Aetna are partnering with DBVI to develop and stand up a six-person training pod for accessible customer service training to be housed at VRCBVI. This is a tremendous honor, as this will be the first training center Nationwide that CVS and Aetna will partner with to make this type of training available. VRCBVI will also be hosting the trainees (up to 6 in each cohort) in the dorms. Graduates of the program will be equipped to work in the customer service area in both private and public settings. It is anticipated that a ribbon cutting ceremony will take place in the spring to welcome this new opportunity to DBVI.

Currently, DBVI is undergoing the required comprehensive state needs assessment (mandated to occur every 3 years). As a part of this process, a third party is hired to review Commonwealth of Virginia population data and disability ratio to ensure all groups that could benefit from DBVI services are being reached out to, meets with staff, businesses and other stakeholders to glean information to provide recommendations for areas of improvement to be considered and acted upon, and focuses on the VR program as a whole. Focus groups have been formed for both in person and virtual opportunities, and will be made up of various department, staff, community rehabilitation partners as well as the individuals we work with both currently and in recent past. Justin Sheets will be sending out survey links this upcoming week. If you receive a link, please complete as this helps DBVI look at policy and procedures and affect changes where needed.

Careers in Action took place in early October at the Delta Hotel in downtown Richmond, with a little over 100 in attendance to include, students, parents and DBVI staff. Students were able to get a behind the scenes view of various occupations in the hotel industry that they may not have been aware of including housekeeping, HVAC technician, maintenance, and culinary arts. On the final day of the program, students had the opportunity to receive a hands-on experience at the Virginia Science Museum to explore further opportunities in the hospitality and science industries with a visit to the Virginia Science Museum. Students were given the opportunity to explore the museum and demonstrations by touch if desired.

DBVI will be working to put together proposals for the Commonwealth's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) initiative. Dan Aunspach, Director, Rehabilitation Technology Services, has proposed two programs; one for older blind individuals that would utilize virtual class instruction in the use of technology and smartphone assistance. While working out in the field, rehabilitation teachers discuss these topics but are unable to devote the required amount of training time to ensure mastery and understanding of the technology. The second proposed program will target 12–13-year-olds to help with exposure to access technology hardware and software, as well as provide instruction in the use of the accessible features of cell phones and discussions surrounding the good and the bad of the use of AI. These program proposals are due by December 2024, and an announcement of award will be made after the first of the year.

Business Relations Specialist Diane McBride has been working with executives from Miter and was able to secure a summer paid internship for a college sophomore in the Northern Virginia area. The internship went so well that Miter offered the student a chance to stay on as a part time remote worker while in college and as this position grows, more opportunities for full time competitive integrated employment for the student.

DBVI is providing information to the Workforce Innovation Program for their longitudinal study on 14 - 24-year-old students and the effects of Pre-ETS (student) services compared to those who did not have access to these services and what the benefits truly are.

Old and New Business

Catherine Harrison – SRC Hearing Officer Review Sub-Committee

Ms. Harrison is working to secure hearing offers for fair hearings for both DBVI and DARS. Currently, there are three hearing officers whose contracts cannot be extended again. A solicitation for hearing officers will be advertised in an attempt to ensure there are enough hearing officers after the end of the expiring terms. The DARS SRC met and nominated two members to serve on a subcommittee to locate two new hearing officers. DARS is requesting two DBVI SRC members to serve on this committee as well. These individuals will work with the DARS SRC members in a subcommittee to review writing samples provided by potential hearing officers on how they would handle a case. This will be one meeting at the DARS HQ office. Mr. Talley and Ms. Klein volunteered as DBVI SRC representatives to serve on this subcommittee.

Election of Officers

Chair Stern announced that he will be retiring from his current position at the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry and therefore will not be able to continue his work on the council. This meeting is Mr. Stern's last meeting. Due to this development, a new chair was nominated by the council. Mr. Chanthan Nene was unanimously nominated by the council. Ms. Lawyer moved to adopt Mr. Nene as chair and Mr. Appert seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

2025 SRC Meeting Dates

The SRC meeting dates for 2025 will be as follows:

February 21, 2025; May 9, 2025; August 15, 2025; and November 7, 2025. Mr. Andrews moved that the 2025 SRC meeting dates be adopted as proposed, and Mr. Nene seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chanthan Nene National State Rehabilitation Council Conference Recap

Mr. Nene shared his experience at the NCSRC Conference in Seattle, Washington, and encouraged other members to volunteer to attend the upcoming meeting in the Spring of 2025 typically held on the East Coast.

SRC Annual Report Update

Ms. Appert is working on editing the reports and success stories that were submitted and is on track to submit to the council by the beginning of December. The SRC Annual Report is due to our federal partners by December 30, 2024.

Representative Roundtable

New SRC members introduced themselves to the council, while several of the SRC members provided highlights on their organization's upcoming events.

Adjourn

Mr. Nene moved to end the meeting. Ms. Appert seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Next SRC Quarterly Meeting is February 21, 2025

Department for Blind and Vision Impaired
State Rehabilitation Council
Agency VR Report
November 8, 2024

Acting Deputy Commissioner's Report – Kathy Malone

Regional Office Updates

Bristol	Fully Staffed
Fairfax	Fully Staffed
Norfolk	Fully Staffed
Richmond	Fully Staffed
Roanoke	Fully Staffed
Staunton	Fully Staffed
Headquarters	Fully Staffed
Business Relations	Fully Staffed
VRCBVI	Recruiting for Orientation & Mobility Specialist

State Plan Goals

DBVI, with assistance from the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), developed six goals and priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE) programs for this state plan cycle. The six goals are listed below and updates are included in this report.

1. Engage and collaborate with WIOA core partners to coordinate business service efforts to include the blind and visually impaired labor market.
2. Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to students with disabilities, youth in transition, and adults resulting in the attainment of industry recognized credentials to obtain competitive integrated employment.
3. Conduct outreach efforts to Local Education Agencies and other Community Partners to assist in increasing the number of students with disabilities participating in and benefiting from DBVI offered Pre-Employment Transition programs.
4. Continue to expand the utilization of Supported Employment and Customized Employment services for adults and youth to increase

competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

5. Achieving agency annual performance goals and establishing base lines for the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in section 116(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.
6. Increase collaboration with the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services to provide comprehensive wrap around services to address the needs of individuals who have dual diagnoses.

State Goal Updates:

1. During this quarter, DBVI's Director of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Services, along with several other DBVI staff, attended the third in a series of the Commonwealth Wide Workforce Town Hall. This town hall was led by the Secretary of Labor, and great attention was spent to discussing the climate survey surrounding consumer's experience interfacing with the Virginia Works Workforce Centers.
2. During this quarter, DBVI's students were provided with several opportunities to engage in fun while learning. Among the events were Careers in Action, Richmond, The IT Credential Fair and the IT Tierd Cohort information session. The IT Credential Fair and the IT Tierd cohort include student's with disabilities, youth in transition and adult career seekers.
3. During this most recent quarter, DBVI's student team made great strides in ramping up outreach opportunities with school systems Commonwealth Wide. Outreach events conducted included participation in the Division on Career Development and Transition conference, Amelia County Professional Development Day, the upcoming Council for Exceptional Children Conference at JMU, etc. Also of note, the student team is now fully staffed with the addition of Mr. William Sutton. Mr. Sutton with primarily be tasked with outreach to schools, businesses and teachers for the vision impaired in the Bristol, Roanoke and Staunton DBVI Regional office areas.
4. During the third quarter of the program year, DBVI counselors and staff supported 87 individuals in pursuing careers of their choice by providing targeted supported employment services. Several individuals located work in competitive

integrated environments and continue to receive follow along services to ensure continued employment success.

5. Although DBVI is awaiting the most recent dashboard information from the Rehabilitation Services Administration, DBVI staff who attended the Counsel of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation received information regarding 1 data point. As in years past, Virginia ranked number 1 in the nation for the highest percentage of measurable skills gains obtained. These skills gains include successful matriculation from one grade to the next in high school, the successful completion of a semester in college, credentials obtained in a myriad of occupations, etc.

6. During this quarter, DBVI staff continued to work with the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services to update policy and regulations in relation to serving individuals with dual enrollment. The Virginia DeafBlind Project, with members from both DBVI and DARS, meet on a quarterly basis to determine process improvements to streamline combined VR services.

Business Relations Unit Updates- Cindy Roberts and Team

Program Update:

- The DBVI Business Relations Unit is sad to announce the loss of our dear friend and colleague, Ms. LaPearl Smith. Ms. Smith worked tirelessly for decades devoting her time to assisting career seekers with opportunities to connect with businesses, setting up paid work based learning experiences, and instruction in interviewing and presentation. Ms. Smith retired from the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services a few years ago, and DBVI was elated when Ms. Smith joined the DBVI Business Relations Team. Ms. Smith served as the Business Relations Specialist for the Norfolk office prior to moving into her work with DBVI students with disabilities over the past year. Ms. Smith was a consistent positive light in the world, and her absence has been truly felt. DBVI continues to work with Ms. Smith's family as they navigate finalizing benefits information and begin adjusting to a world without her.

- October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. DBVI's Business Relations Team hosted the annual Celebrating Abilities in the Workplace program. This year's key note speaker was Ms. Ernesha Pinder, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging with CVS. During this event, DBVI is always proud to honor businesses and individuals who have committed to and achieved competitive integrated employment in the last program year.
- Also announced at the Celebrating Abilities in the Workplace program is that DBVI is pairing up with CVS/AETNA to open a call center training program to be housed at VRCBVI. DBVI is the first and only VR agency for the Blind to receive this honor. Funding for the project comes from a grant through CVS/Aetna, and will result in a real world training environment where up to 6 individuals will learn the nuance and art of customer service, for 6 weeks. CVS/AETNA and DBVI technology staff have worked together to ensure that the training curriculum is accessible for individuals who use screen reading software. Upon completion of the course, DBVI VR Counselors will work with individuals to locate competitive integrated employment in their chosen field either with CVS/AETNA or other companies that provide this type of service. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony announce once all equipment, furniture and signage have been received.
- The DBVI Business Relations Team along with DBVI's Deputy Commissioner for Enterprise, Mr. Matt Koch, presented a session at the National Industries for the Blind annual conference to share DBVI's collaborative experience between the Virginia Industries for the Blind and the DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation department.
- Also during this quarter, the DBVI business relations team presented at the National Federation of the Blind Virginia state conference. These presentations included topics such as career exploration, resume development, interviewing techniques/practice, the importance of having a Linked In profile, etc.
- Diane McBride, DBVI Business Relations Specialist in the Fairfax office, met with an individual served out of the Norfolk office and the BRS from that area. The individual is currently employed by the Virginia Industries for the Blind as an assistant manager, but is interested in obtaining a federal job as a data analyst. The individual indicated that he was willing to relocate nationally. Ms. McBride invited the individual to attend the federal job club and will provide the individual with direct hire opportunities.

- During this quarter, Ms. McBride worked closely with executives with MITRE to secure a paid internship for a rising college sophomore. The following is an email from the student regarding the internship:

“I just wanted to let you all know that I had a great summer with MITRE for an internship and I’ve learned so much. I would also like to announce that they have decided to keep me on their team for the school year as a part-time-on-call student (basically a part time remote position), so I’m looking forward to it. Also, I explained my position with vision and DBVI’s support and they went ahead, with my consent, to write an amazing article about me and the journey I’ve been through.”

Student Team updates- Tish Harris et. al:

- Careers in Action was held October 4-6 at the Delta Marriott in Richmond. Even with a few last minute cancellations due to sickness we still had 36 students and families attend. With students, staff and parents, we had over 126 attendees at meals.
- Commissioner Mitchell kicked off our event on Friday at lunch, welcoming families to the program. On Friday afternoon students did a hands-on career exploration in five areas of the hotel: Sales and Event Management, Human Resources, Banquets, Restaurant and Kitchen, and Laundry and Housekeeping. In each area, students heard about the various jobs within that section of the hotel and how all worked together. In addition to teamwork, students also learned about the importance of time management and proper communication for the workplace, as well as safety and customer service. While students were on tour, Megan Hall, Justin Sheets, Tish Harris, Kacie McIntyre and Gary Joyce held a general session with parents using Vevox to give an overview of topics for Saturday as well as program numbers and work experience information.
- Friday night our group was joined by Stephen and Lyan Ware of Intellectual Point. Stephen first gave some great information on password security and cyber safety. Lyan gave a preview of next summer’s Cyber Warriors. Stephen judged the 3-D print contest and awarded prizes. DBVI students gave Stephen and Lyan a warm welcome, a round of applause and thank you cards for coming.

- Saturday morning after breakfast, students left parents to do a round robin resource fair to hear from several presenters and about multiple topics presented in a participatory setting:
- Madeline Nunnally presented translating interest into a career field, advocacy and disclosure, how to be a team player, technology and apps, and Success tools, including apps that work for travel and careers.
- LaSonya Jackson led a session to introduce students to networking, how to introduce themselves and shake hands, how to begin a conversation and share appropriately, with an emphasis on all jobs have value
- Gary Joyce explained the difference between job shadow, paid and unpaid work experiences, and internships. Gary gave advice on volunteering to begin a resume, time management and goal setting.
- Kacie McIntyre advised students of the importance of staying in touch with their counselors, and explained what VR can do to help students reach goals. Kacie had a discussion with students about what changes as they turn 18. Kacie finished her time with students encouraging them to try programs outside their comfort zones to learn and grow.
- Tish Harris led a panel discussion with four mentors who have multiple mentorship experiences. Four mentors shared what their greatest challenge has been and how they overcame it.
- Saturday morning for parents also included information sessions:
- Becky Keller led a session on independent travel, covering why it is important, what does O&M mean, school offers for student orientation and mobility, and travel apps. Jimmy Morris spoke with parents about his reluctance to use a cane in the beginning but the value of independent travel after O&M training.
- Justin Sheets led a discussion that centered on Social Security, Social Security Disability benefits, the value of meeting with a workforce incentive specialist, ABLE accounts, Individual education plans and 504 plans, and voter registration.
- Felicia Williams shared the importance of a work experience for students, how Business Relations works with students, and invited families to attend the financial literacy program that is offered by the student team to get students ready for work experiences.

- On Saturday after lunch, our group of students and parents visited the Capital for a hosted tour. Students independently traveled through busy downtown streets with multiple barriers and terrains. Students were very engaged in the capital tour and asked multiple questions. Hosts shared their careers with students, including how they came to work at the Capital.
- During the Saturday dinner, students were asked to complete a sheet on setting a goal and first step using information they had gathered during the program. Goals and sheets were read out loud and students were given recognition for completing the career exploration. After recognition, students and parents participated in a dance party.
- On Sunday morning during breakfast, student mentors shared their greatest achievement as well as programs they have enjoyed taking with students and parents. Afterwards, everyone met at the Virginia Science Museum where students saw an accessible film in the dome audio described by Virginia Voice, watched a heart dissection, and then participated in a makers challenge in addition to moving through exhibits throughout the museum.
- Survey results indicate that both students and parents thoroughly enjoyed the program and found it useful for career exploration and advancement of soft skills and advocacy.

VRCBVI- Brooke Rogers

Programming Update:

- On October 17, 2024, VRCBVI hosted its annual "Friends and Family Day". This years event was the biggest yet with over 100 people in attendance. During the event, individuals were able to connect with others in the community, meet with Student Team members to learn about the programs offered throughout the year, meet with VRCBVI staff, etc. The following is an excerpt of an email received following the event:
"Good day,

I had the pleasure and honor of attending the DBVI Family and Friends Day - October 19th, 2024 - sponsored by the Virginia Department of Blind and Low Vision Services. The event was "seamless"!

The support of DBVI allowed me to be able to work for the VA Medical Center as a Medical Records Technician in addition to being a Healthcare Consultant.

I retired- December 2023 after 20 years of Federal Service.

From the initial outreach email from Mr. Sutton concerning the event (consistent and welcoming), registration staff, various vendors that offered explanations - smiles and follow-up with me (when requested) after the event ... seamless. It was my first time attending - I will attend each year!

It was important for my family member to see why I was so excited about the assistance and exceptional services I consistently receive to be able to evolve and develop skills and tools to "meet" my visual "challenges".

My family members responded with looks of "horror" when they questioned me on how I make my meals with low vision (using hot items, and kitchen tools) prior to the event. A trip to the kitchen and a demonstration by a very nice lady (during the tour) illustrated how your agency provides independence, assertiveness and hope. (for all -especially me)

Thank you for giving me hope, skills and confidence."

- **Adult Training Program:**

- VRCBVI resumed the Adult Training Program on September 3, 2024. VRCBVI is currently serving 18 full time adult learners and 6 part-time/commuter adult learners. More students are scheduled to begin training throughout the remainder of the semester.

November 2024 Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Common Performance Measures Report – Deborah Collard

DBVI has transitioned to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Common Performance Measures (CPM). These measures replace the Standards and

Indicators report that was previously shared with the SRC. The six core WIOA programs are all required to now report on the CPMs. The six core partners in WIOA include:

- Adult Formula Program (WIOA title I)
- Youth Formula Program (WIOA title I)
- Dislocated Worker Formula Program (WIOA title I)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (WIOA title II)
- Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (WIOA title III)
- Vocational Rehabilitation program (WIOA title IV)

Common Performance Measures:

Under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, there are six primary indicators of performance:

A. Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit);

B. Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit);

C. Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

D. Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;

E. Measurable Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

- a) Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;
- b) Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- c) Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards²;
- d) Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or
- e) Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

F. Effectiveness in Serving Employers: WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) requires the Departments (DOE and DOL) to establish a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. The Departments are piloting three approaches designed to gauge three critical workforce needs of the business community.

Approach 1 – Retention with the same employer – addresses the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers;

Approach 2 – Repeat Business Customers – addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish

productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; and

Approach 3 – Employer Penetration Rate – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy.

² Within each State there is an administrative unit that provides authorization to postsecondary institutions within the State. States differ in the requirements to which they hold postsecondary institutions responsible for satisfactory progress. Progress for WIOA purposes must comply with any applicable State standards. Likewise, every State has a State educational agency that establishes education standards for secondary education within the State, which would apply for purposes of determining if a participant is meeting the State’s academic standards.

***** DBVI has not received updated information from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to be able to provide an update for the following information. As soon as it is received, an email with the information will be sent.*****

Virginia WIOA Employer Engagement Common Performance Measure (CPM)

DBVI reports with Virginia WIOA core partners on the joint CPM of Effectiveness in Serving Employers as described below:

1. Effectiveness in Serving Employers (States select two of three measures) – Virginia has selected employer retention and employer penetration as described below:
 - Retention with the same employer – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide employers with skilled workers; and
 - Employer Penetration Rate - addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy.

Since this indicator is a new approach for measuring performance under WIOA’s six core programs, DOE and RSA have implemented a pilot program during which States must select two of the three approaches. DOE and RSA will evaluate State experiences with the various approaches and plan to identify a standardized indicator to be implemented in the future.

All state VR agencies nationwide continue working with RSA on reporting of WIOA Common Performance Measures (CPM) and utilizing RSA 911 data along with performance data dashboards developed by RSA to demonstrate VR program performance. Based on current information, DBVI is able to report on several measures as shown in the table below.

CPM	PY18	PY19	PY20	PY21	PY22	PY23Q3
Employment rate 2 nd Q after exit	42.2% DBVI 51.5% VA*	37.6% DBVI 54.4% VA*	39.9% DBVI 51.6% VA*	39% DBVI	51.4% DBVI	34% DBVI
Employment rate 4 th Q after exit	N/A	27.7% DBVI 52.2% VA*	30.2% DBVI 47.5% VA*	33% DBVI	39.1% DBVI	47% DBVI
Median Earnings 2 nd Q after exit	\$4362 DBVI \$3011 VA*	\$4445 DBVI \$3127 VA*	\$5540 DBVI \$3238 VA*	\$4878 DBVI	\$7465 DBVI	TBD
Credential Attainment Rate	N/A	16.7% DBVI	61.8% DBVI 43.3% VA*	49% DBVI	49.3% DBVI	TBD
Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Rate	53.0% DBVI 45.0% VA*	82.6% DBVI 85.65 VA*	85.5% DBVI 88.9% VA*	85% DBVI	93.3% DBVI	2% DBVI
Number of DBVI Participants Earning an MSG**	249	247	243	244	237	15
Effectiveness in Serving Employers						
Employer Retention Rate	N/A	62% VA*	70% DBVI	69%	34% DBVI	TBD
Employer Penetration - DBVI	256 services 129 businesses	266 services 132 businesses	190 services 84 businesses	190 services 117 businesses	227 services 118 businesses	150 services 79 businesses

*Reported for the state of Virginia, this includes Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) VR data combined with DBVI VR data.

**Not a WIOA CPM but considered a primary indicator of performance by RSA.

As part of the implementation of the WIOA CPMs and to assist state VR agencies with determining how the RSA 911 data elements are used and how the CPMs are calculated, RSA has developed a set of dashboards or graphics that illustrate key data elements. One of the dashboards outlines Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) outcomes. In PY23 Q3 there were 31 CIE outcomes achieved. DBVI continues to have a wide variety of occupations and strong median wages represented in CIE outcomes. The top ten careers by Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) categories, median hourly wage, and median weekly hours are listed in the table below.

Standard Occupational Classification	Individuals	Median Hours	Median Wage
Stockers and Order Fillers	2	29	\$31.04
Community Health Workers	2	17	\$24.00
Customer Service Representatives	2	40	\$21.03
Retail Salespersons	2	30	\$13.79
Randolph-Sheppard vending facility operator	1	35	\$81.14
Chief Executives	1	40	\$56.37
Producers and Directors	1	40	\$37.74
Labor Relations Specialists	1	40	\$32.00
Teaching Assistants, All Others	1	40	\$28.00
Special Education Teachers, Elementary School	1	40	\$27.40

Another WIOA performance area where DBVI continues to be consistent and robust is in the provision of the required pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS). For PY2023 Q3, DBVI reported 90 students receiving pre-ETS, including the following number of services provided: 45 job exploration counseling services (15%), 60 work based learning experiences (20%), 58 counseling and enrollment opportunities services (20%), 80 work readiness training experiences (27%), and 53 instructions in self-advocacy services (18%).

Additionally, through the national Rehab Data Workgroup, RSA has shared several “Other Measures that Matter” with the RSA quarterly Dashboards. These measures are

provided to enhance the VR agencies' understanding of the use of the new data elements collected and the implementation of WIOA. In FPY23 Q3, DBVI had 953 total VR participants of which 919 participants had a most significant disability representing 96.4% of participants receiving VR services.

VR Consumer Satisfaction Evaluation Program – November 2024 Deborah Collard

**** Section updated 11/06/2024****

Vocational Rehabilitation Consumer Satisfaction Evaluation Program Summary; Federal Program Year 2023, July 2023 through June 2024:

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, housed in the Services Division at DBVI, is responsible for the administration and operation of Virginia's VR program serving individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind, as described in the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014. The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) partners with and assists DBVI in reviewing the effectiveness of, and individual satisfaction with the VR services. Services are designed to meet the needs of individuals consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, abilities, interests, and informed choice so that they may prepare for, engage in, and retain competitive integrated employment. The Policy, Planning, & Evaluation (PPE) team, housed in the Administration Division at DBVI, partners with Services Division staff to administer the VR Consumer Satisfaction Evaluation program (CSAT). PPE staff provide oversight, review, and analysis of evaluation results. The evaluation program is designed to include individual consumer surveys that eligible VR participants can complete on their own.

The survey process provides a systematic method of learning the point of view of individuals being served. It is one measure of program effectiveness and a quality-of-service indicator. In their confidential responses to the survey questions, individuals can provide their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with received services, VR staff, and various aspects of the VR program. DBVI distributes surveys at the time of VR case closure, to assess consumer satisfaction with VR services. Reports of survey results are created annually and upon request. Additionally, quarterly data is provided to the SRC and the DBVI VR team. All individuals with an eligible VR cases closure, who received VR services, are provided an opportunity to complete a survey to express their satisfaction with the VR program, services, and service providers.

During the 2023 federal program year, DBVI maintained steps that were taken in the 2020 federal fiscal year (Oct 1, 2019, to Sept 30, 2020) to increase the response rate from individuals who received VR services. Three main areas of focus to address the response rate were determined: communication, utilization of agency resources, and updating and editing the survey platform and questions. For communication, DBVI updated the VR case

closure letters that are provided to individuals at the end of their VR program, to include information about the VR consumer satisfaction evaluation. Additionally, training was provided to VR staff to engage staff in the evaluation process and reaffirming the importance of communication about the evaluation. DBVI partnered with the SRC to accomplish the third focus area of updating and editing the survey platform and questions. The number of questions required to be completed decreased from nineteen to nine. The estimated completion time also decreased. The questions were also reviewed and edited for simplification. To align the collecting and reporting of evaluation responses with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) federal program year reporting, the new survey questions and format were first used for a partial 2020 federal program year (FPY) to include Sept 2020 through June 2021. Use of these questions has continued through PY2023. A copy of the updated survey questions is included in Attachment A at the end of this document.

During the calendar year 2021, DBVI also implemented additional assistance, to improve utilization of agency resources, to address the second focus area identified above. The additional assistance included outreach and follow up activities that have proven successful in the past. Additional staff have worked on these activities, including mailing a paper copy of the consumer satisfaction survey with the VR case closure letter, and email and phone call follow up activities to individuals who were eligible to complete the survey. These practices continue through PY2023.

Most recently, during the FPY 2023, 221 individuals were eligible to receive the VR consumer satisfaction survey (CSAT). Of those 221 individuals, approximately 13% or 29 individuals were determined to be unable to locate, contact, or moved, which decreased the likelihood of receiving a response to the survey. The continued implementation of the improvement strategies described above resulted in 51 responses received, equaling an approximate 27% response rate. This response rate is less than the 44% and 30% response rate received for the previous program years PY2021 and PY2020, respectively, but an increase over the 23% response rate from last year, FPY22. The FPY23 rate of 27% is also exceeding the DBVI target response rate of 20%. Monitoring and optimizing of the implemented strategies will continue for FPY2024, which includes July 2024 through June 2025. Additionally, DBVI continues to see a 100% completion rate for survey respondents, meaning once the participant began the survey, 100% of the time the survey was completed.

Federal Program Year (FPY) 2023 consumer satisfaction survey responses indicate:

- Individuals with employment outcomes (rehabilitated) continue to report high overall satisfaction with the VR program, with a weighted score of 92.31 (out of 100). Likewise, individuals without employment outcomes (other than

rehabilitated) reported a score of 86.67, the highest score from this group in the last seven years.

- Most respondents, ninety percent, reported being “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with the VR services received from DBVI.
- The overall satisfaction score for all respondents in FPY23 is 90.98, the highest reported score in the last seven years.

Results for overall satisfaction scores with the VR program from FFY2016 through FPY2023 are included in the table below.

Table 1. Overall Satisfaction scores FFY2016 through FPY2023

<u>Year</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Rehabilitated</u>	<u>Other than</u>
<u>Rehabilitated</u>			
FFY2016	73.66	82.75	63.33
FFY2017	79.65	85.57	69.79
FFY2018	78.60	94.70	58.50
FFY2019 and 2020	73.33	87.32	45.54
FPY2020*	78.80	91.82	71.20
FPY2021	87.74	94.73	76.66
FPY2022	85.58	95.00	67.69
FPY2023	90.98	92.31	86.67

When compared to the last reporting period, FPY2022, scores for FPY2023 remained consistently high for individual perception of VR staff being respectful, knowledgeable about disability, and sensitive to needs. The satisfaction scores with VR staff for FPY 2023 were the highest in the last seven years. FPY 2023 survey highlights are provided below:

- ❖ 96 percent of individuals agreed their VR counselor was respectful, resulting in a weighted score of 94.90. Additionally, 81 percent agreed their VR counselor delivered services and service items in a timely manner, scoring 87.32.
- ❖ Individuals believed their VR counselor was sensitive to their needs, scoring 94.51, and responded to their questions and concerns in a timely manner, scoring 94.90.

- ❖ 94 percent of individuals agreed their counselor was knowledgeable about their disability, scoring 94.51, the highest score in the last seven years. Additionally, 92 percent agreed their VR counselor partnered with them in developing their vocational goal, scoring 93.47.

Results for satisfaction scores with VR staff from FFY2016 through FPY2023 are included in the table below.

Table 2. Satisfaction scores with VR Staff FFY2016 through FPY2023

<u>Year</u>	<u>Respectful</u>	<u>Knowledgeable on disability</u>	<u>Sensitive to needs</u>
FFY2016	83.71	78.59	77.96
FFY2017	86.61	85.96	83.93
FFY2018	92.86	81.43	85.71
FFY2019 & 2020	84.38	83.75	80.00
FPY2020*	85.83	87.23	84.26
FPY2021	90.87	88.70	90.97
FPY2022	88.57	90.50	88.29
FPY2023	94.90	94.51	94.51

In FPY2020 DBVI introduced a Net Promoter Score (NPS) question to the survey. The NPS is a metric used in customer experience evaluation programs. A NPS is used to measure how likely a customer is to refer your product or service to others, scores can range from -100 to +100, a higher score is desirable. A national benchmark NPS for government organizations in 2023 is 52. The FPY2020 NPS responses were calculated to establish a baseline for DBVI equaling 36. The DBVI NPS for FPY2023, the fourth year this metric was used is 75, an improvement from the baseline and last year's score of 57, and also the highest score since the implementation of the NPS question. The NPS will continue to be monitored and analyzed in the coming years.

The responses and ratings for FPY2023 are high and consistent with improvement and satisfaction with the VR program. However, given the number of evaluation responses submitted in FPY 2023, it is difficult to determine how well the summary statistics represent the entire group of eligible individuals served; as a result, please view the summary information as informative, and providing general guidance, rather than as definitive statements regarding the consumer satisfaction results of any specific subset of VR cases or individuals being served. A detailed summary of all evaluation questions

and responses is located at the website listed below and is available for review and comment.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MwwOba1djYN8IUyABVQQ1A_3D_3D/

The open-ended responses from the VR consumer satisfaction evaluation included numerous comments from consumers regarding their experiences with the agency and their satisfaction with their VR counselors and trainers. Accessibility to services and opportunities, timeliness of services, and engagement with agency personnel continue to be a focus for individuals DBVI serves. DBVI is aware of the need to continue with early engagement and follow up with individuals to improve services and access to services. Additionally, DBVI is focused on the need to optimize staff coverage for service provision and minimize staff turnover. All open ended responses are included in Attachment B at the end of this document.

The DBVI VR Program is part of the Workforce system within the Commonwealth of Virginia. As a member of this large, coordinated network, DBVI continues to position itself to maintain strong partnerships within the Virginia Workforce system, including the new Virginia Works workforce agency, as the Commonwealth continues to implement the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014. The results of the consumer satisfaction survey will be used by DBVI decision makers and the SRC in the continued development and implementation of the Combined Virginia State Plan and WIOA implementation. The feedback and insights will also be used to make recommendations for improvement of services on behalf of individuals. The comments provided by the consumers are rich in content and will continue to aide in improving the high-quality service delivery program that exists at DBVI.

* **FedProgramYear2020** is a partial federal program year, from September 2020 through June 2021. This timeframe is used for this reporting year to align the reporting year at DBVI with the federal program year in WIOA. The next reporting timeframe, Federal Program Year 2021, corresponds to July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.

Attachment A – FPY2020, 2021, 2022 survey questions

1. Please provide the following information:

Name

VR Counselor

* 2. Did you receive information from DBVI about the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, including the VR application and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), in accessible formats, for example in Braille, large print, or electronic versions?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

N/A (not

applicable)

Other

(please

specify)

* 3. Did your Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor inform and explain about the Client Assistance Program (CAP) administered by the disAbility Law Center of Virginia, and your right to appeal DBVI decisions?

☐

Yes

DDC 110624

☐

No

☐

Not sure

* 4. How satisfied are you that your VR Counselor was:

Very Satisfied

Satisfied

Neutral

Dissatisfied

Very

Dissatisfied

N/A Respectful

☐☐☐☐☐

Sensitive to your needs

☐☐☐☐☐☐

Knowledgeable about your disability

* 5. How satisfied are you that your VR Counselor:

Very Satisfied
Dissatisfied N/A

Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very

Responded to
your questions
and concerns
in a timely
manner

Delivered services and
service items in a timely

☐
☐
☐
☐

manner

☐
☐

Provided
adequate
information
and partnered
with you in
choosing
services and
service
providers

Partnered with you in
developing your

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

vocational goal

* 6. Please rate your satisfaction with services received from DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program:

Very Satisfied
Dissatisfied N/A

Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very

Guidanc

e and

Counseli

ng

Opportunities

to interact

with

businesses, for

example: job clubs, ☐☐

seminars, job

fairs, or

informational

interviews

Work

Experiences

and/or

Internships

Job search assistance ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

* 7. Were you satisfied with additional services and training you may have received from DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program:

Yes
applicable)

No

N/A (not

Blindness Skills

Training

(Braille, etc.)

Orientation and Mobility ☐☐

Rehabilitation Teaching

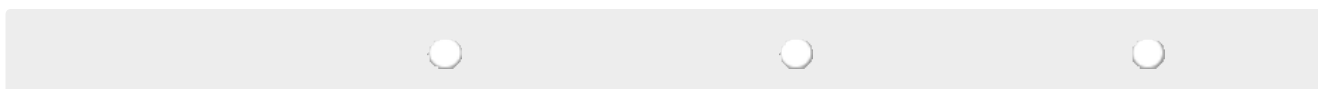
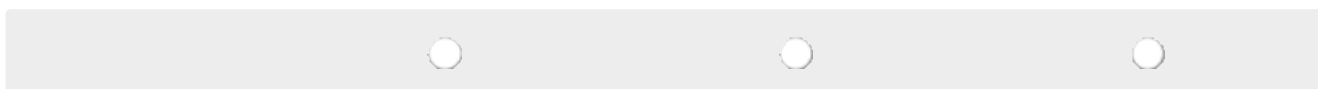
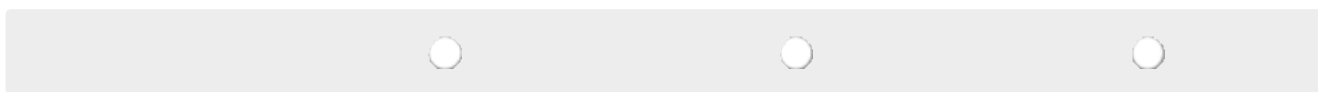
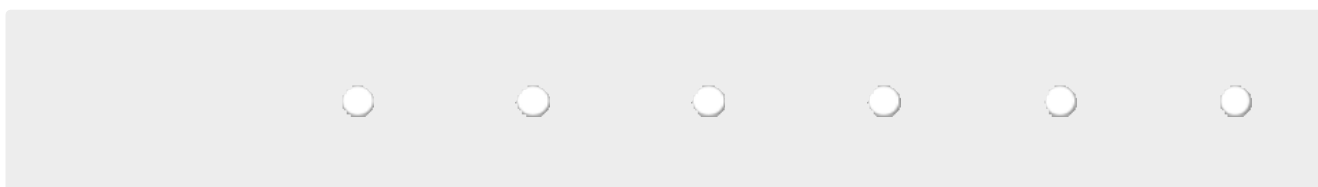
and Independent Living

☐

Low Vision (Vision
screening, aids, eye
glasses)



Interpretation
or translation



* 8. Please rate your satisfaction with how DBVI provided:

Information about the availability of Assistive Technology services and devices, if needed

Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

Training or tutoring services for the use of Assistive Technology, if needed

Support to increase your Assistive Technology skills to help you reach your goals, if needed

* 9. How likely is it that you would recommend DBVI VR services to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely
Extremely likely

10

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

* 10. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the VR services received from DBVI.

Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

11. OPTIONAL - Please share other thoughts, and add comments or suggestions

Attachment B – FPY 2022 open ended responses**Responses from individuals who selected “Very Satisfied”:**

Mr. Crisp and the entire DBVI team went above and beyond on more than one occasion to support Ibn. They never gave up and were always available to support me (Guardian) to assist Ibn. Thank you!!!

I had a wonderful counselor who was very keen to my needs and also to my inabilities. Couldn't recommend the services provided here more and I was supported throughout my entire journey with DBVI. Thank you all for what you do and how you interact with your clients.

The services provided by my case managers and Shawn C were invaluable. Each of them went above and beyond to ensure that I had skills and support.

I think right DBVI Lea C. next to be more involved in my work. And I guess you say more supportive. Add more options. Add trading options.

Isaac was a huge help and very helpful with getting equipment and helped me reach my goal.

LaSonya has been nothing short of amazing. Incredibly informative in so many different facets. Extremely patient, kind, and caring. She has made this whole traumatic experience into one that I truly relished. She and DBVI has given me hope for my future and I can never thank you or LaSonya enough.

On our initial call to DBVI, we were told that no services would be available for Sarah. That was heartbreaking and with continued follow up, DBVI did indeed offer services for Sarah. Some were effective, others not so much. Once we were connected with VR our path became clear, needs identified, program developed and implemented, resources provided, and accommodations provided. Sara has received exemplary support with Liang on her team. Liang has been proactive, patient, efficient with her monthly check in meetings, and

on top of that providing any necessary resources for Sarah to have a successful work experience. It should also be noted that Sarah is NOT the typical DBVI client and Liang has consistently sought to learn more about Sarah's unique needs, and how she can better support her. Liang is a treasure to our family, to Sarah, and to DBVI who is extremely blessed to have her in the department! Rick was very helpful to guide me and get me knot VRCBVI in Richmond. It helped me a lot, but I still need some help, and I am going to continue with DBVI services.

DBVI has given me a new life and hope after my vision loss.

I received valuable assistance from Mike, Steve and Dr. Baldwin. The training and tools have helped me remain employed. Forever grateful!

I am extremely grateful for all the help that DBVI has given me, especially Holly Dalton. IN the past few years, I have received such valuable help and assistance, including a computer tutor, job training, finding an internship and now my dream job and so much more. Holly is always available, helpful, and kind.

THANK YOU!

Thank you so much for all your help. Thank you for sending me the equipment I needed. I was able to use my CCTV you provided to complete this survey. Each worker I dealt with was so helpful and patient with me.

I was very satisfied that I could continue using my regular low vision Dr. because of the time I have spent with him on my vision exams.

To anyone it may concern, never give up, the doors will soon open. Always eat the elephant one bite at a time. 10 year reunion would be nice.

Ms. Liao was very helpful in all of my needs while going through my vocational rehabilitation.

DBVI was always there for me as my backup in achieving professional goal during my college years and beyond, until I found the job at DFAS. I would also appreciate your help in my move to Ohio for my desired employment.

I had a wonderful experience with DBVI program, and I think Holly Dalton is an excellent DBVI Counselor. I was very satisfied with her help and counseling. Everyone I worked with was wonderful--patient, knowledgeable, and made sure I knew all about everything that you all offer, even though I didn't need all those services. They came with me to the low vision specialist, delivered equipment to my home, and showed me how to use it. Thank you all so much!

Responses from individuals who selected "Satisfied":

I believe that the lag time between when a client contacts DBVI and when DBVI is able to work the case needs to be reduced. In my case it took six months before I received assistance. Six months is a long time to wait when you are out of work and the unemployment office is not equipped to help visually impaired clients.

Regarding timeliness of services question above: I lost my job in April and was not able to receive services until September. For someone who is out of work, a 6 month gap between requesting and receiving services is not acceptable. I did not want to answer very dis-satisfied in the question above, because this was beyond my counselor's control. His service was excellent once he was able to work with me.

Responses from individuals who selected "Neutral":

ONE OF MY BIGGESTS DISAPPOINTMENTS, OR ISSUES OF DISSATISFATION IS THAT MY COUNSELOR WOULD NOT REFER ME FOR AN UPDATED LOW VISION EXAM, INCLUSIVE OF NEW GLASSES AND ANY OTHER LOW VISION AID FOUND HELPFUL. MY COUNSELOR INSISTED THAT I WOULD HAVE TO SCHEDULE AND PAY FOR MY OWN LOW VISION EYE EXAM AND HAVE THOSE RESULTS SENT TO HER. ADDITIONALLY, I WAS NOT MADE AWARE OF ANY POTENTIAL INTERNSHIPS OR WORK EXPERIENCES THAT I MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE PART IN. We had almost NO interaction with our counselor.

Responses from individuals who selected "Dissatisfied":

I feel like the counselors only do the minimum amount so that they can get a paycheck I have had so many different counselors I never feel that I get to know one before they leave in another one come.

Responses from individuals who selected "Very Dissatisfied":

None.