



The Rehab Council Connection

A Quarterly e-Newsletter

Mark your Calendar:

Customer Forum

Thursday April 17th
5:30p.m to 7:30 p.m.
Wenatchee

*ASL and Spanish
Interpretation Provided*

For information or
reasonable
accommodation contact
rossiae@dshs.wa.gov

In this issue:

Goodbye Wait List	1
Your Input Sought	1
New Leadership	2
Survey Impact	2
Inroads to Business 3	

Goodbye and Good Riddance to the Waiting List

In 2005 when more than fifteen thousand DVR customers were waiting for services, most would have found it difficult to believe that there would ever be an end to the waiting list. On February 10th, the last people waiting for services will begin the Vocational Rehabilitation process. The waiting list will be a thing of the past.

From the newest Rehabilitation Technician, Seasoned VRC, Unit Supervisor, to the Director, staff at every

level of DVR has worked hard to realize the end of the waiting list. It has not just been about numbers and budgets. The organization understands the impact that waiting has on the lives of real people. The Washington State Rehabilitation Council also understands the true hardship that many have faced as they have waited to go to work. We appreciate your patience and celebrate your endurance. We applaud the effort made by our colleagues at DVR.

Still, the end of the wait list is just the beginning of the challenge for the organization and its customers. The organization has to rebuild trust within the community and manage its resources to avoid the reemergence of a waiting list. The customers have to do the hard work of developing and implementing a plan to go to work. The members of our Council do not underestimate these challenges.

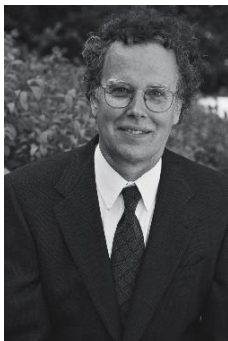
Customer and Stakeholder Input More Important Than Ever Following Waiting List

The central responsibility of the Rehabilitation Council is to use the information we receive from those receiving services, community members, and others to identify trends within Washington State's Vocational Rehabilitation System that need to be addressed to increase the likelihood that people get the jobs they want and have the confidence and skills to keep them.

While the waiting list was growing, we knew that it

was a driving factor impeding DVR's ability to make quality services widely available. As we move beyond the waiting list, other trends are important to consider. For the organization to avoid a waiting list it will need to manage its resources thoughtfully. Our Council needs to hear from you now more than ever to understand from independent sources how DVR is serving you. If you are a vendor or a community partner, we

are also interested in any trends you notice in your interactions with the division. The Washington State Rehabilitation Council has succeeded in building a constructive relationship with DVR because our common interest is in insuring that a greater number of people with disabilities enter and advance in the workforce. Our Council is a voice of conscience within the Vocational Rehabilitation Process. We need your input more than ever.



**Martin McCallum,
Washington State
Rehabilitation Council
Chair**



Look for the Council's 2007 Annual Report in your snail mail in the coming weeks!

New Leadership in 2008

At the Council's January meeting in Olympia, elections were held. Members built on their strong tradition of electing an effective and cohesive leadership team.

Martin McCallum, who represents the Workforce Board on our Council, was elected Chair. Martin has been a member of the Council for three years. Martin has a wealth of expertise in making systems work better for people. For 33 years he has worked within the Workforce Development System in the field and as a policy analyst.

McCallum is especially interested in utilizing the strengths of the Executive Committee to increase the results we hope to achieve as a Council in 2008. He is joined by Carol Maher, the Council's West Vice Chair. She works to make state buildings more accessible for people with

disabilities.

Bob Roberts of Spokane is the East Vice Chair and the Chair of the Planning and Policy Committee. He brings business acumen and expertise in trades and apprenticeships that has been recognized nationally.

The team is rounded out by five talented and dedicated Committee Chairs. Kristopher Tefft represents Business and Industry on the Council. He is the lead attorney for the Association of Washington Business. He chairs the new Business Committee.

Bill Murray is the Council's outgoing two-term Chair. He is a self employed Developmental Disability Consultant, uniquely equipped to Chair the Council Effectiveness Committee.

Jim Larson is a newly appointed member of the

Council who will be Chairing the Customer Satisfaction Committee. Jim's commitment to employment services for people with disabilities is both personal and professional and extends three decades.

John Harrison is the incoming Chair of the Interagency Liaison Committee. With a thirty year career in education as a Teacher and a Guidance Counselor, John will bring a well informed perspective to the Council's interest on High School Transition issues.

The Executive Leadership team of the Council looks forward to using its considerable skill and experience to strengthen our partnership with DVR as well as the influence of customers who are investing their time and energy in the vocational rehabilitation process.

Tracking the Impact of Customer Input

In April of last year, our Council presented seven recommendations to DVR about how it could improve the VR process for customers across the state. The recommendations were 1. ensure that services are aligned to support the customers' job objective; 2. communicate how services support the attainment of the job objective; 3. increase awareness of the Client

Assistance Program; 4. manage the waitlist in a manner that supports DVR and its customers to succeed; 5. place customers in jobs consistent with their job objectives; 6. co-locate DVR Counselors in high schools; 7. support Career Path Planning. These recommendations came from our customer surveying efforts in 2006.

In 2007 DVR and the Council have held a dialogue each meeting to determine if and how the recommendations are influencing DVR's practice. So far, we have determined positive movement on three of the seven recommendations. We appreciate the open dialogue with our partners at DVR..

The WSRC

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.wastrehabcouncil.org

The WSRC Builds Inroads to Business Community

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council has three representatives from Business and Industry: Jim Larson, Bob Roberts and Kristopher Tefft. Jim is the CEO of Morningside, a Community Rehabilitation Program in the South Puget Sound area. Bob is retired from decades in the construction industry. Kris works for the Association of Washington Business and is uniquely positioned to offer

a broader perspective on the interests and concerns of the community of employers.

Through our new Business Relations and Networking Committee and our partnership with the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, the Council is spearheading an effort to strategically survey employers. Currently, the project is in the earliest planning

phases. Although the effort is Council led, we will work closely with DVR in this process. Our intent is to assist DVR in gathering information about key partners and to support DVR's effort to strengthen relationships with employers.

Let us know what you think of our new publication!

E-mail your feedback to brounjm@dshs.wa.gov, or call Joelle Brouner at (360) 725-3690.

Our Vision Statement

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council honors the unique collective and diverse voices of individuals with disabilities to support the

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and its customers to achieve employment outcomes by providing guidance, direction and

recommendations to increase the quality and availability of vocational rehabilitation services.

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**COMING STRAIGHT TO YOU
QUARTERLY
FROM CYBERSPACE**