



*Today,  
Cole believes in  
himself and his  
ability to work.*

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

# WORKING IN WASHINGTON

2014 MESSAGE  
FROM THE DIRECTOR  
Andres Aguirre



It is my privilege to introduce to you the Washington DVR 2014 Annual Report – Working In Washington. As is customary, this year's annual report features the success stories of some of our customers in a calendar format. We hope this provides you a glimpse into the work of DVR staff across the state. I also hope you enjoy their stories and are inspired by their lives and their unique journeys to successful employment.

2014 started out very well. We began the year with solid performance numbers and optimism over the opportunities ahead with filling staffing needs. The outlook seemed very positive with the progress we were making and then we received some sad news. A colleague and friend to many, Karen Hundahl, died in early May. Karen was a VRC in the Bellingham office and personified the most positive attributes of a VRC.

As the year progressed, news of reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act was on everyone's mind. The unknowns associated with the Reauthorization and overall Act – the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, has been difficult and challenging for staff. Yet, they have not wavered from doing their work on behalf of the customers they work with, which is what staff enjoy and believe in.

DVR staff continued to obtain positive results as evident by the increased employment outcomes and higher rehabilitation rate. DVR staff, partners, vendors, the Washington State Rehabilitation Council, and the state's businesses continue to demonstrate their beliefs with helping individuals with disabilities increase their ability to live a more productive and independent life. Customers seem to be very pleased with the work and efforts of our staff.

In conclusion, I thank each and every DVR staff member for their dedication, and determination. They come to work each and every day with a positive attitude and the desire to help people live better lives. I also want to thank all of the partners- the businesses that hire customers, the community rehabilitation programs that advocate on behalf of customers and the many other entities working towards the same goal, a better life for individuals with disabilities. Together we are transforming lives!

# Washington State Rehabilitation Council

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) role is to offer direction to improve Vocational Rehabilitation Services

*The WSRC assists in making decisions about the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Council Members share a commitment to empowering Washingtonians with disabilities who wish to achieve their goals for employment.*

## Council Members

Andres Aguirre  
*DVR Director (Ex-Officio)*

Valerie Arnold  
*OSPI Representative*

Philip Bradford  
*Labor Representative*

Kelly Boston  
*Business Representative*

Erica Hansen  
*Workforce Training Representative*

Jana Finkbonner  
*VR Tribal Representative*

Vickie Foster  
*Recipient of DVR Services*

Mike Hudson  
*Business Representative*

Jerry Johnsen  
*Client Assistance Program*

Susan Kautzman  
*CRP Representative*

Justin Poole  
*Recipient of DVR Services*

Kathy Powers  
*Business Representative*

Leandro Razo  
*Advocacy Representative*

Bill Youngman  
*VR Counselor*



Washington State Rehabilitation Council  
*Building Inroads to Employment and Success*

## Washington Joins New Talent Acquisition Portal

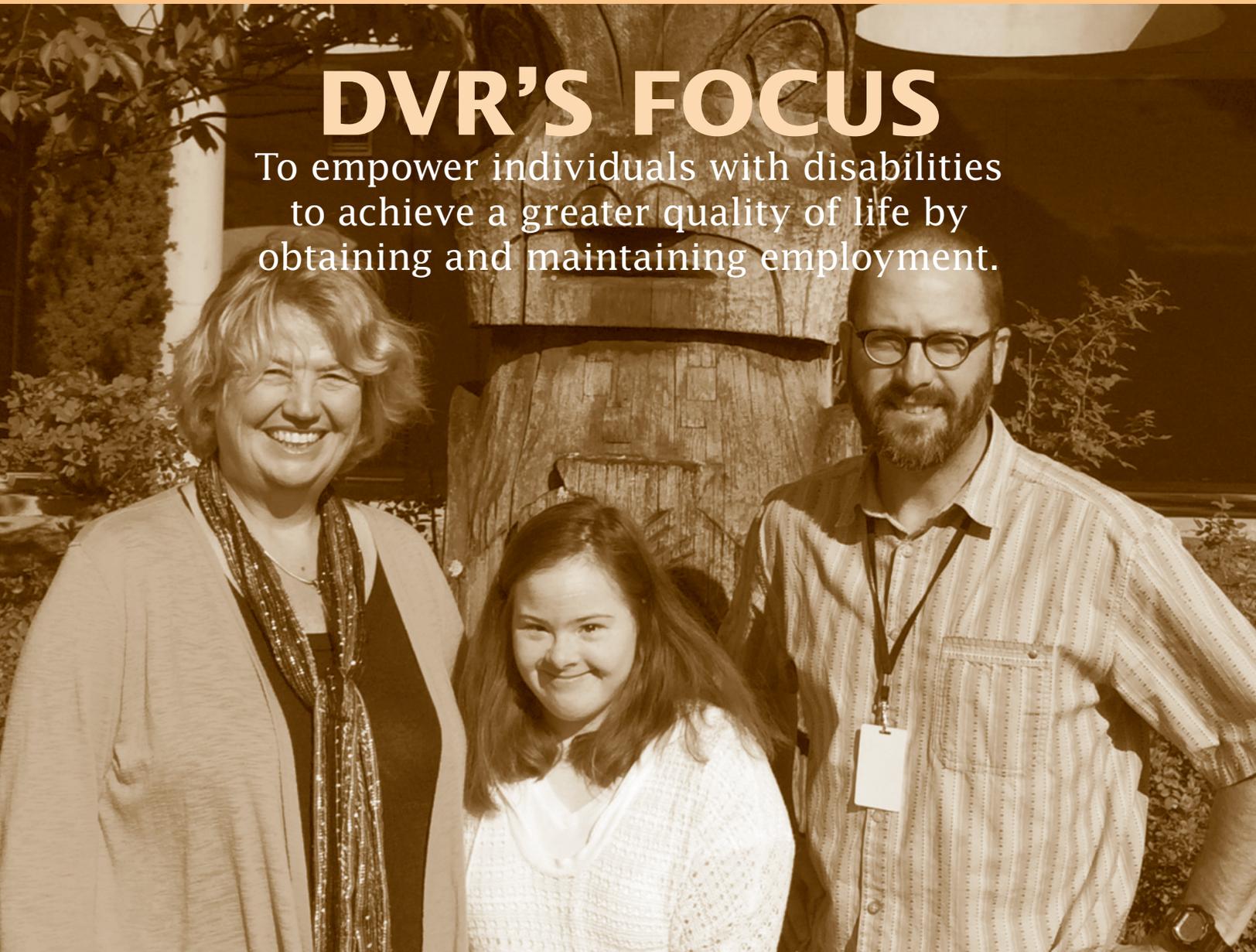
VR agencies nationally have been collaborating with the business community and people with disabilities to develop the Talent Acquisition Portal® (TAP), a new national online recruitment system for businesses to tap into the talent pool of individuals with disabilities associated with the Public Vocational Rehabilitation program.

TAP offers business the opportunity to post jobs, search candidate resumes based on skill sets and geographic availability, capture job metrics, generate compliance reports, interview candidates, have online job fairs, and have their jobs seen by individuals with disabilities across the country.

In partnership with a broad range of community employment providers, Vocational Rehabilitation serves approximately one million individuals with disabilities per year, offering the largest talent pool of candidates with disabilities in the United States. With the expectation of additional candidates coming from partner agencies across the country - tapABILITY.org - is designed to be the nation's premier web portals for business to hire individuals with disabilities.

# DVR'S FOCUS

To empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.





*Julie Roles*

Adriana Tossini, *Seattle Mercer DVR*

Julie is diagnosed with Down Syndrome. She was in special education with Seattle Public schools since preschool at Alki Elementary. Julie is very outgoing, is an avid reader and has a mind of her own. Her vocational goal has always been either to work with young children or with animals. Because of these unique interests and talents her mother designed her 18–21 year old school program and established volunteer sites for Julie that would exhaust any other student! Her activities included unpaid internships at a no-kill animal shelter in Arlington and at an elementary school.

After Julie completed her 18-21 year old school program she was eager to start paid employment. Mainstay staff, Anja Post, started the pathway to employment with a CBA. Fortunately Mainstay and Julie were able to set up a community based assessment (CBA) at Alki Elementary School which was the same school where she attended preschool and was currently volunteering. Not only were they able to set up a site at her dream location but her supervisor, Judy Hill, was her former preschool teacher.

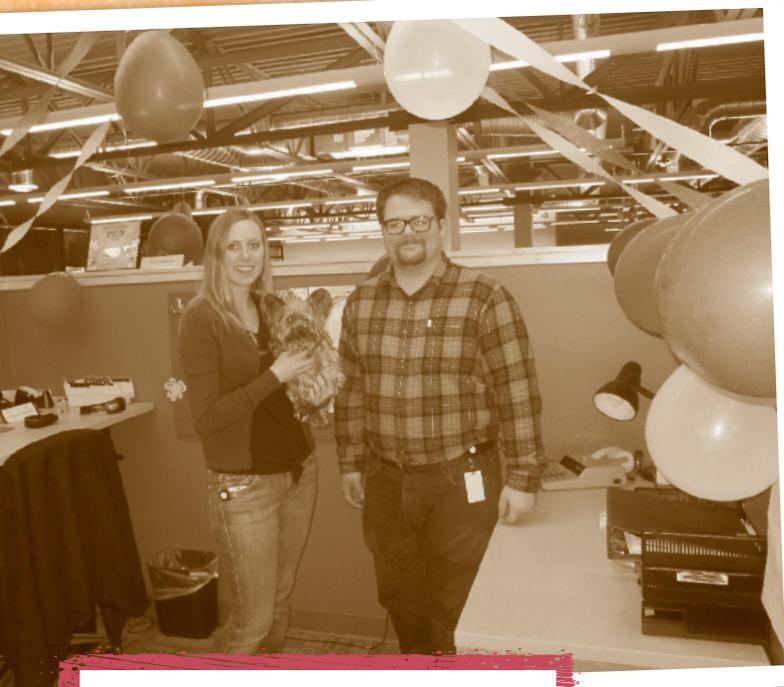
Julie became a valued asset to the classroom. Her duties included filling water bottles, accompanying the preschoolers to the restroom, meeting the bus and taking the students to their classroom. The class included several students with significant disabilities that limited their participation in group activities. Julie assisted them so they could be included. Several students commented that their favorite part of the day was having Julie spend one-to-one time reading books of their choice to them.

After the successful completion of the CBA, the teacher and Mainstay were very interested in pursuing permanent employment at Alki Elementary. Challenges and hurdles developed. First her biggest advocate, the teacher, retired and a relationship with the new teacher needed to be developed. Then the principal transferred to another school. Again, a new relationship needed to be developed. After the teacher and principal were on-board, funding became the next hurdle. Attempts were made to hire her as an assistant teaching aid, but funding was not approved. After months of negotiations, the district approved utilizing the tutoring budget to support her employment. Her volunteer position became a permanent position with the Seattle School District.

We hope that the funding will continue to support Julie's position and in the future, expand her duties and hours of paid employment.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JANUARY 2015



*Nick Bodemer*  
Adriana Tossini, *Seattle Mercer DVR*

Nick was a transition student from Garfield High School with the Seattle School District. I named him the Type Writer Man because of his knowledge and obsession with portable typewriters. Every meeting Nick came in tow with a vintage extraordinary typewriter. He researched the history, vintage and special information of each typewriter. I believe one of them was the same model as my high school graduation present.

Nick completed the drafting program at North Seattle Community College. After he graduated, DVR provided job placement services to place him in a drafting position. However, we were not able to place him in his vocational goal and looked into other opportunities that matched his talents. In the interim, he found an amazing internship

opportunity with The Puget Sound Archives. He sorted, filed, and packed the archives. The Director Midori Okazaki raved about his work in email.

After several months, CRP Mainstay contacted me about a position at 1st Security Bank of Washington. Nick was perfect for the job and was hired immediately!

Nick's immediate Supervisor Cassie Oakley, prepared what she thought would be at least one week's worth of work. After several hours Cassie found Nick wandering around the cubicles. After three hours Nick had finished a week's worth of work. Cassie couldn't believe it. Not only was it completed but the work was perfect!

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

FEBRUARY 2015



Operations Manager, Kathrine Sharrick and Cassie have provided numerous accommodations that they either consulted with Nick about or generated the ideas themselves. I have to say that Nick is right on target about his management needs/ supports and can articulate useful ideas. A few examples:

To help Nick manage his sometimes excessive level of energy, they arranged for Nick to walk the onsite canines. To help Nick to stay on track with his tasks and assignments, a framed, desktop schedule was created by Cassie for Nick to reference throughout the day as he needed. This is a great visual reminder that is attractive and totally in keeping with the professional environment. To help Nick to calm his anxiety level when he is aware of supervisory absences, Nick's workstation was positioned in such a way as to afford him with visual access to both supervisors by glancing in either direction.

As a practice for all employees of the company including Nick, managers schedule brief check-ins with individual employees every other week to review progress and to discuss or follow up on any concerns or issues. To keep the desktop items i.e. computer and screens stable when Nick gets overly excited and unintentionally pushes too hard away from his desk while seated in his chair (on casters), padding was placed against the back of the edge of the desk to cushion the impact against the wall.

Nick is well loved at work and so is his dad, (a chef), who out of appreciation, has prepared a scrumptious meal for the staff. Nick works four days a week and continues to volunteer every Friday at the Washington State Archives.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31				

MARCH 2015



*Stacy Reed*

Michelle Mulhern, Vancouver DVR

I seriously never dreamed of being in this moment when I first walked through these doors for orientation. After a very traumatic childhood, I had spent almost 20 years looking towards starting a career with no success. At the time the “recession” hit; I was working three jobs. I was working at Petco, Taco Bell and I was also working as a vendor, stocking machines two days a week. At the beginning of 2010, I had to close the vending business because it was going under; then, due to the economy, I was laid off from Petco later that year. Eventually, I moved to a place that was better for me...in that process, I transferred Taco Bell and ended up working 10 hours or less a week.

Because I was on my own with extremely limited resources, I had to apply for food stamps at the Community Services Office. Because I was there, I noticed the DVR office, and ended up applying a few weeks later. Little did I know how much that would change things for me. I took steps towards an office job, started volunteering with the Salvation Army and finished school. I actually got a job with a local hotel in April of 2014 and just the following month, I was hired as an office assistant at DVR.

Now everything is so different for me. I am able to take care of myself, I have structure that I never had before and I absolutely love both of my jobs. DVR is such an amazing organization that helps those with disabilities obtain and maintain employment and to be part of the process that helps people become independent and confident means so much to me. Every time I walk through those doors, I think about how lucky I am to have finally found a place that did so much to help me and works together to help others so much every day. Always grateful.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30		

april 2015



*Gregory Masten*  
Karen Clack, Lynnwood DVR

Carrie Morehouse contacted me in 2006 and asked me to be involved in her son, Gregory Masten's transition planning. We started while Gregory was in middle school because Gregory has several disabling conditions, including deafness and blindness. Additional time was required to plan and execute a successful transition both from middle school to high school and from high school to adult services.

Gregory was able to benefit from the solid, coordinated work of his team members including Lake Stevens High School and staff; his parents; Deb Gall, Snohomish County Developmental Disabilities and Karen Clack, DVR who provided Transition Coordination and Employment Services; Tim Corey, Calibri Facilitation who provided Person Centered Planning; the Community Rehabilitation Programs that have worked with Gregory including: Jennifer White, Able Opportunities, who provided a Vocational Assessment and training for effective communication and work skills building; The Lighthouse for the Blind that provided a Vocational Evaluation, Work Opportunities that provided a Community Based Assessment, Job Placement and Intensive Training Services at Any Time Fitness in Lake Stevens doing equipment and lobby cleaning, and Chinook Enterprises that is providing Long Term Employment Support Services through Snohomish County Developmental Disabilities funding at the Any Time Fitness location in Mt. Vernon.

The team work of the school district that funded the assessment through Able Opportunities and The Department of Services for the Blind that funded the assessment at The Lighthouse for the Blind provided foundational pieces for Gregory's future employment. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation funding provided for a Community Based Assessment, Job Placement Services and Intensive Training Services through Work Opportunities that allowed Gregory to develop work skills and to get and keep his first paid employment. Snohomish County Developmental Disabilities is funding ongoing Long Term Employment Support Services. Gregory is currently living at Soundview, Supported Living Home in Mount Vernon and working at the Mt. Vernon Any Time Fitness.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31						

MAY 2015



## Heather Harper

Kathi Richards  
Tumwater DVR

Heather works in her dream job! She is an Office Assistant 1 in the office of Governor Jay Inslee in the state capital building. Although she is in a wonderful job, she worked very hard to get there.

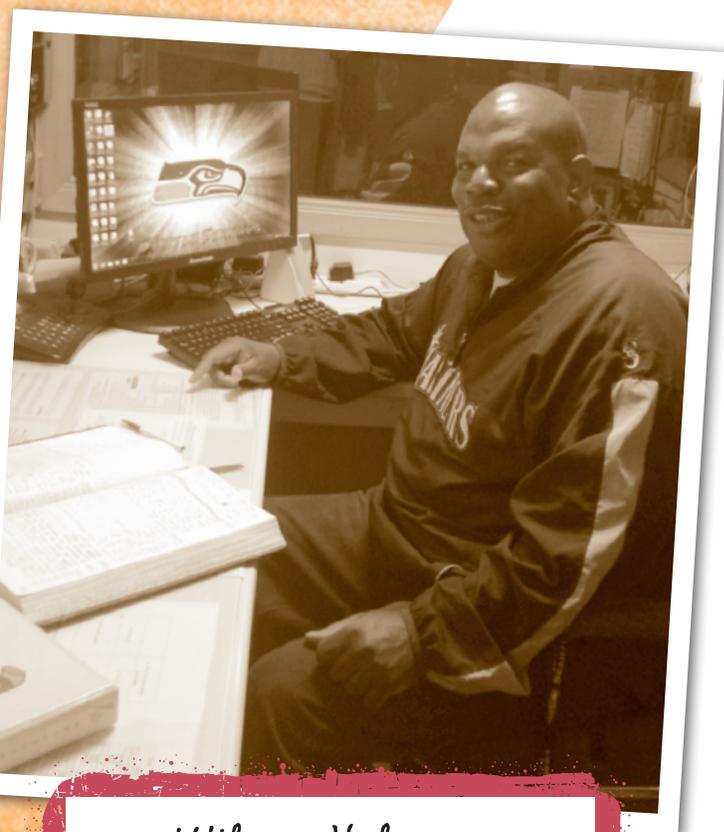
Heather started working with DVR as a high school transition student. Volunteering her time while going through job placement services, Heather developed office skills which she enjoyed. After working briefly in a veterinarian's office, using her skills from training while in high school, Heather focused on employment in an office setting. Her perseverance paid off, and she was hired as the receptionist for ARC, one of the locations where she volunteered.

At ARC, where she worked for 6 years, Heather performed a variety of tasks including filing, shredding, making packets and answering phones. One of the activities which she enjoyed the most was working on the weekly advocacy meeting with legislators and community members during the yearly legislative sessions in Olympia.

Heather is a member of People First, has held offices within the state and local groups, and has testified before legislative committees in advocacy for people with developmental disabilities. Unfortunately, the job at ARC ended due to budget cuts. Job development services began with Morningside, a local community rehabilitation program, and the end result was Heather being selected from a group of candidates to work in the Governor's Office! This position was developed as part of the supported employment in state government program. Heather works with mail that is sent to the office, sorting and scanning documents as well as filing. She loves her job and assignments, working with the office staff members and using the skills that she developed in previous employment and volunteering. And Heather loves serving the people of Washington State.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30					

JUNE 2015



*Wilson Holman*  
Kathleen Grignon, *Moses Lake DVR*

Wilson attended alternative high school and then he says “ I worked all the jobs you don’t want to do in life.” He experienced an injury while driving a potato truck and could not return to work. “I felt like a loser in life and I didn’t want my kids growing up like I did.”

So at age 38 he decided to return to school and applied to DVR for assistance. He struggled in high school but did not let those difficulties stop him. He decided on a major in criminal justice with the goal of working with juveniles. “I was there (in trouble with the law) when I was younger and I wanted to show the young people positive options for their lives.” He worked closely with DVR, student support services at Big Bend Community College and SkillSource to reach his goal.

After completing his BA degree Wilson worked on-call at a local juvenile center for two years to get his foot in the door. When he was offered a permanent position there he was told his dependability and willingness to accept work whenever he was called resulted in an offer of permanent employment. Wilson now works as a Counselor Assistant for Sunrise Community Facility which serves 15 juvenile residents.

Wilson emphasizes: “No matter where you are in life, age-wise or education, never say never. I am a prime example that with hard work and devotion, as long as you keep your eye on the prize and shoot for the stars with hope of hitting the tree tops, anything is possible in life.”

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	

JULY 2015



*Cole Carpenter*  
Lesa Crane, Colville DVR

In order to generate passion, it is important to believe. Only a deep belief will create the vigor and force that gives you the fuel to change. Know that you can achieve all that you set out to do for yourself. You only need to start believing in yourself. This belief resulted in changes that allowed Cole Carpenter to become a successful full-time employee of Columbia Cedar! Today, Cole believes in himself and his ability to work.

Cole's DVR journey began in January 2013. He and his grandmother approached DVR confused and concerned about where Cole's life was taking him. Cole had recently been diagnosed with a genetic disorder, Klinefelter Syndrome. He was in the beginning of hormone therapy and counseling to assist him in understanding this new diagnosis and manage his anger. Cole stated frustration with his current living situation and his hopes about being able to move out on his own "just like any other person". He and his family felt it was urgent that he get support to become employed as soon as possible.

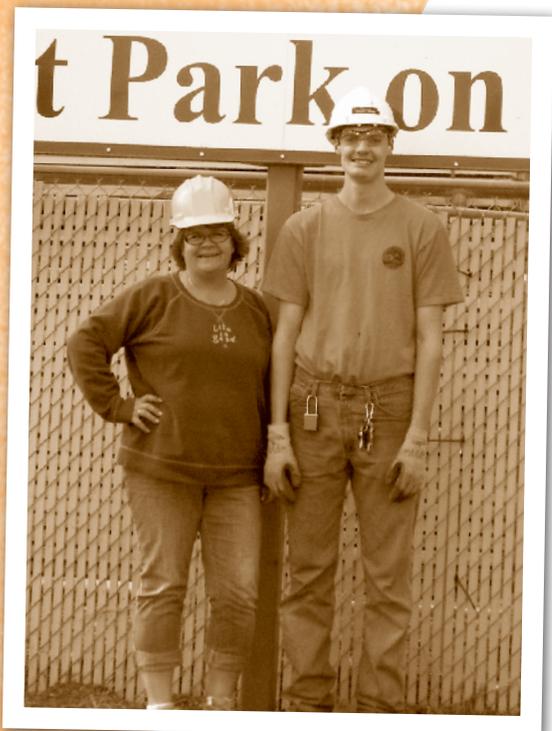
Cole had a limited work history including training at Job Corps for construction work. He had multiple certifications and ample training to do the job; however, he found that he was unable to keep up with his co-workers. Because he was not successful in construction work, Cole and his family were stuck. They didn't know where to go next and his new diagnoses just added more confusion. VRC recommended a vocational evaluation and WorkStrides to assist in narrowing down his career choices.

Once Cole completed the vocational evaluation and WorkStrides it was apparent that he would most benefit from working in a hands-on position, mill work or warehouse work. According to his vocational evaluation, his

intellectual abilities were very high but until he felt he was ready for college emotionally, he would most likely not be successful in higher education. Therefore, he decided with the support of his family

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							1
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					

AUGUST 2015



to pursue full-time employment as a mill worker. Cole was referred to Career Path Services for a community based assessment to identify needed accommodations and other on the job supports.

Cole and Career Path Services worked together to identify a good match for his CBA. Career Path Services had formed a positive relationship with the owner of a small mill just outside of Kettle Falls, WA. This employer was willing to have Cole come on for a month of full-time work to identify accommodations. Cole was able to rotate through all of the positions within the mill. As expected Cole was able to learn all of the different duties within a reasonable time. His struggles were with interpersonal relationships and understanding feedback. He was provided with one on one job coaching to address communication on the job, accepting feedback, forming appropriate relationships, and working as part of a team. Career Path Services and Cole worked hard to make this placement a success. Cole received accolades and a letter of reference after he completed his CBA.

Mr. Carpenter, his family and VRC Crane worked together to finish his IPE so that it reflected his needs, abilities, and wants in employment. He had settled on working in a local mill or warehouse as an entry level laborer. Mr.

Carpenter worked with Career Path Services for only one month before he was offering full-time benefited employment with Columbia Cedar of Kettle Falls, WA. Mr. Carpenter began employment on November 21, 2013, full-time as a green chain laborer with full benefits!

During his first ninety days of employment, Mr. Carpenter exceeded all expectations of his employer. He mastered the job within a timely manner and had little trouble making friends on the job. Mr. Carpenter has been working steadily for close to a year now and has saved enough money to move out on his own. His family continues to be a large support and will continue to be there for him. He now has a productive place in his community and is supporting himself. Mr. Carpenter is a true success story! Great work, Cole!

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30				

SEPTEMBER 2015



Brittany participated in the School To Work program in her last year of Adult Transition Program (ATP)-Educational services. This means that for the last year of school before accepting her diploma, Brittany had agreed to identify a good fit employment goal, and make efforts to become employed. Brittany's new employment team consisted of the following: Edmonds School District Educators, Deona (Work Opportunities-Employment Specialist), Deb (DDA-County transition coordinator), DDA case manager, Person Centered Planning provider, Nicholas (DVR-Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor), and her supportive family.

The team started the year helping Brittany explore her various interests, and connecting those interests to employment opportunities in the community. The team reviewed her personal interests, internship experiences through her ATP, and her skills and abilities in various work areas. We agreed to explore further employment in the area of Retail Work, as Brittany reported to having successful experiences working with crafts and in craft stores. And successful she continued to be.

Brittany did well in her exploration process (trying out more work in a retail environment), and the team decided to continue moving forward with Job Placement services. While Brittany and Deona started developing employment opportunities in the community, they eventually came across a local Bridal Alterations store in the Edmonds community. One of Brittany's personal interests includes making dresses for her doll collection. With Deona's support, a perfect employment match was made.

After a brief working interview Brittany was given a job offer, and she accepted. She started working just a few days after graduating from her ATP in June, 2014. Her tasks include: Alterations to wedding dresses & wedding apparel, sewing on lace or appliques, buttons, beaded loops, steaming dresses, and the list goes on. Feedback from Brittany's employer indicates that she is doing beautiful work.

Congratulations Brittany! On behalf of your team, thanks for letting us work with you!

*Brittany Parker*  
Nicholas Michiels, Lynnwood DVR

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

OCTOBER 2015



*Megan Boss*

Perry Anderson, Bellevue DVR

Just like the kudos Megan receives after performing in a play at the Issaquah Community Center, her employment success deserves a round of applause. This hard working and personable young woman has become a leading lady at both her current jobs. Whether she's bussing tables at Café 34 on Microsoft's Redmond Campus or greeting patrons as she cleans at Matthews Thriftway in Bellevue, Megan's positive outlook and personality make her a big hit with customers.

Megan's career path began with a partnership between Bellevue DVR, the King County School-to-Work Program, the Issaquah Transition Program and supported employment vendor Puget Sound Personnel (PSP). During the 2011-12 school year, she used vocational services to sample community-based work experiences through unpaid internships. PSP worked with Megan and her parents to hone in on her interests, skills and employment goals. Two part time jobs were developed. One was as a cleaning assistant at Matthews Thriftway—a job she still maintains today. The other was a hostess position at Cucina!Cucina! in Issaquah. Unfortunately, the restaurant closed, bringing everyone back to the table to explore Megan's next employment steps.

Within a year, Megan's skills and confidence had blossomed. She had proven to be a dedicated, hard working employee whose cleaning and customer service skills were exceptional. With those traits to recommend her, PSP secured another job for Megan as a dining room assistant with Eurest Dining Services at Microsoft.

The Bellevue DVR office, PSP and the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) worked cooperatively to transition Megan into her new job. DVR funding allowed PSP to give her the training needed to master new job tasks and successfully adjust to the Euresst work environment. It didn't take long for Megan's energy and enthusiasm to make a positive and memorable impact—on Café patrons, her co-workers and managers alike.

When a new Café was set to open at Microsoft, the general manager handpicked his team and wanted Megan to be on it! Megan's transfer to Café 34 was a big vote of confidence in her capabilities and work ethic that has allowed her to grow professionally and meet new people.

Megan enjoys going to movies and taking karate and drama classes.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30					

NOVEMBER 2015



*Holly Murahashi*

Perry Anderson  
Bellevue DVR

When you see Holly at work in Café 43 on Microsoft's Redmond Campus, she is literally "working it" big time. Her infectious energy, rocking dance moves and thumbs up attitude let you know she loves her job and is happy to be working. Very happy—especially after her recent promotion and increased work hours. Customers at the busy lunch spot take it all in with welcoming smiles and warm hellos. They often tell the Eurest Dining Services manager that they appreciate having Holly working there because she brings them joy.

To see Holly being as comfortable and outgoing as she is now would have been hard to imagine back in 2009. That was when Bellevue DVR and supported employment vendor Puget Sound Personnel (PSP) got to know her through the Bellevue Transition Program. To gain valuable work training in a supported environment, Holly's first paid position was an office assistant internship in PSP's Bellevue office. A job as a hostess at the Bellevue Applebee's was also developed. But, Holly's shyness prevented her from meeting the demands of the job. She was transferred to a kitchen prep job which she worked 3 hours a week.

In the summer of 2012, Holly and her family wanted to discuss more engaging job possibilities. Funding through DVR allowed PSP to work with Holly to find a position that would expand her skills and career opportunities. A job at Hop Jacks restaurant in Issaquah proved to be the starting point of Holly's transformation. The 4 hours a week position involved opening and front-of-house activities that gave her the right environment and pace to prove herself. PSP's training helped Holly master her job skills and gain confidence. Holly's co-workers were given tips on how to better communicate with her. The team started to meld. Holly's personality began to assert itself. And, the rock and roll tunes that played over the sound system seemed to mirror her upbeat attitude. Holly had found her groove.

A year later, PSP was able to match Holly to her dream job for Eurest in Café 43 at Microsoft. In this challenging, yet engaging environment, Holly is thriving and taking the initiative to do more. Her PSP job coaches, co-workers and supervisors couldn't be more pleased with how she has blossomed on the job. You could say Holly's employment success has her dancing for joy!

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31		

DECEMBER 2015

# DVR Launches “Soft Skills” Assessment & Training for Customers

The job market has become highly competitive and driven by employer demands for a multi-skilled and adaptable workforce. It is no longer enough just to be able to do the basic tasks of a job. Surveys of employers indicate they share common expectations for employee qualities that go beyond occupational skills.

While every job requires unique occupational qualifications, credentials and experience to perform work tasks, employers today also look for employee applicants who bring a strong set of “soft skills” to the workplace.

## What Are “Soft Skills?”

Soft skills are essential qualities and characteristics that employers expect virtually every employee to contribute to a productive workplace. These skills fall in to five categories that employers expect from their employees:

1. Positive interactions with co-workers and customers
2. Professionalism with a strong and principled work ethic
3. Acceptance of supervision
4. Quick adaptation to changing responsibilities and expectations
5. Critical thinking and effective problem solving

## DVR Soft Skills Assessment & Training

DVR, in conjunction with Nancy Payne, PHD, developed an assessment tool that enables customers to identify their soft skill strengths and needed areas of development before they begin job search. The tool involves a self-assessment by the customer combined with an assessment by their VR Counselor.

Before developing the assessment tool and training, twenty “off-the-shelf” products were reviewed to determine if any would meet the unique needs of VR customers and provide complete accessibility for users with a wide range of disabilities. All of the products reviewed were high quality, but none took into account disability factors that affect “soft skills” nor were any fully accessible for users with disabilities.

An important feature of the assessment tool developed by DVR is that it takes in to account the impact of a person’s disability on their ability to acquire and demonstrate soft skills. Because certain disabilities clinically affect a person’s ability to interact with others, follow instructions, quickly adapt to change, or acquire other types of soft skills the assessment tool is designed to identify whether a customer requires medical and/or psychological treatment instead of training.

The soft skills training is designed for individuals who do not require medical or psychological treatment for disability conditions that affect their soft skills. Other types of VR services are provided to address these barriers to employment.

A curriculum of nine training modules has been developed to follow a customer’s assessment of their soft skills. The training modules include the following topics:

1. Grooming and Dress
2. Attendance and Punctuality
3. Interpersonal Skills
4. Follow Directions and Instructions
5. Accept Supervision
6. Positive Work Habit and Attitudes
7. Ethics and Honest in the Workplace
8. Communication
9. Problem Solving and Flexibility

All VR Counselors, Supervisors, and Employment Specialists, along with many Rehabilitation Technicians and the three Area Managers, have been taught how to use the soft skills assessment tool and provide each training module to customers in one-on-one and group settings.

The assessment tool and training were launched in Summer/Fall 2014 and will be evaluated over the next year to make any refinements or improvements that are needed.

*For more information, contact: Don Kay at [Kayd@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Kayd@dshs.wa.gov) or 360-725-3623.*

# DVR Annual Report 2014

## Average Earnings

Federal Fiscal Year 2014

Average annual earnings of customers before and after rehabilitation.



Before  
**\$4,080.74**



After  
**\$16,643.82**

## Sources of Revenue

Federal Fiscal Year 2014

**Total: \$59,698,996**



State Funds  
**\$12,912,012**

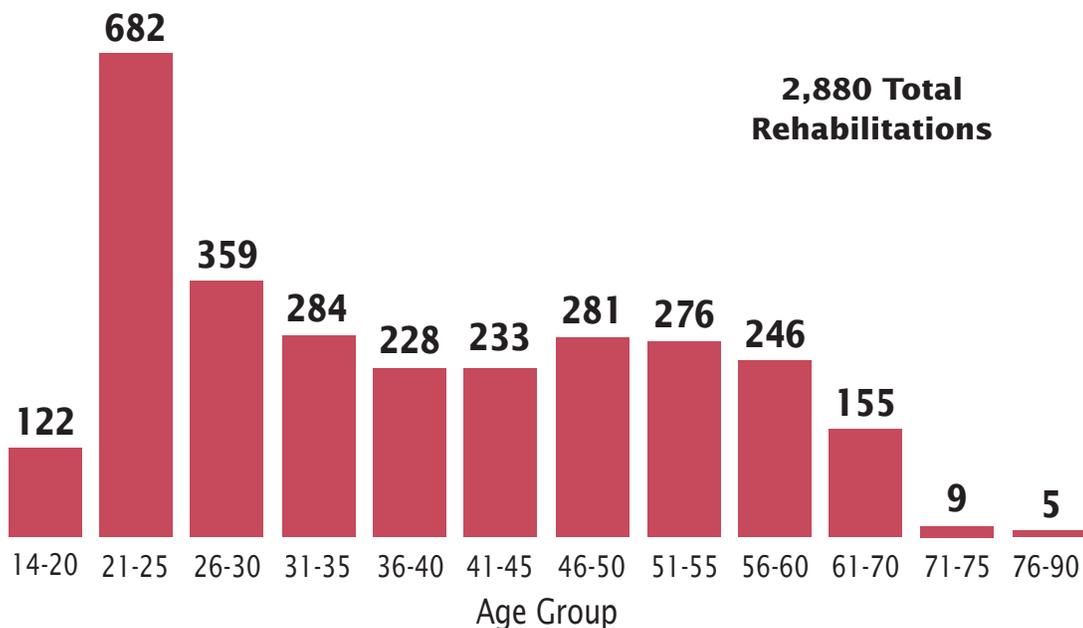


Federal Funds  
**\$46,786,984**

## Ages of Customers

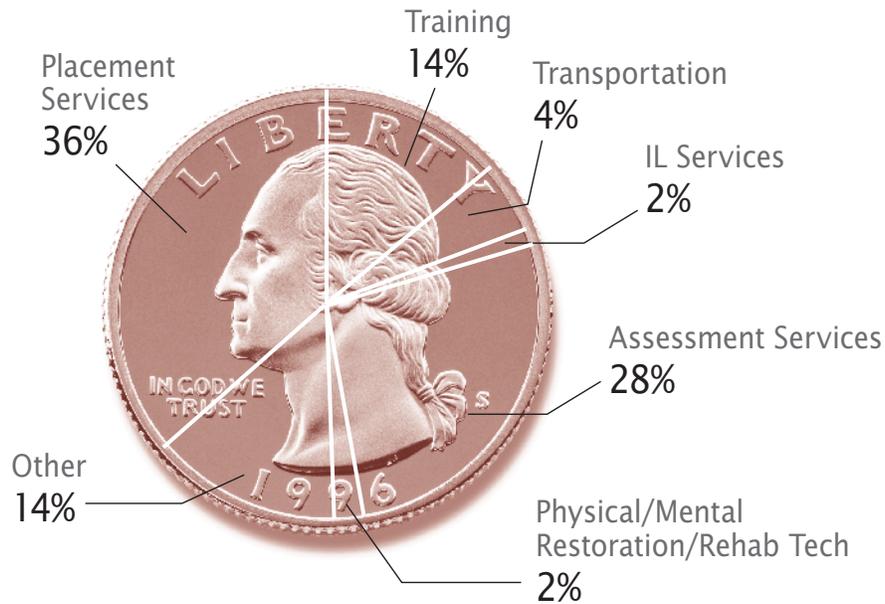
Federal Fiscal Year 2014

Total number of customers successfully rehabilitated in various age groups.



## Case Service Expenditures

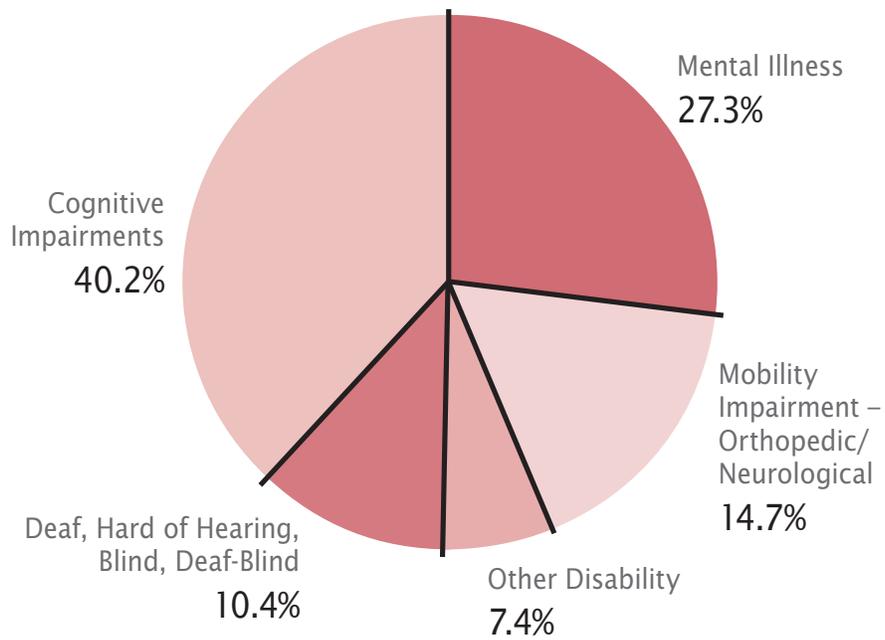
Federal Fiscal Year 2014



## Types of Disabilities

Federal Fiscal Year 2014

Types of disabilities of rehabilitated customers.



# DSHS MISSION

To transform lives.

## DVR PURPOSE

To empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.

### Acknowledgements

In deep appreciation to all DVR staff for the work you do every day and your heartfelt dedication to making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Special thank you to the DVR Staff who contributed customers' success stories and ideas to this year's annual report.

#### Non-Discrimination

No person, because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, or disability shall be discriminated against in employment, services, or any aspect of the program's activities. This policy is consistent with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967, Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 11375, the Civil Rights Act of 1992, Governor's Executive Order 93-07, and the Washington State Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW.

### 2014 DVR Annual Report

To request this publication in alternate format, please contact a Customer Service Representative at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

DVR can be reached at 1-800-637-5627. This publication is also available on our website at [www.dshs.wa.gov/dvr](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dvr).

This annual report was coordinated by DVR staff Rayanne Mueller.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
PO Box 45340 ▪ Olympia, WA 98504-5340  
1-800-637-5627 (Voice/TTY) or (360) 725-3636 (Voice/TTY)



Washington State  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

---

*Transforming lives*

---