

# DVR *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*



## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

# DIRECTOR'S LETTER



**Rob Hines**  
DVR Director

Over this past year, despite a host of challenges that included retirements, budgetary constraints, and customers experiencing Order of Selection for the second consecutive year, DVR staff responded with professionalism and persistent focus on customer success. There were also opportunities to celebrate accomplishments across the Division.

## **Order of Selection (OOS)**

Since September 2019, DVR has released approximately 200 customers per month from the Priority Category 2 waiting list, with plans to continue this trend through the end of State Fiscal Year 2020 (June 2020). Releases will continue through June 2020 depending on available funding. DVR entered OOS in November 2017. OOS is required under Federal law when a VR agency cannot serve all customers who are

eligible for its services. At the close of the 2019 State Fiscal Year (SFY), there were 5,757 customers on the waiting list for DVR services.

## **Intake and Eligibility Pilot Projects**

Last winter, DVR embarked on a Lean project to promote consistency, efficiency, and equity throughout the Intake, Eligibility and Priority Category Determination Processes. Participants in the project represented a cross-section of job classes and geographic areas across DVR. Their work has led to a number of field office-based

pilots throughout the state with the goal to promote a process that will lead to better consistency and timeliness for our customers and staff. This will result, we hope, in a more equitable delivery of services to people with disabilities, regardless of where they apply for services.

*DVR has released approximately 200 customers per month from the Priority Category 2 waiting list.*

## **Staff Training**

DVR submitted a Request for Quotes and Qualifications (RFQQ) for the "Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (VRI)," to train DVR counseling staff on VR core competencies. DVR awarded the two-year contract, which specifies multiple training cohorts for up to 180 DVR staff, to University of Washington's Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation.

In addition, DVR has appointed four regional trainers who will develop and deliver ongoing training in Washington VR case management practices. This training will reinforce and supplement the training delivered through the Rehabilitation Institute. The trainers will coordinate new VRC training and coaching opportunities, quality assurance, and region, unit, or office-specific training.

## **Business Management Modernization Project (BMMP)**

DVR hired a Project Manager for its BMMP to begin work designed to modernize and streamline DVR's case-management system. DVR is conducting a thorough analysis of system features and functionality. Very soon, the project team will engage field staff at all levels in determining our future case management needs.

## **Looking Ahead**

In 2020, DVR's priorities will continue to include ensuring quality training for DVR staff, integration of DVR services within the workforce system, and the continued management of DVR's resources for the benefit of our customers and community.

As always, we could not do this great work without the support of our staff, stakeholders, employers, and partners.

*thank you!*



## PRE-ETS STUDENT EXCELS IN DAYCARE JOB AT COSMOPOLITAN KIDS ACADEMY

For Aracely, a student at Seattle Public Schools' BRIDGES transition program at Swedish Hospital, learning about a career in early childhood education was a fortuitous discovery.

With transition services provided by BRIDGES and Mainstay, a Community Rehabilitation Program, Aracely was able to secure a permanent assistant teacher position at a daycare.

She started her journey in 2018 at BRIDGES, where she performed custodial duties and stocked product at the Starbucks at Swedish. In December 2018, her teacher referred her to DVR to apply. It was determined that Aracely would benefit from job exploration, so DVR provided her Pre-Employment Transition Services through Mainstay. Mainstay's employment specialist helped Aracely connect with employers by facilitating informational interviews. During one interview, Aracely learned about working at a daycare. This sparked her interest, and in summer 2019, Aracely applied and was selected for a paid Community Based Assessment at Cosmopolitan Kids Academy in downtown Seattle.

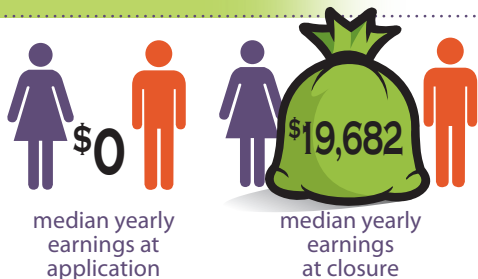
### Aracely

By *Chrissy Heerschap*,  
Central Seattle DVR Counselor

Aracely excelled at the job. Cosmopolitan Kids wanted to hire Aracely for an assistant teacher position. Since Aracely still had a year left in transition services, she arranged with BRIDGES to work four days a week at Cosmopolitan Kids, and join her peers at BRIDGES for life skills on Fridays. Cosmopolitan Kids asked Aracely to complete online training in early childhood education and receive certification in first aid and CPR. To help Aracely complete her training and certification, DVR worked with Mainstay to establish a job retention plan. Aracely continues to do well. Aracely will complete BRIDGES in June 2020, and at that time, will likely add on more hours at her job.

## DVR BY THE NUMBERS (in State Fiscal Year 2019)

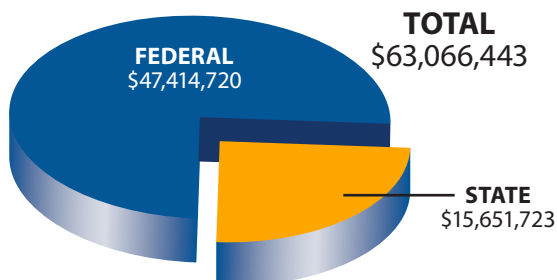
### DVR CREATES INDEPENDENCE



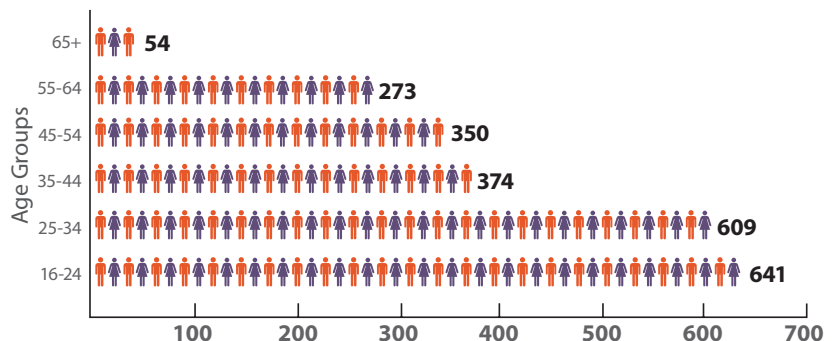
### NUMBER OF CASES CLOSED/EMPLOYED



### SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR DVR



### AGE GROUPS OF CUSTOMERS CLOSED/EMPLOYED



## STRONG WORK ETHIC EQUALS JOB FULFILLMENT



### Shumiye

By Justin Lord,  
Lynnwood DVR Business Specialist

In his homeland of Ethiopia, Shumiye was a successful sanitation and survey engineer. He wanted the same in the U.S., but his skills didn't transfer. Regardless, Shumiye knew employers valued his work ethic. His barriers to employment comprised a debilitated hip affecting mobility, and a vocal-cord injury and hearing loss affecting communication.

With DVR counselor guidance, Shumiye developed his Individualized Plan for Employment. His job goal was a janitorial position with lighter duties. To address his hearing, DVR purchased hearing aids for Shumiye. DVR Business Specialist Justin Lord helped Shumiye job-search. He discovered a janitor vacancy in the DVR office building. Shumiye secured an interview. Shumiye's skills and experience impressed the manager. The manager offered Shumiye employment. He mastered his job in under 30 days and is now an indispensable team member.

## SHEET METAL ASSEMBLER GIVES THANKS TO DVR FOR HIS SUCCESS

Sean is a successful sheet-metal assembler for Tri Way Industries in Auburn. He has worked there full-time since September 2018. It has been a long road for Sean. He credits DVR for helping him to secure and maintain employment. Sean said applying for services at DVR "felt like my last hope."

Sean came to DVR because keeping a job was difficult. Through a Community Based Assessment at Orion Industries in Auburn, Sean learned and applied production manufacturing skills. He had an interest in metal. This led him to assembly work. Sean received post-secondary education counseling from DVR. Though his Asperger's does make interpreting some social communication difficult, Sean said this is the norm but he won't let it stop him from succeeding.

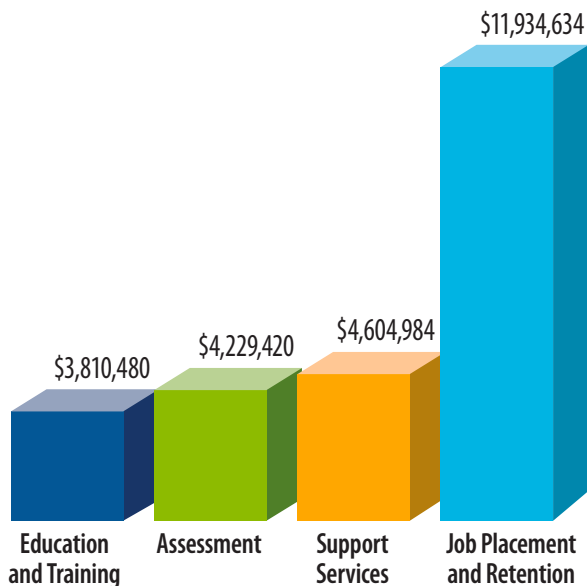
Sean said success is "not all about making a lot of money. It is about being patient enough to stick with it, no matter what your job is."



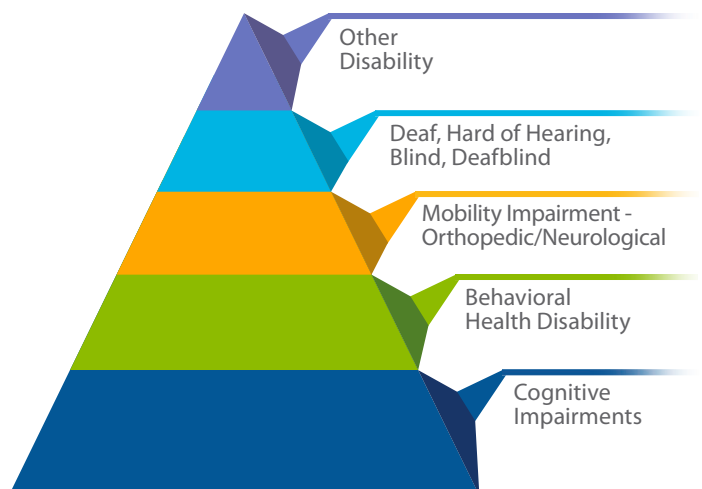
### Sean

By Haley Gross,  
Tacoma DVR Counselor

### CASE SERVICE EXPENDITURES



### DISABILITY TYPES



## PROJECT SEARCH STUDENT SECURES STERILE PROCESSING JOB AT SWEDISH

Cedric's DVR success story began during his final year at Edmonds School District in the VOICE program where he received adult-transition services. During this time, Cedric also participated in Project SEARCH at Swedish Edmonds Hospital. Project SEARCH is a competency-based program addressing employment barriers for students with learning differences. These barriers are addressed through student-directed internships at the hospital in collaboration with DVR, Developmental Disabilities Administration, Work Opportunities, Snohomish County, the Edmonds School District, and various community partners.

While at Project SEARCH, Cedric learned and fell in love with sterile processing. Unfortunately, there were no available positions at Swedish that Cedric was qualified for (in Washington, sterile processing technicians are required to have official certification). After a little over a year of looking for a paid job in sterilization, and studying to take the sterile processing certification exam, Swedish opened a non-certificated position as a sterile processing assistant. Cedric applied, wowed the interview team, and began his job at the hospital in September 2018.

Cedric received employment supports funded through a School-to-Work contract, which provided the assessment, job placement, and intensive training services needed for his successful outcome. Now, a year later, Cedric is working full time with benefits and almost exclusively independent. He continues to study for the certification exam in hopes to one day become a certified sterile processing technician.

"Project SEARCH was a great opportunity for me to discover and try different internships at the hospital," Cedric said. "I love doing house pickups around the hospital... and delivering instruments to different departments... once the equipment has been sterilized. But most of all, I enjoy working and helping my co-workers and supervisor."



**Cedric**

*By Michael Holman,  
Lynnwood DVR Counselor*



## WOMAN WITH A GOAL TO DRIVE LONG-HAUL ATTAINS HER DREAM JOB

Marietta applied for DVR services in September 2018. Her goal was financial freedom. She wanted to become a long-haul truck driver, but needed support and guidance in order to realize her dream. She and her DVR counselor outlined a plan that included numerous services and supports. Marietta was highly motivated. She started studying truck-driving protocols on YouTube in preparation for formal training and certification at Taylor Driving School in Burlington, Washington.

Before coming to DVR, Marietta had gastric bypass surgery, a hernia repair, two knee replacements and hearing loss. She had a learning disability but wasn't about to let that stop her. She also had a mental-health diagnosis that included PTSD, bipolar disorder, anxiety and depression. She and her doctors agreed her mental health had stabilized and that she could pursue her employment goals.

**Marietta**

*By Catherine Herring,  
Bellingham DVR Supervisor*

Marietta was very organized. This work ethic ensured clear direction in developing her Individualized Plan for Employment. DVR provided benefits planning to Marietta that helped her understand how working and earning income could have an impact on her Social Security cash benefits. Marietta also needed a hearing evaluation, hearing aids, and support in adjusting to those changes and improvements with communication. DVR supported these costs, as well as costs for Marietta's training and certification to become a licensed Class-A Commercial Driver, and her Transportation Worker Identification Credential.

Marietta was able to realize her dream. She started employment in early 2019 at Prime Inc. in Missouri. Marietta's case closed successfully in May. She is now the proud owner of a 2020 Freightliner through Prime. Marietta attributes her success to those first few steps with DVR, and the encouragement she received along the way.

## COMMUNITY OF HELPING HANDS MAKES DREAM JOB COME TRUE

While working as a manufacturer, Jacob returned to DVR wanting to be a painter at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) and shorten his long commute. Jacob's journey to being a painter helper was a difficult one, requiring many helping hands.

Jacob started as a painter helper at PSNS on September 16. To help Jacob reach his job goal, DVR Business Specialist Diane Warwick provided resources that included WorkSource personnel, assistance from disability specialists at the Department of Navy and WorkSource, the Department of Navy human resources, and intensive interview training. Jacob, who is deaf and on the autism spectrum, struggled to understand best practices when interviewing for a job. Gail Brock, Jacob's vocational rehabilitation counselor, informed Diane of the best communication style for Jacob during their training sessions that promoted successful outcomes. For his part, Jacob worked hard to improve his interview style. Diane worked with PSNS personnel to reserve time before the interview for Jacob to meet with an interpreter and go over his resume.

Jacob applied for the painter helper position for the eighth time in January 2019. He interviewed in April. This time the interview was successful. He now works in the sign shop. He and his fellow new hires are in training. He recently asked his supervisor about how to advance in his position. Because of his communication style, Jacob may not smile or show outward signs of gratitude. However, he is happy to have a shorter commute and learn the trade he loves.



### Jacob

*By Diane Warwick,  
Silverdale DVR Business Specialist*

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**DSHS Mission** – To Transform Lives

**DVR's Mission** – Transforming lives by assisting individuals with disabilities to fully participate in their communities through meaningful employment.

**DVR's Vision** – Dedicated professionals leading the field of vocational rehabilitation, delivering exceptional experiences to every customer, every time.

**DVR's Values**

- **Transparency** through clear, honest communication with customers, staff, and partners
- Acting with **Integrity**, upholding the ethics and values of our profession
- Promoting a culture of **Empowerment** for customers and staff
- Advancing rehabilitation practices through **Innovation**
- **Collaboration** with customers, staff, and partners that produces results
- Committed to **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** in all its forms to achieve excellence



*Transforming lives*

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Providing Vocational Rehabilitation Services Since 1933

State and Federal funds are used to deliver DVR services. The VR program receives approximately 78 percent in Federal funds and 22 percent in State funds. For detailed information on the dollar amount of Federal funds for the program, please visit <https://rsa.ed.gov/programs.cfm?pc=basic-vr&sub=awards>