

Alaska State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee

# 2017 Annual Report

Planning for the Future



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**“They absolutely saved my life, literally.** They never knew just how suicidal I was, and if it had not been for their help and encouragement I would have never had the strength or confidence to keep trying. I was devastated emotionally, physical, mentally.”

*- DVR Participant, Public Testimony*

## From the Committee Chair

It has been an honor to serve as the Alaska State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee (SVRC) Chair this year and to present our 2017 Annual Report. Over the past year, the SVRC conducted three full meetings via video conference and other meetings via telephone. The SVRC is assessing the audio/video meeting format to determine the impact on public testimony participation.



The VR program made remarkable progress with utilizing and expending the 15% Pre-Employment Transition Services funds. Pre-Employment Transition Services expanded from serving 301 students with disabilities in FFY16 to 957 in FFY17. Several new Community Rehabilitation Providers came on board this year, particularly in rural Alaska. Individuals exiting the program earned an average hourly wage of \$15.25/hr. which is \$5.45 over Alaska's minimum hourly wage. The SVRC is a strong supporter of the proposed regulation to eliminate subminimum wage payments to persons with disabilities and look forward to the closure of all sheltered workshops operating in Alaska. The SVRC awarded two Southeast Alaskan employers for employing people with disabilities. The small employer award winner was Sea Mart, a Sitka based grocery store. The large employer award winner was Fred Meyer, a Juneau superstore.

These are a few of the many accomplishments of the SVRC and the DVR program this year. I greatly appreciate the commitment and dedication of the committee members who give so generously of their time and energy.

Sincerely,

Dave Bérube, Chair

## From the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Director

The State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee (SVRC) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) are pleased to present the 2017 Annual Report. The report provides an overview of key DVR and SVRC activities that occurred this year. DVR continued to work hard to implement many changes brought about by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the final regulations associated with the act. Of note, 3,417 individuals received VR services. Ninety-five percent of service recipients experienced significant disabilities. The average wage of those exiting the program employed was \$15.25 per hour, an increase of almost a dollar per hour from last year. Our Pre-Employment Transition Services experienced remarkable growth, serving 957 students with disabilities from 117 Alaskan communities in FFY 2017.



In addition to program highlights, the report provides information about DVR's Pre-Employment Transition Services, strategic planning, and vocational rehabilitation counselor credentialing and professional development.

The report shows the strong partnership that exists between the SVRC and DVR. This positive working relationship is essential to the success of the VR program and is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Cannon, Director  
Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



# The Committee and Members

## **Dave Bérube**

CHAIR

*Anchorage*

Business Representative

## **John Cannon**

*Juneau*

Division of Vocational  
Rehabilitation Director

## **Collette Costa**

*Juneau*

Business Representative

## **Kathy Craft**

*Fairbanks*

Alaska Workforce  
Investment Board

## **Lindsay Davison**

*Chugiak*

State Independent Living  
Council

## **Tamara Douglas**

*Anchorage*

Client Assistance  
Program

## **Dan Elstad**

*Juneau*

Consumer Advocate

## **Raeshawndra Jett**

*Nome*

Business Representative

## **Bonnie Lucas**

VICE CHAIR

*Anchorage*

Consumer Representative

## **Mae Marsh**

*Fairbanks*

Business Representative

## **Mary Middleton**

*Eagle River*

Parent Training and Info.  
Center Representative

## **Stacy Niwa**

*Anchorage*

Rehabilitation Counselor

## **Bob Purvis**

*Sitka*

Community Rehabilitation  
Program Representative

## **Kenneth Schoenlein**

*Willow*

Consumer  
Representative

## **Coleen Shivers**

*Juneau*

Alaska Dept. of Education &  
Early Development

## **Gail Sorenson**

*Dillingham*

Tribal Vocational  
Rehabilitation

## **The Alaska State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee**

(SVRC) is composed of volunteers from around the state who are appointed by the Governor to both advise and partner with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Members help shape policy by participating in strategic planning, needs assessments, consumer satisfaction surveys, and ongoing program evaluation.

Members include people with disabilities, community rehabilitation program employees, representatives from independent living, special education and Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) programs, advocates, VR participants, and business leaders.

Each year the SVRC submits this report on the status of the DVR program to the Governor and to the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

*Prior SVRC members who served during this reporting period, but have completed their term of service or resigned include: Marchea Sovde, Mary Ann Pruitt, Sam Jordan, and Leslie Jaehning.*

# DVR Strategic Plan



## **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Mission**

To assist individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment.

The SVRC and DVR continuously work to improve the delivery of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to Alaskans with disabilities. A keystone of this work is an ongoing, three year cyclical strategic planning process, which is the responsibility of DVR and SVRC leadership. The strategic planning process utilizes data captured from the tri-annual Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) report. The results of the CSNA were used to determine DVR priorities.

The strategic planning team includes the DVR management and leadership teams, SVRC members, the Client Assistance Program, and Tribal VR programs. The four goals listed below were identified for the 2016-2019 planning cycle and provide organizational direction and focus for DVR. Specific teams are tasked with duties that will ensure these goals are met. These assigned tasks are reviewed and updated quarterly.

### **Goal 1: Provide High-Quality Services**

DVR will deliver high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities and assist them with obtaining employment that is consistent with their career goals. This goal reflects DVR's continued focus on improving the VR service delivery system.

### **Goal 2: Provide Highly Skilled Staff**

DVR will recruit, employ, retain, and train the most qualified and highly skilled rehabilitation staff. This goal reflects the value DVR places on well-trained staff and the serious need for succession planning with the anticipated loss of key staff in the future.

### **Goal 3: Improve Organizational Systems**

DVR will continuously evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational systems and identify opportunities to develop innovative solutions for necessary changes. This will include implementing advancements in technology as resources allow, analyzing current business practices to improve service delivery systems, and ensuring critical applications/systems are current.

### **Goal 4: Provide Leadership in the Workforce System**

This goal is to strengthen our connection to other programs that serve individuals with disabilities. DVR will maintain a leadership role in expanding vocational opportunities for Alaskans with disabilities. DVR will continue to collaborate with other agencies to improve the delivery of VR services.

# DVR at a Glance

The individuals served by DVR are of all ages and from all walks of life. Although each person has their own unique story, looking at aggregate numbers provides an understanding of the overall scope of the vocational rehabilitation program in Alaska.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation Outcomes for State Fiscal Year 2017**

- 3,417 individuals received services from the VR program.
- \$3,198,123 was spent on direct client services.
- \$1,198,310 was spent on Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities.
- 1,558 new individuals applied for services.
- 1,531 individuals received information and referral services.
- 484 individuals exited the program employed with an average wage of \$15.25/hr. The State of Alaska's minimum wage is \$9.80.

### **Of the 484 individuals that exited the program:**

- 395 were employed in the private sector.
- 65 were employed in federal, state, or local government.
- 24 were self-employed.

## **Who DVR Serves**

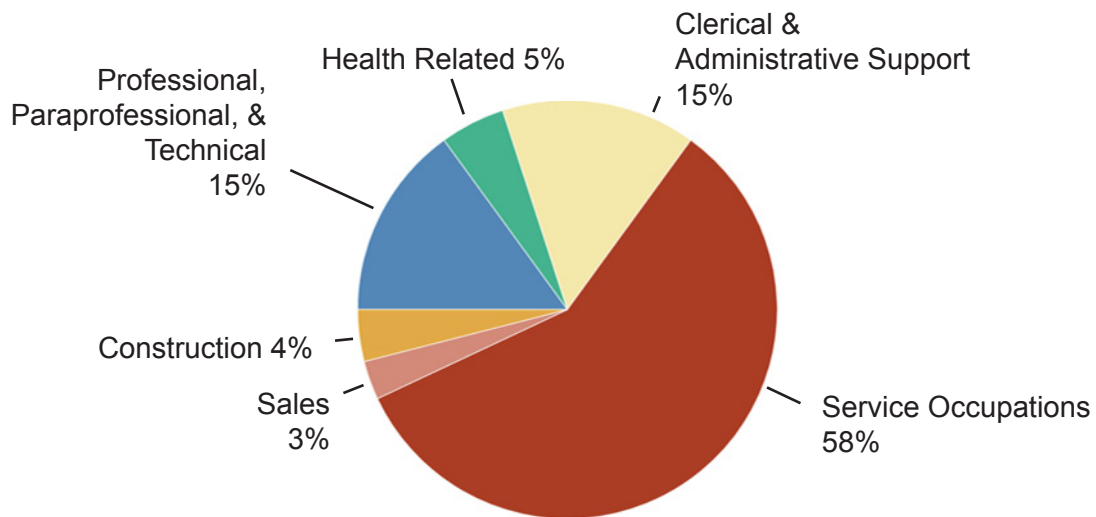
- 95% of individuals receiving services were significantly disabled with multiple barriers to employment.
- 58% were Caucasian; 19% were Alaska Native; 6% were Black or African American; 14% were Multi-racial; 2% were Asian; and 1% were Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian (participants may identify as one or more racial group). These numbers mirror the demographics in the State of Alaska.
- 957 Potentially Eligible students received Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

**"I wouldn't be where I'm at today if it would not have been for them.**

I'm working as a HR records and benefit coordinator, and I'm very happy for everything DVR provided me. My counselors have been wonderful. Voc Rehab made me remember there was more to me than what I couldn't do."

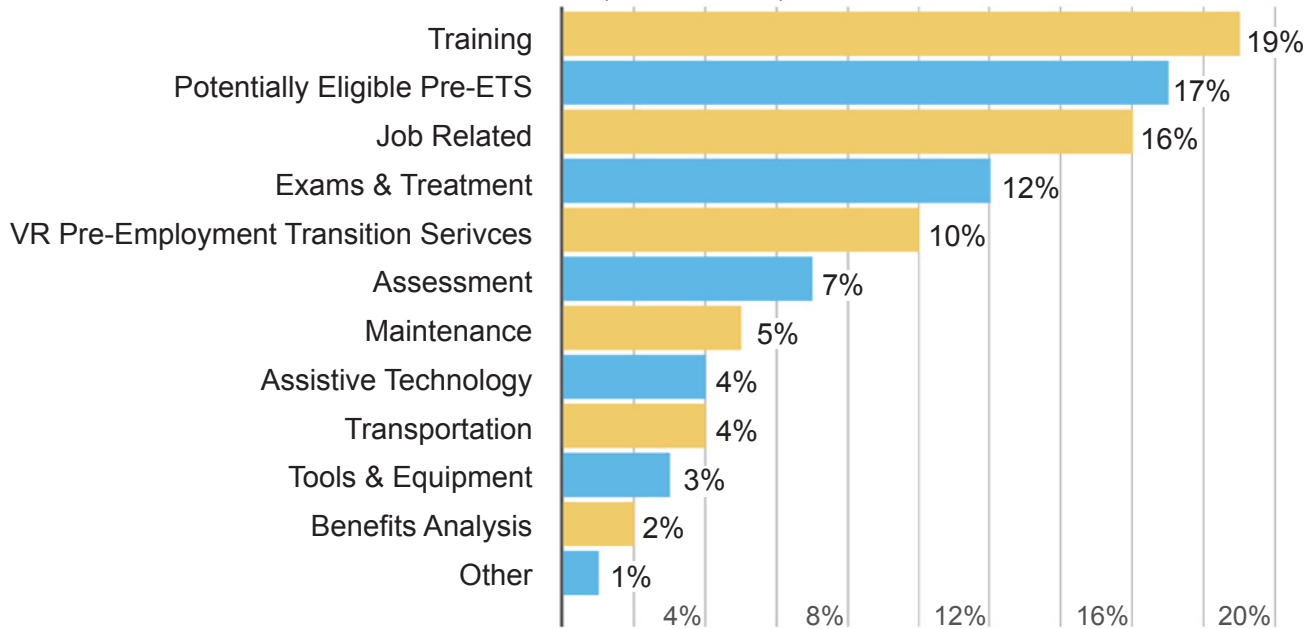
- DVR Participant, Public Testimony

## Occupations of DVR Participants SFY 2017

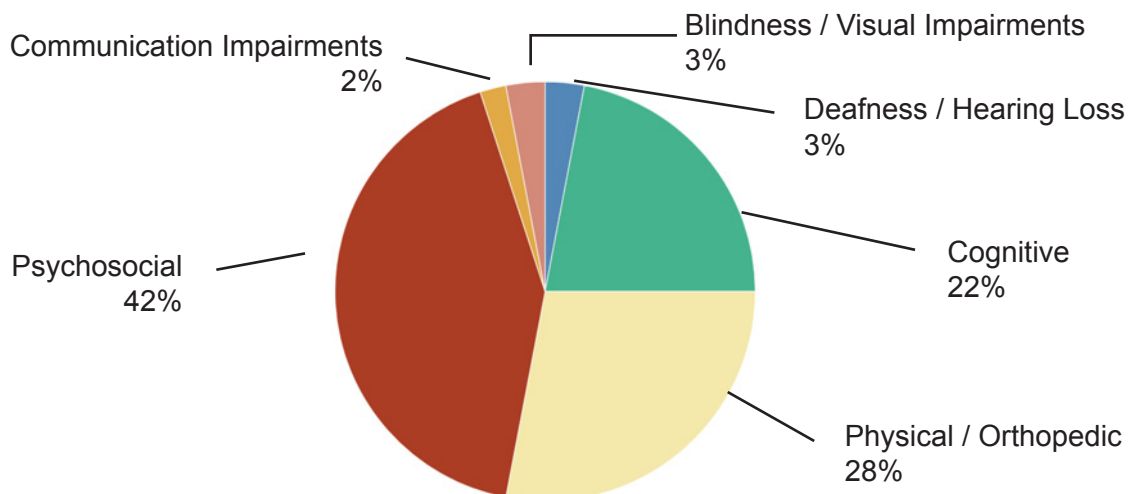


## Purchased VR Services SFY 2017

(\$4.4 million)



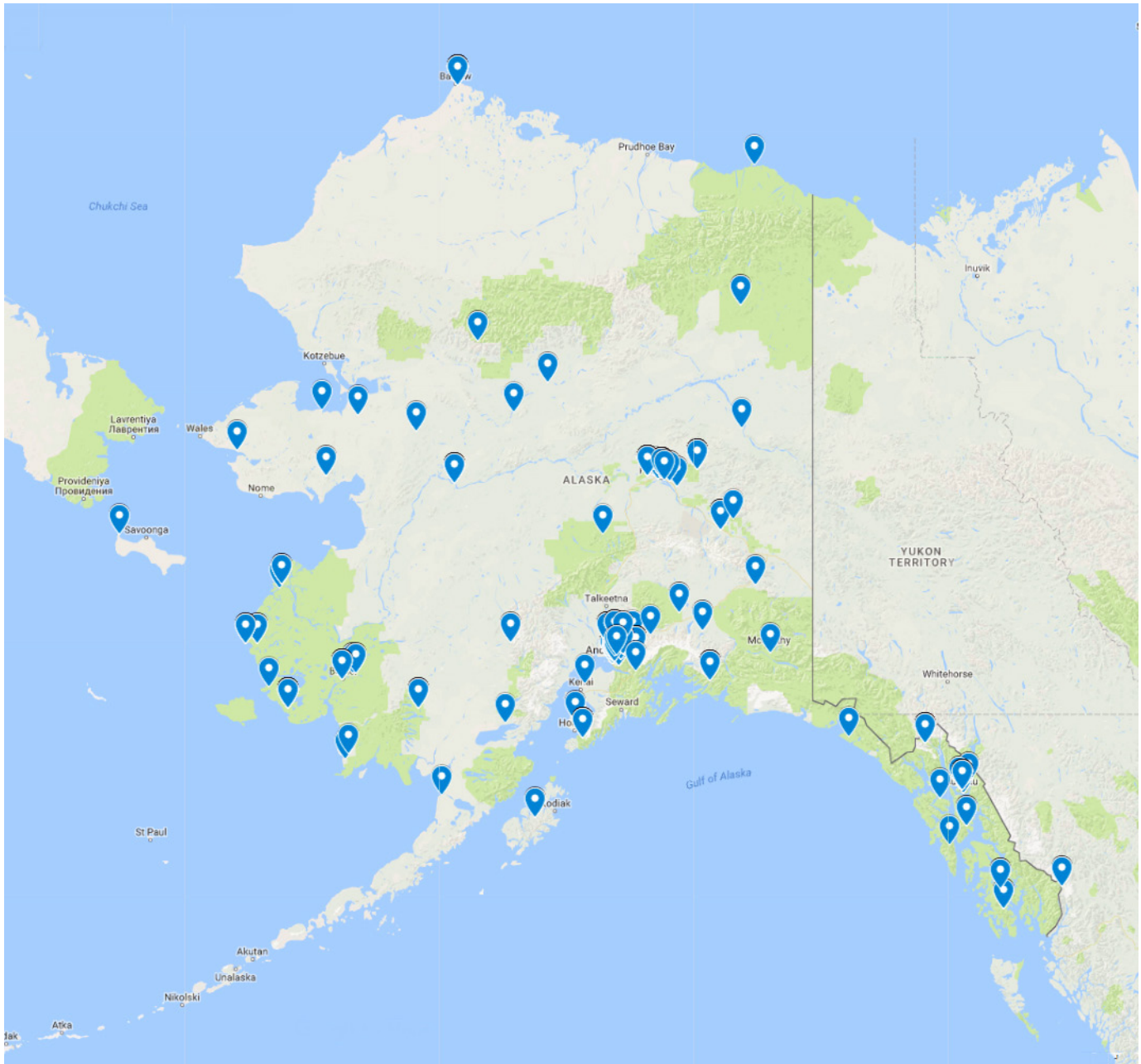
## DVR Participants by Disability SFY 2017



# DVR Participants

## Geographic Location of Alaskans Served by DVR FFY2017

Source: DVR Management Information System



The map above shows where DVR services, including Pre-Employment Transition Services, were delivered throughout Alaska in Federal Fiscal Year 2017, from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017. DVR has offices in Anchorage, Eagle River, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Sitka, Wasilla, and serves rural Alaska with traveling counselors.



# Public Testimony Quotes



Below are excerpts from public testimony given by DVR participants at SVRC regular meetings. The SVRC uses this testimony, along with other data sources such as customer satisfaction surveys, to spot systemic issues that need to be addressed, and as part of our ongoing effort to inform ourselves about the experiences of DVR participants.

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“About a year ago I was in a car accident and I had a lower back injury. I was working as a warehouse manager. May of last year they laid me off. I tried to find work but, with a criminal background, it pushes you back. DVR helped me out to actually take a step back and see what I need to do better in my life. So I’m really happy right now. Now I’m doing a job working for automated laundry as a parts and service administrative assistant. That’s just things that I wanted to do for a long time.”

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“I would like very much to praise the people at DVR for all the help that they give to people like myself, and for hope that they give to people.”

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“I have a criminal background, and I have depression, and I’ve appreciated what DVR has done for me so far and I want to continue working with them.”

“I’m grateful beyond words for the opportunity I’ve been given through the Vocational Rehabilitation program.”

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“My husband died of cancer, it was very fast. I was diagnosed with MS. My son and I were homeless, and I went to DVR and got help. And now I’m a real estate professional working with the best brokerage office. I have money in the bank, I have an apartment. I feel like crying because if it wasn’t for you guys and my VR counselor, I wouldn’t be as good off as I am right now.”

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“I struggled for a long time to be able to get a job because I ended up being diagnosed with bipolar and ADHD and there was some other issues involved in that. I kept trying to seek jobs that I couldn’t sustain because of a lot of different things. So when I got in DVR, they just kept pointing me in the right directions. Because of them I was able to be put on medication. Real medication and real service and real help, and for that I’m forever grateful.

I’m working a job now with physically, mentally, and otherwise challenged individuals. And now I have an opportunity to move up and on to something even more so I can have a degree in social work.”

# Pre-Employment Transition Services

In FFY17, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) delivered Pre-Employment Transition Services to 957 Potentially Eligible students throughout Alaska. This is roughly double the number served in FFY16, and contributes to exceeding DVR's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment goal to serve 585 students annually. Thanks to robust and flexible partnerships with over 100 businesses and partner agencies, Pre-Employment Transition Services were provided to students in 117 communities across Alaska (see map on the next page).

## Flexible Services Meet Diverse Needs Across the State

A key challenge to providing Pre-Employment Transition Services throughout Alaska is that a small population resides across a large geographical area, including remote communities that are only accessible by boat or plane. DVR was able to meet this unique challenge by establishing new partnerships and expanding existing partnerships, with hundreds of agencies, schools, and businesses in rural/remote communities. Using this strategy, DVR was able to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to Potentially Eligible students in over 100 communities.



Another challenge included how to leverage available resources and address the distinct needs of each community. Using a “one-size-fits-all” model for service delivery was not appropriate given the uniqueness of Alaskan communities. Urban cities, such as Anchorage, have hundreds of businesses and dozens of service providers, while remote communities, such as Chefnak (located over 400 air miles from Anchorage), only had a handful of business and no existing service

providers. Through innovation and planning, DVR was able to leverage local resources to develop flexible service delivery models, which in turn, actually created service providers in communities, like Chefnak, that previously had none.

DVR's JOBZ Club program is specifically designed for rural/remote areas to be delivered by local area teachers who may be

the only qualified providers in a community. For activities such as Transition Camps, teams from urban areas fly in to rural/remote communities to expose Potentially Eligible students to education and employment opportunities throughout Alaska. Additionally, DVR designed a proposal process for service providers to create innovative Pre-Employment Transition Service programs to be delivered in their communities, ensuring the design and service delivery met fidelity guidelines set by DVR.



*Pre-Employment Transition Services continued...*

## The Results

These strategies resulted in almost one thousand Potentially Eligible students receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services from local school districts, tribal entities, intellectual/developmental disability agencies, mental health providers, Independent Living Centers, and other community rehabilitation providers.

- **957 Potential Eligible Students served.**
- **Collaborated with over 100 businesses.**
- **Met the WIOA requirement to spend 15% of agency funds on Pre-Employment Transition Services.**

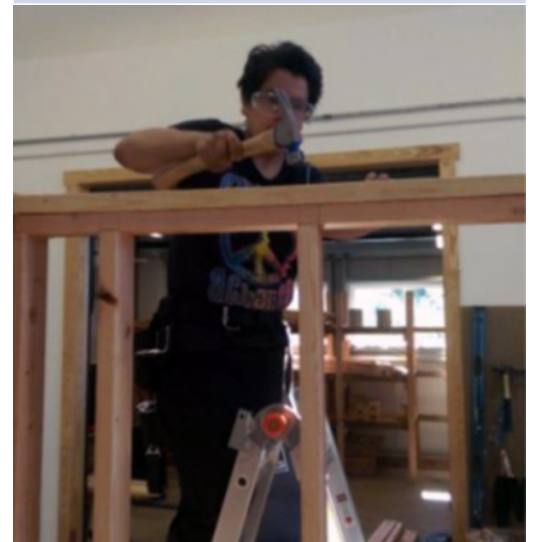
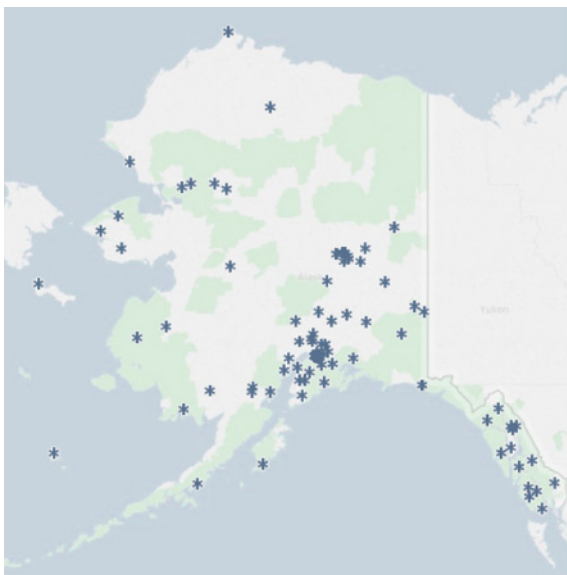
“Thank you very much for taking the time, money, and effort to help us start our store. This opportunity has taught me to run a business. I also learned about handling money.”

- *Student Participant*

“The best part about planning for a store is keeping the supplies ready and pricing them.”

- *Student Participant*

## Services Delivered in 117 Communities



# Qualified Counselors Provide Quality Services

All Vocational Rehabilitation services provided by the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) are delivered by counseling teams led by a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC). A VRC's work is technically demanding, specialized, and requires both independent decision making and the ability to manage a large caseload of clients who have multiple, significant disabilities.

## Qualified VRCs are a Return on Investment

While the ongoing education of Alaska's VRCs appears to be extensive, a qualified CRC has comprehensive knowledge of all aspects of disability, as well as an in-depth understanding of critical considerations such as assistive technology and employment law. CRCs are typically able to provide the highest level of services, while expending the lowest amount of case service dollars per individual served. They can manage higher caseloads, require minimal supervision, and are able to place more individuals into competitive, integrated employment than other VRCs.

## Certified Rehabilitation Counselors Ensure Quality Service

DVR defines a qualified VRC as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). The Commission on Rehabilitation Counseling Certification (CRCC) sets the standard

for competent delivery of quality rehabilitation counseling services through the nationally accredited and internationally recognized CRC certification program. The CRC designation represents an advanced level of specialized, graduate education and training specifically designed to serve individuals with disabilities. While other types of employment counselors deliver services of a more generalized, vocational nature, VRCs must exhibit a



*Counselor Liz Eddy holding her recently acquired Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Certificate*

thorough knowledge of vocational counseling theories. They must also have knowledge of a broad range of physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities and the counseling techniques needed to provide guidance and counseling to an individual throughout the vocational rehabilitation process. Services provided by a VRC are specialized and complex, however, it ensures that individuals



## Qualified Counselors Provide Quality Services continued...

with disabilities are being provided the highest quality of vocational rehabilitation services.

### Finding Qualified VRCs in Alaska is Challenging

Rehabilitation Counseling graduate programs are not available in Alaska. This makes hiring qualified VRCs challenging. Because hiring out of state is a difficult process, DVR has a multi-class recruitment process that allows managers to hire individuals at a lower counselor level, designated as a VRC I or VRC II, if they meet specific, minimum requirements. VRC Is and VRC IIs are required to obtain their CRC within a specific time frame as outlined in their Employee Development Plan (EDP). Once a counselor obtains their CRC, they can be promoted to a VRC III.

### Qualified Rehabilitation Counselors Must Engage in Lifelong Learning

In order to stay current in the field of vocational rehabilitation, CRCC requires CRCs to earn 100 continuing education hours over a five year period, with at least ten of those hours being in Ethics. These continuing education hours are in categories such as: counseling theories, medical and psychosocial aspects of chronic illness, career development and job placement, assessment; community resources and partnership, and

professional orientation. In order to ensure CRCs have access to current best practices, DVR provides:

- CRCC approved curriculum and training provided by existing CRCs;
- Opportunities for webinars, online courses, or in person training provided by CRCC approved Distance Education Programs; and
- VRCs who are not yet CRCs have opportunities to obtain their CRC by accessing scholarships or other rehabilitation counseling classes.

“After 15 years in emergency services with two different fire departments, I found myself out of work. Despite multiple interviews, I was unable to land a job and could no longer perform my old job due to issues with my back... I’m eternally grateful for the guidance, direction, support, and caring of my DVR counselor and all the staff in the Vocational Rehabilitation office.”

- DVR Participant, Public Testimony

# Consumer Satisfaction

## **Survey of Participants Who Exited DVR Services between 10/1/2016 – 9/30/2017**

The SVRC oversees the on-going consumer satisfaction survey to ADVR participants closed from an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

### **Survey Highlights**

DVR is a consumer-driven organization where a participant's self-involvement in the vocational rehabilitation process and informed choice are important for success. The consumer satisfaction surveys focus on four points: Consumer & Staff Interaction, Consumer Involvement, Program Information, and Program Satisfaction.

Surveys are sent to the participants' email address via the online survey tool, SurveyMonkey. Currently, 78% of DVR participants have a valid email address. The average monthly response rate is 10.7%.

### **Treating the Consumer Participant with Respect**

Seventy-eight percent of DVR participants who responded agree that staff were polite and helpful throughout the time their case was open. A similar percentage of respondents felt questions and requests to staff were replied to promptly.

### **Informed Choice and Involvement in the DVR Process**

Seventy-four percent of responders were pleased with their involvement in the decision making process that led to their plan for employment. Additionally, 82% knew the goal of DVR was to help them find employment or stay employed.

### **Referral of Others**

Overall, 71% of participants would recommend Alaska DVR to others.

"I had no idea there was so much help out there; I wish I had known about DVR after the bad work experience I had in 2008. I was unemployed for nearly three years due to PTSD from what happened on the job. I lost my home and feeling of self-worth, but DVR has restored at least my feeling of self-worth."

*- DVR Participant, Consumer Satisfaction Survey*



## All Respondents - Survey Categories

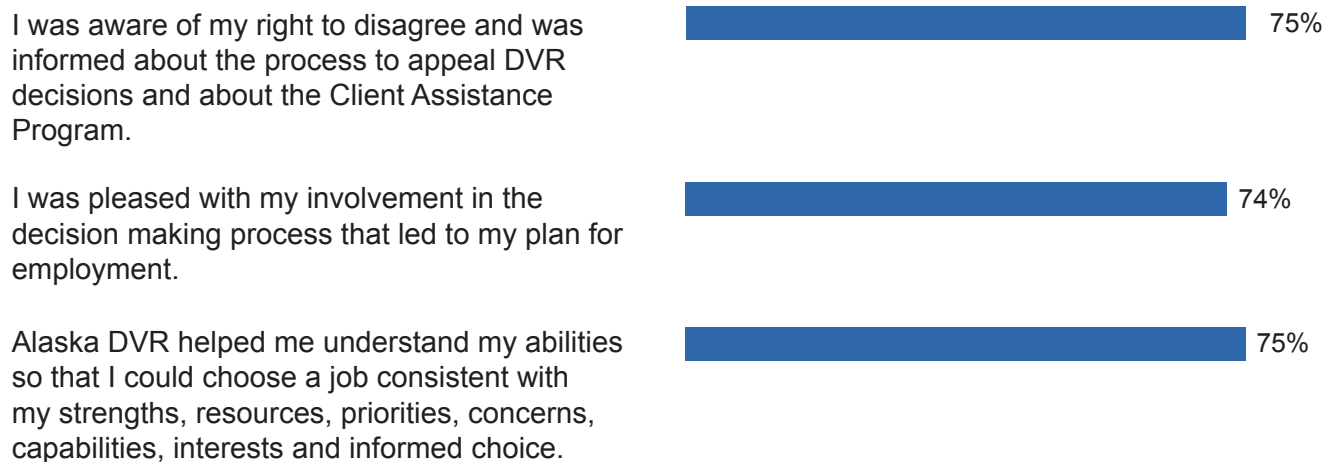
### 1. Program Satisfaction



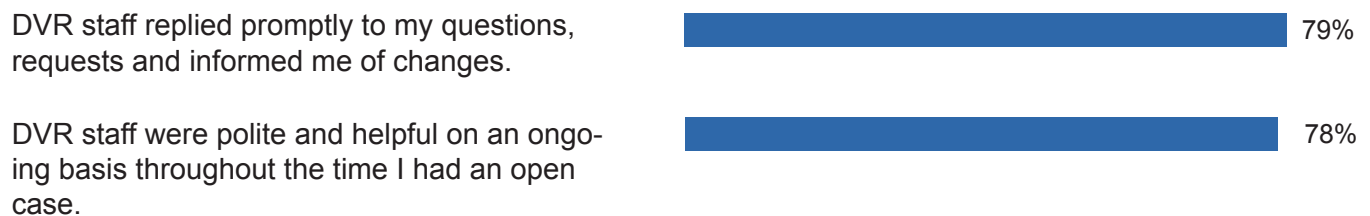
### 2. Program Information



### 3. Consumer Involvement



### 4. Consumer and Staff Interaction



# SVRC Expenditures and Resources

## SVRC 2017 Expenditures

The SVRC 2017 funds were used for expenses related to quarterly meetings held via video conference, including a court reporter, printing of the Annual report and purchasing of framed certificates for the committee's two Business Recognition Award winners.

## 2018 Resource Plan

Funds will be used to support the committee's quarterly meeting expenses, including one face-to-face meeting to be held in Anchorage, Alaska. This will involve travel and accommodations for members and staff, a court reporter, a sign language interpreter for public testimony, and conference room rental.

Funds will also be used to purchase up to three, framed certificates, or a similar type of award, for the winners of the committee's Business Recognition Awards.

## From DVR Participants Consumer Satisfaction Responses

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"The DVR team totally ROCKS. They have had such an impact on so many of us that would have fallen through the cracks of the system. They've made me whole and proud to be productive again and part of a team environment."

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"They were very nice and professional. They honestly helped me get my life started over again."

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"I felt they were quite supportive and showed interest in my involvement with MASST program and training at Center for Blind."

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"The staff at DVR were incredibly helpful and had a genuine interest in promoting my skill sets and career direction."

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"The one-on-one encounters were very helpful for me. I received valuable guidance in sorting out and making difficult life decisions."

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"DVR was amazing about giving me the time I needed to recover and to make changes to my plan that would take into consideration the impairments I now have. They made sure I received all services and resources available to assist me in adapting to my new life and to be able to work. I am eternally grateful to DVR."



# SVRC Activities



In partnership with DVR, the SVRC engaged in a broad range of activities during federal fiscal year 2017 from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017 to help ensure the quality of DVR's services.

## SVRC Activities Federal Fiscal Year 2017

- Collected public testimony from around the state via email, phone, and written letters.
- Held three meetings this year. Two were video/teleconference meetings and one was a face-to-face meeting in Anchorage. Each meeting focused on a different region: Anchorage, Rural Alaska, and Southern.
- The committee conducted outreach efforts to recruit new members to the SVRC.

### Speakers At Each Meeting

At each meeting, reports are given by the DVR Director, John Cannon; Chief of Rehabilitation Services, Mariah Krueger; and appropriate regional manager(s); as well as partner reports from Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, the Client Assistance Program, and the parent training organization "Stone Soup Group."

The committee also heard from the following guest speakers:

- Rural Alaska Meeting Guest Speakers: DVR Rural Team leader and Southern Regional Manager, Jim Swanson; DVR Transition Coordinator, Jim Kreatschman; and Access Alaska,

Interior Program Director, Sarah Canoy. North Slope Borough, Manager, Linda Payton, was scheduled to attend but had to cancel.

- Anchorage Meeting Guest Speakers: DVR Business Enterprise Specialist, Pam Geary; Arc of Anchorage, Director of Supported Employment, Danny Parish; and the Anchorage Community Health, Vocational Program Manager, Lee McInerney. Also, the DVR Chief of Rehabilitation Services gave a presentation on meeting new WIOA requirements.

One full day of the Anchorage meeting was dedicated to the Assistive Technology (AT) Act and the SVRC's role as Alaska's AT Council. Dubbed the "Day of AT," the day included an overview of AT Act activities and outcomes by Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) director, Mystie Rail; committee training by DVR AT Coordinator, Jason Caputo; and tours of key AT providers' facilities which included ATLA, the Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Access Alaska.

- Southern Region Meeting Guest Speakers: Second Chance Reentry Program, Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Program Coordinator, Talia Eames; and Aiding Women in Abuse and Rape Emergencies Community, Resources Coordinator, Christina Love.

# SVRC Subcommittee Activities

The State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee (SVRC) has five standing subcommittees: Executive; Program Evaluation; Assistive Technology; Planning; and Policy, Public Relations and Resources. The committee also has an ad-hoc Business Recognition Subcommittee. Below is a summary of each subcommittee's role and activities.

## Executive

*Chair: Dave Bérube*

The Executive subcommittee is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, and the chairs of all the standing subcommittees. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

Director also attends as a courtesy.

The subcommittee held monthly teleconferences where it reviewed the work of, and assigned work to, the other subcommittees and planned the SVRC's quarterly meetings. The subcommittee continued to review the change in SVRC meeting format from in-person to video/teleconference that occurred last year to ensure it was meeting the needs of consumers across Alaska.

## Program Evaluation

*Chair: Tamara Douglas*

There were no specific tasks given to

this subcommittee during this time period. The subcommittee spent the majority of its time listening to public testimony in order to identify any trends or patterns. At this time, the subcommittee has not identified any noteworthy patterns, but will continue to monitor public testimony and consumer satisfaction surveys.

## Assistive Technology

*Chair: Bonnie Lucas*

The AT subcommittee provides consumer input and feedback on how the federal Assistive Technology (AT) Act funds are being used in the State of Alaska. The AT subcommittee brings formal recommendations to the State Vocational

Rehabilitation Committee (SVRC) for further actions.

AT Act funds are currently administered by DVR and passed through the implementing agency, Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA). ATLA is a non-profit agency based in Anchorage that provides services statewide. The AT subcommittee holds monthly teleconferences. ATLA Director, Mystie Rail, and DVR AT Coordinator, Jason Caputo, also attend. The DVR AT Coordinator tracks grant progress, provides informal input to DVR and ATLA, and brings issues to the full SVRC, as needed.

"I don't know where I would be right now had it not been for DVR and all the resources in Alaska that worked with me on establishing my own business."

- DVR participant



### *SVRC Subcommittee Activities continued...*

The AT subcommittee also plans an annual one-day meeting with the full SVRC. This year, it was held in Anchorage. The meeting focuses on assistive technology issues within the state and gives SVRC members an overview of AT Act activities and progress.

## **Planning and Recruitment**

*Chair: Lindsay Davison*

The Planning and Recruitment subcommittee's role is to work with DVR on the preparation and updating of the DVR State Plan and Tri-annual Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, recruit new SVRC members, and contribute to the preparation of this annual report on the status and effectiveness of the VR program.

During this time period, the subcommittee focused on member recruitment and has developed a draft plan to improve recruitment activities.

## **Policy, Public Relations and Resources**

*Chair: Ken Schoenlein*

The Policy, Public Relations and Resource subcommittee reviews both policy changes (when submitted for review by DVR) and notices on quarterly meetings to communities. The subcommittee held meetings, as needed, to accomplish

the goals outlined in the SVRC Tasks and Timelines document.

The subcommittee developed the theme and artwork for the SVRC 2017 Annual Report, reviewed and approved its content, and designed a table of contents.

The subcommittee also helped promote the quarterly meetings in the communities in which they were held.

## **Business Recognition (Ad-Hoc)**

*Chair: Bob Purvis*

The SVRC's Business Recognition subcommittee annually selects and provides an award to a successful large and small business who makes a notable effort to employ people with disabilities. The subcommittee focuses on a different region of Alaska each year. Nominees for these awards come from the DVR Business Team, which is made up of counselors from each region of Alaska.

This year the subcommittee focused on the Southern region of Alaska. The Fred Meyer store in Juneau won the award for large business. Sea Mart, a grocery store in Sitka, won the award for small employer. The awards are presented both locally, generally at a Chamber of Commerce function, as well as in Anchorage at the Society for Human Resource Managers annual conference.

# The Committee Seeks Your Input

## The State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee invites you to:

### Apply for Membership

If you care about issues pertaining to disability and employment, the SVRC encourages you to apply for a seat on this committee.

You may apply at: [gov.alaska.gov/services/boards-and-commissions/apply-for-a-board-appointment/](http://gov.alaska.gov/services/boards-and-commissions/apply-for-a-board-appointment/)

You may also apply by sending a completed Boards and Commissions application, resume and a brief letter explaining your desire to serve the State of Alaska, to:

#### Office of the Governor

Attention: Director of Boards and Commissions

P.O. Box 110001, Juneau, AK, 99811-0001

Contact the Boards and Commissions office:

**Call:** 907-269-7450

**Fax:** 907-269-7461

**E-mail:** [Boards@Alaska.Gov](mailto:Boards@Alaska.Gov)

### Attend a Meeting or Public Forum

All State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee meetings and forums are open to the public. Meeting dates are available at [labor.alaska.gov/svrc/calendar.htm](http://labor.alaska.gov/svrc/calendar.htm). Notification of meeting times and agenda are posted 30 days prior to meetings at [aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/](http://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/).

More information about the SVRC is available at [labor.alaska.gov/svrc](http://labor.alaska.gov/svrc), including minutes from previous meetings, and DVR participant and stakeholder public testimony.

### Share Your Thoughts and Ideas with SVRC

**Call:** Voice/TDD 907-465-2814 or 1-800-478-2815

**Write:** Chair, State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee  
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# **Alaska State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee**

## **2017 Annual Report**

Bill Walker, Governor

Heidi Drygas, Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development

**Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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