



OUR VISION IS WORKING

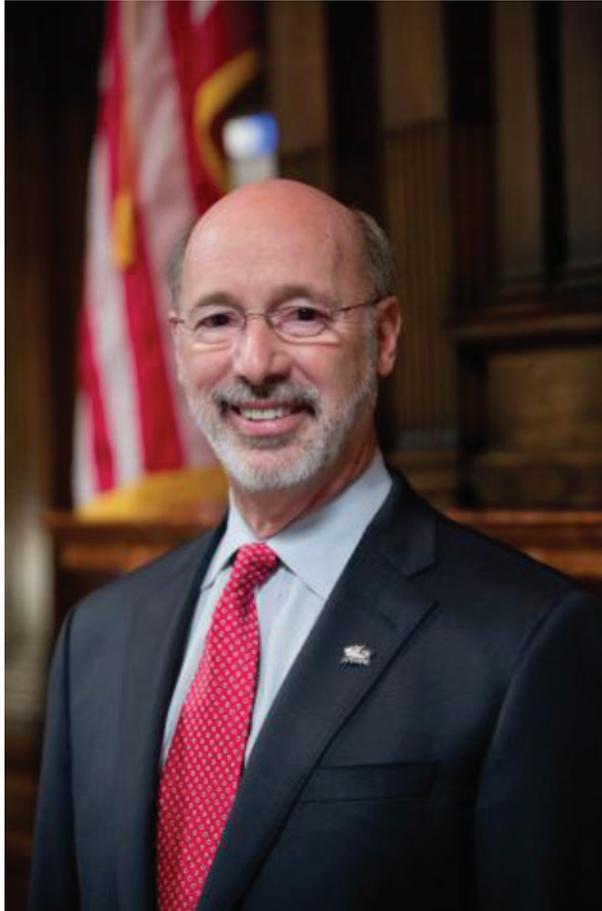
OVR ANNUAL REPORT



pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Message from Governor Tom Wolf



The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation helps Pennsylvanians with disabilities find the employment opportunities they need to lead fulfilling, productive and independent lives. My goal is for more employers to tap into this extremely talented pool of workers, and I commend OVR for working with 6,000 employers to assist more than 10,000 people with disabilities in accessing real jobs with real pay. Thank you for the essential work you do and for ensuring the commonwealth has the most talented and inclusive workforce in the country.



Message from L&I Secretary Jerry Oleksiak



I am privileged to serve on Governor Wolf's cabinet as the Secretary of the Department of Labor & Industry.

Labor & Industry has a rich and wonderful mission: to improve the quality of life and economic security for Pennsylvania workers and businesses, encourage management and prepare the Commonwealth's workforce for the jobs of the future. A recent analysis indicates that for every \$1 of investment in Vocational Rehabilitation programs, \$3 will be added back into Pennsylvania's economy after one year through new jobs and new incomes. Last year, through our Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, we worked with over 70,000 individuals and 6,000 employers, assisting over 9,300 people with disabilities in finding competitive, integrated jobs - real jobs with real pay. After one year, these 9,300 new employees will have earned over \$200 million in collective gross income, adding substantial value to Pennsylvania's economy and generating an estimated total of 3,000 additional new jobs in PA, both in industries that supply goods and services to employers and in the broader state economy due to new incomes being spent.

Through most of my professional career, I was honored to serve as a special education teacher, assisting students of all ability levels in achieving their educational and personal goals. Statistics demonstrate that when we help high school students with disabilities find summer, weekend or evening employment opportunities, they are 2.5 times more likely to be successfully employed after graduation, and that benefits all of us.

Labor & Industry is proud to be the lead agency on implementing Governor Wolf's Employment First Executive Order, bringing together state agencies to increase employment opportunities for our fellow citizens with disabilities. OVR is a tremendous example of communication, coordination and collaboration, working with state agencies, colleges/universities and community providers to offer internship opportunities this summer to college students with disabilities. OVR's Hiram G. Andrews Center is preparing Pennsylvania's future workforce for high priority occupations through innovative initiatives, including the Welding Technology Program and the CVS Pharmacy Tech Program. These initiatives fulfill Governor Wolf's vision of Schools That Teach, Government That Works and Jobs That Pay.

I am proud of the work accomplished by the outstanding staff at OVR, along with all of those volunteers who serve on the boards, councils and committees that are part of our department. I look forward to our continued good work together in 2018.



State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation



Current State Board Members:

M.J. Bartelmay, Jr. – Mercer County

Thomas M. Caulfield – Cambria County

Dr. Liza M. Conyers – Centre County

Joseph B. Drenth – Bucks County

Raymond W. Hoover – Cumberland County

Michael Kiel – Cambria County

Nelson Lauver – Monroe County

Donald E. Rhoten – Westmoreland County

John L. Tague, Jr. – Allegheny County

Gail Vasko – Northampton County

The Pennsylvania State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation is authorized by State Act 167 of 1988 and serves as the designated state agency for services provided by OVR. Its members meet quarterly to receive updates and reports, review and vote on policy proposals, engage in discussion and make recommendations to OVR based on their unique expertise and insights. Members are governor appointed to ensure that the opportunities OVR offers to Pennsylvanians with disabilities are relevant, appropriate and useful. The board's primary function is to review and officially approve OVR's policies, programs and activities.

Policies/Memos Reviewed and/or Approved by the Board in 2017

- Psychological Services – Guidelines: Psychodiagnostics and Vocational Assessment
- Low Vision Services
- Subrogation/Agreement to Repay
- Essential Procedures for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program
- Out of State Travel Approval Procedure for OVR Employees

The board also approved the draft VR Services Portion of the Combined State Plan.



The PA Rehabilitation Council

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council's (PaRC's) mission is to inform and advise the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the governor on the diverse issues affecting vocational rehabilitation. As required by the Rehabilitation Act, a majority of PaRC members are individuals with disabilities and represent 16 categories. The scope of the Council's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, collaborating with OVR in writing the VR portion of the combined state plan, conducting the statewide needs assessment and participating in policy development workgroups.



In addition to meeting quarterly, the PaRC has standing committees whose members work tirelessly on various projects throughout the year. Members of the legislative committee travel to Washington, D.C. and Harrisburg, Pa. to educate elected officials regarding the potential of individuals with disabilities and to promote increased resources for OVR. This past year, PaRC's Social Media and Outreach Committee developed six community education and outreach videos to highlight the potential of people with disabilities, as well as the collaborative work of OVR and the Council.

In August, the PaRC organized an Empowerment Summit where leaders from the council, our State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and Labor & Industry/OVR met to further develop partnerships and leverage expertise that will continue to foster pathways to success for the employers and residents of Pennsylvania that we serve.



PA SILC

The Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council's (PA SILC's) mission is to use its collective power and legal mandate to develop and secure public policies that ensure civil rights and expand options for all people with disabilities in all aspects of life. SILCs and Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are authorized for 50 states and six U.S. Territories under the Federal Rehabilitation Act. The PA SILC is primarily funded through the federal Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and collaborates with the 17 Pennsylvania CILs and other disability organizations across the commonwealth to promote independent living for individuals with disabilities. The PA SILC also collaborates on a national level with the National Council on Independent Living.



Pennsylvania's 17 CILs provide the following five core services: Information & Referral when individuals contact CILs for information/disability program referrals; Advocacy for both individual and systemic issues; Peer Support to connect individuals with similar disabilities for support; Independent Living Skills for people who acquire a disability and need to relearn basic life skills; and services that facilitate transition from nursing homes and other institutions to the community, provide assistance to those at risk of entering institutions and facilitate transition of youth to postsecondary life.

One of Pennsylvania's 17 CILs is the Center for Independent Living of Central PA (CILCP) whose mission is to eliminate and prevent barriers that people with disabilities experience by providing ongoing advocacy and offering innovative programs and services. In 2014, CILCP, PA SILC, OVR and the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing collaborated to launch the DeafBlind Living Well Program, the first Support Service Provider program in Pennsylvania. Through this program, residents of Pennsylvania who are deafblind are accessing the information and services they need to live independent lives. Listen to CILCP's video testimonials in the QR code below!



The PA Client Assistance Program

The Pennsylvania Client Assistance Program (CAP) is dedicated to ensuring that the rehabilitation system in Pennsylvania is open and responsive to the needs of Pennsylvanians.



- CAP is an advocacy program for people with disabilities administered by the Center for Disability Law & Policy.
- CAP helps people who are seeking services from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Centers for Independent Living and other programs funded under federal law.
- CAP assistance is provided at no charge, regardless of income.

Contact CAP

1515 Market Street
Suite 1300
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Toll Free: 888-745-2357
Voice/TTY: 215-557-7112

Staff:

Executive Director: Stephen S. Pennington, Esq.
Senior Advocate: Margaret Passio-McKenna
Case Manager/Advocate: Lannette D. Suarez
Advocate: Julia Blackwell
Office Manager: Francella Porter



OVR by the Numbers: 2017



74,594 individuals engaged with OVR

The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is funded through a combination of State and Federal dollars. **For every \$1 in State funds** allocated, **OVR can leverage an additional \$4** from the Federal Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration to invest in **employment services for individuals with disabilities.**



22,326 new applicants

\$35.5M State dollars = **\$131.3M** Federal dollars



13,946 students with whom OVR engaged

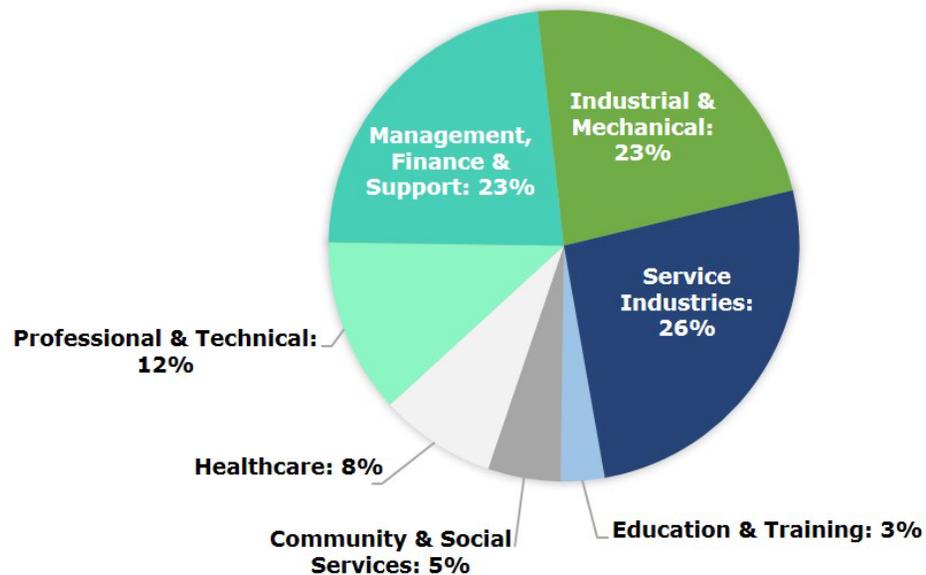


9,304 individuals placed into employment

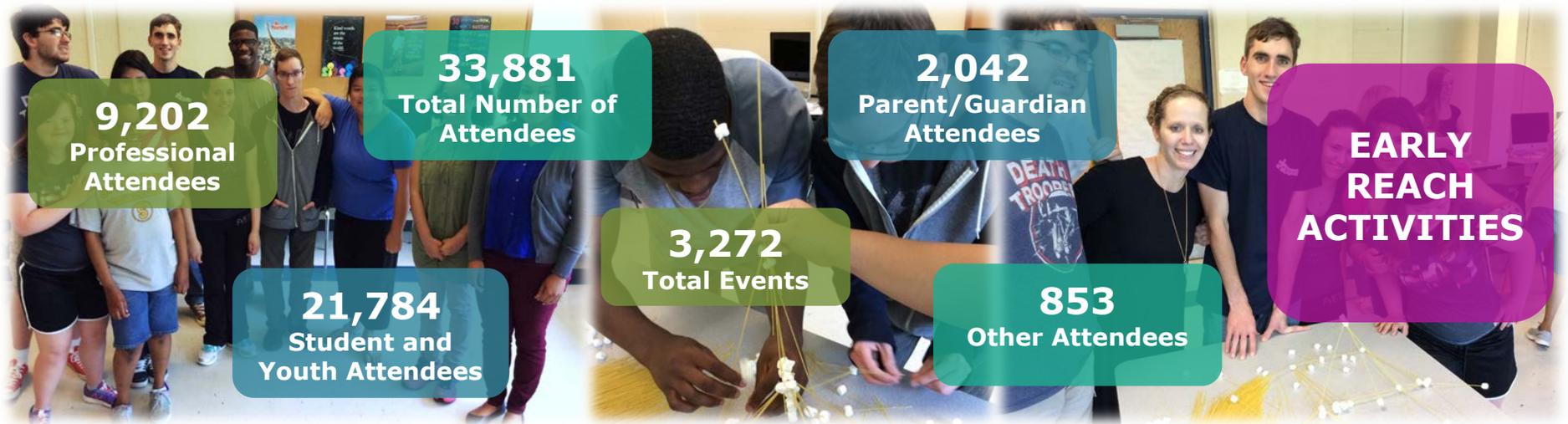


6,000 employers with whom OVR worked

Occupational Categories



OVR by the Numbers: 2017



HGAC & ACRP: #CollaborationWorks

In Cambria County, the Alternative Community Resource Program (ACRP) and our Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC) are collaborating to create externship and employment opportunities for students with disabilities. ACRP is a non-profit agency dedicated to meeting the needs of at-risk youth and their families. Since 2015, they have worked closely with the Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI) at HGAC, serving as an externship site for students to work in ACRP's Chore program that assists low-income households with home repairs essential to their safety and ACRP's Youth Employment Services (YES) Program that offers lawn care, painting and building renovation services.



After participating in an externship with ACRP and on-the-job training, provided by our Pittsburgh Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office, Nick Strosser, an individual who happens to have autism, was hired as a full-time employee with ACRP's YES Program. According to Jim Buday, ACRP Program Director, their organization was so impressed with Nick, his work and work ethic that they wanted to keep him around. Throughout his employment at ACRP, Nick has spent time working in several skilled trades, including completing drywall repair, masonry and electrical work. While this job has helped him develop transferrable work skills, it has also helped him gain the financial independence needed to live on his own. According to his supervisor, YES Program Assistant Director Kary Roberts, Nick is an outstanding team member and has grown into a confident individual who has proven that "he can be a valuable employee."



November 2018

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MY Work (Municipalities + Youth) Initiative

In 2016, our Pittsburgh Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office launched the MY Work (Municipalities + Youth) Program that provides high school students with disabilities the opportunity to gain real life, work-based learning experiences at their local municipalities during the summer. In its first year, Pittsburgh BVRs partnered with nine municipalities and 12 high schools to connect 50 students to summer employment. Last summer, the program shattered 2016 stats: more than 150 students, from 36 school districts, went to work at 34 municipalities. Students participating in the MY Work initiative work directly with municipality leaders and staff to improve their own communities and, at the same time, enhance their soft skills, earn a paycheck and build their resumes. Landscaping; administrative duties, including filing and preparing notes for council meetings; community beautification projects, such as gardening and cleaning up abandoned lots; and summer playground program monitoring are just a few of the jobs that students complete while working for their communities. The program itself is no cost to the municipality, as OVR funds the students' wages.



One of our partnering municipalities is Braddock Borough, the first municipality to agree to participate in the MY Work program during its inaugural year. Not only were they the first to sign up, but Braddock Borough Manager Deborah Brown also helped champion the program to other local municipalities. For her and her borough's efforts, collaboration and belief in the potential of students with disabilities, Ms. Brown received the 2017 #CollaborationWorksPA Governor's Award at the PA Workforce Development Association's annual conference. Ms. Brown believes that, through this program, the students not only gain valuable work experience but also improve their team-building, leadership and communication

skills, skills that will be beneficial to each participant throughout their careers. In addition to participating in both years of the summer program, Braddock has also partnered with OVR to give high school students with disabilities the opportunity to access work-based learning experiences throughout the school year.



December 2018

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**Christmas
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James Stanton



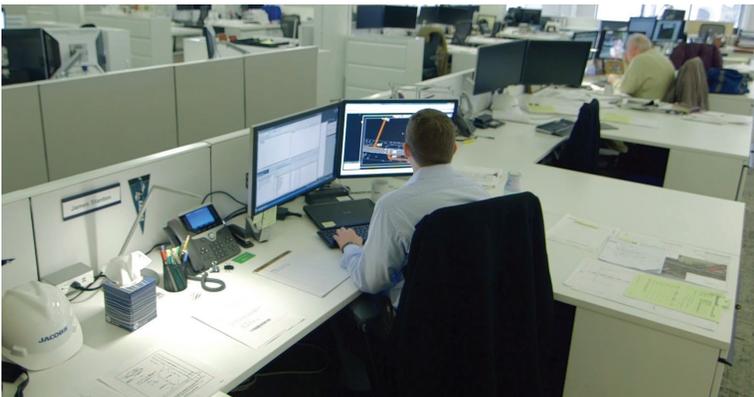
“Work pays off. And it also gives me that sense of accomplishment, you know, having a disability, and I was able to graduate from a well-known university, get a degree and find a job. So, having that job definitely gives me that sense of accomplishment.”

– James Stanton

In his role as Highway Design Specialist for Jacobs in Philadelphia, James Stanton’s day can include working on anything from engineering large interstate projects to designing small streets through neighborhoods. With 54,000 employees in over 230 locations around the world, his employer, Jacobs, is a global leader in architecture, construction and engineering.



James is an individual who happens to have a visual impairment, and his journey to becoming an engineer began when he connected with our Harrisburg Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS) office in his junior year of high school. Throughout his high school and college years, our Harrisburg office worked with James to help him discover his career path and obtain the technology, including low-vision aids and a MacBook Pro, that he needed to succeed in the classroom and in employment. Through technology, James was able to access print materials, develop notes and complete both research and written work assignments in school. BBVS also provided financial assistance for James to attend Drexel University, where he studied civil engineering.



James’ advice to other students with disabilities on how to succeed in college is to advocate for yourself, making sure your professors are aware of your needs, and to look for your resources, whether that be with OVR or the college’s disability services office.



January 2019

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King Jr. Day

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Jennifer Marino



“Having been through the addiction and recovery, I’m able to give them [my clients] encouragement and let them know that it can be done. I love the fact that, with my job, I can see hope in these people.”

– Jennifer Marino

When Jennifer Marino came to OVR, she had been sober for two years after an opioid and heroin addiction, and was working part-time at a grocery store. Her part-time job was not enough to support her family of six, and she had experienced difficulties, because of her past addiction and criminal record, in accessing career paths and obtaining or maintaining a job. One of the many obstacles that Jennifer had to overcome after recovery and while working with OVR was having to rethink and reinvent her career path as a nurse. Because she knew that her sobriety depended on helping others and giving back to the community, Jennifer decided to pursue becoming a Certified Recovery Specialist and worked with her OVR counselor to access the training.



While maintaining a part-time job, attending her meetings and outpatient treatment, and working full time as a wife and mother, Jennifer, through funding assistance from OVR, completed the training to become a certified recovery specialist, and, after receiving her certification, found employment at a behavioral health agency where she helps individuals recovering from addiction overcome barriers, access resources and achieve long-term success in recovery. In addition to her job as a certified recovery specialist, Jennifer is very active in her community, organizing addiction awareness events and speaking to youth at local high schools.



February 2019

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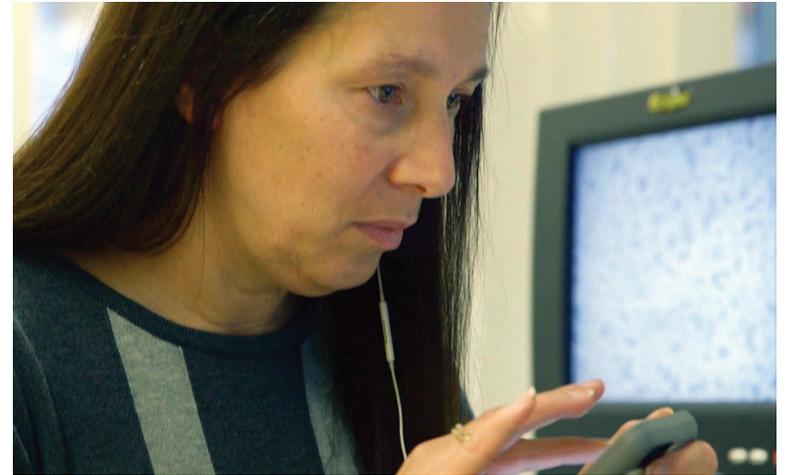
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Janet Gerster

When Janet Gerster reconnected with our Pittsburgh Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS) office, she was over 50, supporting children in college and had just been laid off from her job of 27 years, due to her position as a recruiter being eliminated. Working with our Pittsburgh BBVS office staff, as well as Blind & Vision Rehab Services of Pittsburgh, a United Way-funded and Career Transition Project partner agency, Janet was able to obtain the skills she needed to succeed in a new job.

After being laid off, Janet's BBVS VR counselor helped her access the training and financial assistance needed to make the transition from magnification with voice assist technology to complete voice assist technology. Through Blind & Vision Rehab Services of Pittsburgh, Janet was connected with Tom Armstrong, Univ. of Pittsburgh Recruiter, Veterans and Individuals with disabilities, and the Univ. of Pittsburgh's Transitioning Individuals with disabilities program, a program that, according to Tom, strives "to break down walls, break down those barriers of the whole diversity piece, the whole disability piece." Because of her talent and experience, Janet was hired by the university as a recruiter through this program.



As an individual who has been legally blind since she was 12 years old, Janet uses a white cane to travel independently. Through lessons with her BBVS orientation & mobility instructor, Janet was able to find safe travel routes, convenient bus stops and learned some tips for urban street travel for her commute to her new job, since most of her prior travel had not been in an urban setting.

The staff in her Talent Acquisition Department at the university whole-heartedly accepted her from day one, supporting her as the Access Technology Center and IT department worked to help her overcome accessibility barriers. Throughout it all, Janet says Michelle Fullem, the director of recruiting, also supported her by being committed to making opportunities at the university accessible to all.

As a recruiter for the university, Janet focuses on staff and temporary position recruitment and, in her role, is also able to assist other individuals with disabilities in accessing employment. As Tom shares, she has become a strong advocate for hiring this untapped talent pool. Janet regularly attends, on behalf of the Univ. of Pittsburgh, our Pittsburgh BBVS office's job fairs and conferences as a speaker and mentor/exhibitor to recruit individuals who are blind or visually impaired for careers at the University. Janet believes that everyone needs a strong foundation to build a strong life, and, for her, her husband John and daughters are that foundation.



March 2019

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Aidan Todd

Through family support and possibility-thinking job coaches, educators and OVR staff, as well as an employer who believes in the potential of students with disabilities, Aidan Todd, an individual who happens to have autism and an intellectual disability, is now successfully employed at MARK-IM.com, a screen-printing and embroidery business in Butler, Pa. Aidan's journey to employment began with Butler Area School District staff facilitating community-based vocational training for him at MARK-IM. After this training, our New Castle Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) office joined the collaboration to fund and facilitate a work-based learning experience for Aidan at MARK-IM during his final school year.

Throughout the work-based learning experience, partners went the extra mile to help Aidan overcome barriers, build job skills and achieve employment. Teachers arranged lunch meet-and-greets with his job coaching staff and worked on maintaining job skills during his class time. In addition to providing transportation, Aidan's family met with school staff to learn how to encourage and model appropriate work behaviors at home. Job coaching agency staff attended Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings and staffings to provide feedback so that Aidan could continue to make progress toward his employment goals. Throughout the job opportunity, MARK-IM remained flexible, allowing school and agency staff at the work site to provide Aidan with the supports he needed to succeed. After the positive work-based learning experience, our New Castle office was able to secure and fund an on-the-job training opportunity, with job coaching support, and Aidan was hired by Mark-IM in July 2017. Not only is Aidan now successfully employed; he is successfully employed at a job where he can use his artistic abilities and attention to detail to contribute and add value to a local business. Upon hearing that Aidan was hired, his mother wrote, in a thank-you note: "I refer to Aidan's transition team as the crowning jewel in his academic career thus far. Each and every one of you has my sincerest gratitude for your stellar efforts." Teamwork makes the dream work!



April 2019

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Jason Tweed

Meet Jason Tweed, senior partner and marketing strategist at Mediastead, author, husband, father and an individual who happens to have spinal muscular atrophy. Jason's company Mediastead is a full-service marketing consulting firm based out of Northumberland, Pa. that has grown to three office locations in the five years it has been in business. Throughout the past 20+ years, Jason has worked with our Williamsport office to access independence, education and employment, which has included receiving financial assistance with obtaining his degree in Mass Media and Public Relations from Edinboro University, adaptive equipment for his vehicles and, most recently, adaptive technology for his home office.



"I want people to perceive me as a professional, as an expert in my field, as one of the more knowledgeable people they will meet in my specific area of expertise, and I use a wheelchair."

- Jason Tweed

Some of the assistive technology Jason uses to run his successful marketing firm and live independently include Amazon's Echo that allows him to control light switches, thermostats, garage doors and other functions in his home through voice command and Eyegaze, a hands-free mouse that enables computer navigation through eye movement.



May 2019

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Schuylkill County Students Access Real Life, Paid Work-Based Learning Experiences



Last summer, our Reading Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) office teamed up with Shenandoah Valley High School to help high school students with disabilities gain paid, work-based learning experiences. Throughout the summer, students completed yard and maintenance work, as well as building and grounds upkeep at the high school, all while earning a paycheck, 100 percent of which was funded by OVR. For some of the students, this experience was their first job, ever.



"OVR really helped me become a better leader, a better worker and... overall being better with other people around me and my surroundings. It's good for the future."

- JT Thomas, student at Shenandoah Valley High School

In addition to earning a paycheck and gaining work experience for their resumes, school staff note that employment has allowed students the opportunity to put into practice what they are learning in the classroom. "I think it's very valuable for our students here that are working," shares Brian Waite, Shenandoah Valley High School Superintendent. "They're able to learn about some of the soft skills that we talk about in education...being on time, working together cooperatively with others, taking direction. That's been very beneficial for our students here."

During the work-based learning experience, OVR also provided funding to have a job coach on site to train the students, teaching them the specifics of the job so they could meet the expectations of the employer. "It's an awesome opportunity for our students to participate in this program...and have job coaches to help them learn these skills and maintain these skills throughout their lives," shares Michelle Zinkus, Special Education Director at Shenandoah Valley High School.



June 2019

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Kayla McDonough wins #AccessEqualsSuccess in Education Award



Last May, Kayla McDonough, a student at Carbondale Area Jr./Sr. High School who happens to have a visual impairment, received the Outstanding High School Student #AccessEqualsSuccess in Education video award from our Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS) and the Advisory Committee for the Blind of PA (ACBP). Kayla's winning video submission demonstrated the

assistive technology she uses to access education, as well as her hard work and dedication that have resulted in her achieving academic high honors. Kayla is very active at school and in the community, participating in Future Business Leaders of America, Student Council, the Association for the Blind's Insight Kids Club and Transition Assistance Club. She has been working with our Wilkes-Barre BBVS office to achieve her educational and employment goals, which include going to college and pursuing a degree in business.

BBVS and the ACBP hosted the 2017 Blindness Awareness Expo and Award Ceremony at the State Capitol Building in Harrisburg. Last year's theme was #AccessEqualsSuccess, and students and adults who happen to be blind or visually impaired were recognized for their outstanding accomplishments in accessing education, employment and independence, along with possibility-thinking employers who are breaking down barriers in employment and independence. During the afternoon Expo, organizations, partners and employers were on hand to demonstrate the technology available that creates equal access for individuals experiencing vision loss and to educate, inform and inspire attendees on the potential of people with disabilities.



July 2019

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Stan Yann

"You need to give it a chance. You may not believe in yourself. You may think: well, I have these disabilities. Will anybody hire me with disabilities, and, if they do, can I do the job? You'll surprise yourself. Just give it a shot."

– Stan Yann

Through our Harrisburg Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) office's partnership with the Harrisburg Social Security Administration (SSA) office, residents of Pennsylvania who happen to have disabilities are accessing employment opportunities and SSA is finding the talent they need to run their agency.

"We've had the pleasure of working right down the hallway from OVR," shares SSA District Manager Trevor Hillier. "So, due to the logistics here of walking across the hallway, we've really created a strong relationship with OVR, and them knowing what we're looking for in a candidate has really been a huge help to us over the last couple years."

Stan Yann is one individual who has benefited from this collaboration. Working with both a VR counselor and a business services rep, Stan was able to obtain the confidence and direction he needed to secure employment as a claims representative at the Harrisburg SSA office. For Stan, one benefit of working with OVR to find employment was that it helped break down the barrier of disability disclosure: "One big thing that helped me is going into a situation, like Social Security, with the employer knowing that I have disabilities. That is a big plus," said Stan.

Stan's success demonstrates how OVR helps employers access the most untapped talent pool for them to consider and, at the same time, assists people with disabilities in realizing their full potential. Trevor shares that SSA is "extremely happy to have him [Stan] on board, and, again, that's thanks to OVR for, again, providing us with the type of candidates that we're looking for to fill these positions."



August 2019

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Leigh Ann Patterson

For Leigh Ann Patterson, life has come full circle. As an individual who became a quadriplegic in high school after a motor vehicle accident, she is extremely proud of the fact that, today, she is able to improve opportunities for high school students with disabilities, both through her job duties as a program specialist at Life'sWork and through the example she sets as a possibility thinker, breaking down barriers she encounters. "People that I've worked with have looked at me and said: 'she's never going to do it,'" Leigh Ann shares, "and I've proved them wrong." As a program specialist, Leigh Ann partners with our Washington office to provide pre-employment transition services, including workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills training, to high school students who happen to have disabilities, helping them prepare for success in employment after graduation.



"It's just a matter of proving that there's ways around not being able to use your arms and legs. I'm a fighter, and I like to show that to my students."

- Leigh Ann Patterson

Leigh Ann Patterson has worked with VR counselors at our Washington office over the past several years to obtain her bachelor's degree in accounting, as well as the assistive technology, adaptive equipment and vehicle modifications needed to maintain employment and independence. Of her experiences working with OVR to obtain her independent living, educational and employment goals, Leigh Ann shares: "it makes me feel so thankful and so grateful that there is an agency that is out there that is willing to help somebody like me become employed and support me and know that I am worthy of work."



September 2019

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#BeHired Career Fair

"Sometimes when you have a disability, you tend to be insecure because you believe that you are not a viable member to society in the employment atmosphere, but, by being in school and being given the tools at Sierra Group Academy, I was able to showcase myself, which led to a job at the Independence Blue Cross, where I am today."

– Makisa Singh, Client Services Representative at Independence Blue Cross and participant at the #BeHired Job Fair

Made possible by The Sierra Group and our Philadelphia Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) office, the May 2017 #BeHired Job Fair connected over 200 job seekers with disabilities, including students from local high schools, to 24 national and local employers.

Throughout the day, participants had the opportunity to present their resume to and network with employers, including Independence Blue Cross, the University of Pennsylvania, UPS, the City of Philadelphia, Thomas Jefferson University, American Water, Benefits Data Trust, Temple University, Starbucks, CVS Health, PECO, Comcast, the U.S. Postal Service, SEPTA, the State Civil Service Commission, PNC and Lowe's.



It wasn't just the job seekers, though, who benefited from the event. Employers were able to interact with the most untapped talent pool for them to consider – people with disabilities. "More than anything," Janet Fiore, CEO & Founder of The Sierra Group shared, "businesses who come to the job fair have the unique chance to see more than 200 people with disabilities coming in professionally dressed, resumes polished, talent in one room".

Makisa Singh is just one success story from the event, an event that connected employers with the talent they need to meet their hiring needs and where people with disabilities were given the chance to showcase their skills, letting employers know that they are, as Makisa shared, "just as much of a good hire as someone who does not have a disability."



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Amanda Smith



Through GetGo's Inclusion Project, funding and support from our Johnstown Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office and her own determination, talent and ability, Amanda Smith is transitioning to competitive, integrated employment!

Amanda was selected to participate in GetGo's Inclusion Project, a partnership with ACHIEVA that provides individuals with disabilities the opportunity to access customized employment. Participants in the program are guided by ACHIEVA's Employment Supports through an exploration of community employment possibilities and given the opportunity to develop skills necessary for employment success. The goal of the project is to help individuals make informed decisions, contribute to their communities and experience the benefits that come with increased community participation.

As a participant in the program, Amanda was aided by a support team who assisted with a personalized plan. After an OVR intake meeting and funding from OVR for employment supports, ACHIEVA began the community-based work assessment (CBWA) process. By working with Amanda, ACHIEVA learned her strengths and preferences and provided her with several CBWAs to "try on" existing jobs and perform a variety of work-related tasks. Amanda was ultimately hired by GetGo where she works three days a week as an associate with support from ACHIEVA. Her primary responsibility is maintaining the coffee station, which includes stocking supplies, brewing coffee, and cleaning the station and dining area. To help her succeed and organize her day, she uses a picture schedule. Amanda has grown immensely since she started her job exploration. ACHIEVA Employment Specialist Amber Koshinsky shares, "Honestly, she's flourished...She was actually very scared of being in the community without supports. And now she actually asks me to step away, so we've come a long way."



November 2019

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Real World Lehigh Valley



Last year, the Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living (LVCIL), in partnership with our Allentown Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office and Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, hosted Real World Lehigh Valley, a summer program that helps prepare high school students with disabilities for success in the workforce. During the six-week program, students gained real life work experience in a variety of jobs throughout Dorney Park, including maintenance, food service and customer service, and spent time job shadowing Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom employees. Classroom training was also incorporated into the students' work days, which gave them the opportunity to learn employability, independent living and self-advocacy skills – skills to pay the bills! Throughout the entire classroom and work experience, students developed the confidence they need to overcome barriers and go to work.

One of the student participants, Trent West, began the program as someone who, as his VR counselor Amy Burke shared, "was very nervous and wouldn't make eye contact" and "kind of looked to Mom for all the answers." By the end of Real World, Trent had the confidence and skills he needed to participate in an interview, during which he shared his experience participating in the Real World Lehigh Valley program. Trent believes the program has helped students, including himself, access the tools they can use "in the near future, when we live on our own and when we get jobs."



Project Educate

"One of the things that I always tell people is that you never stop trying 'cause that's kind of how you make it in life... you got to try first and you don't give up."

– Alex Gearhart, student at Keystone Charter School who also works at a local restaurant, sharing his advice for other students with disabilities after participating in a Project Educate session



In 2016 and 2017, Governor Wolf's administration invested over \$6.3M in Innovation & Expansion (I&E) Projects to help high school students with disabilities obtain the education, skills and experience they need to access Jobs That Pay after graduation. Through one I&E project, Project Educate, made possible by the collaboration of Vocational & Psychological Services, local school districts and our Erie Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office, high school students with disabilities and their families are receiving transition-from-school-to-work-related education, support and services through informational sessions and workshops to ensure student success after graduation. Topics of the sessions and workshops include independent living, self-advocacy, community resources, work readiness, employment rights and individual planning tools for transition.

According to Dr. Martin Meyer of Vocational & Psychological Services, the Project Educate endeavor engages transition age students and their families to promote positive outcomes for meaningful employment. Designed so that the student, in collaboration with their family, can contribute to their own independence and decision making and feel confident in goal setting and vocational exploration, the project sets students up for success after high school.

In their first year, Project Educate provided education, support and services to over 800 students, family members and transition professionals through 24 information sessions and 14 workshops.



Quinn Hutzell

Through our Altoona Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services' (BVRS') partnership with the Center for Independent Living of South Central PA (CIL), Quinn Hutzell, a student who happens to have a disability, obtained a work-based learning experience as an administrative assistant at the CIL this past summer.

When Quinn interviewed for the administrative assistant position, George Palmer, the CIL's executive director, said that he was the "standout" candidate. Throughout his time working at the CIL, Quinn fit into the office well, demonstrating a strong work ethic and transforming from someone who needed supports at the beginning of his employment to an individual who now has the confidence, experience and skills needed to be successful in the workplace. According to Quinn, it is through his job duties at the CIL, which included answering calls and greeting visitors, that he has learned how to handle himself in a professional setting, as well as many other skills he can apply to future jobs.

Because of the great experience that the CIL had working with Quinn this past summer, Mr. Palmer wants to continue to work with OVR to "find the other Quinn's out there," as well as develop future programs to help youth with disabilities obtain the skills they need for today's workforce.



"What made me want to do this was the want to be more independent, having some responsibilities, some money of my own, something that I could be like: Yes, I got this myself by working."

– Quinn Hutzell



Assistive Technology Awareness Day



This past November, our DuBois Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office and Penn State DuBois' Occupational Therapy Assistant Program teamed up to host their third annual Assistive Technology Awareness (AT) Day, a resource expo for students, family members, legislative representatives and community providers. Through AT demos, vendor information booths and sessions on AT-related topics, including how to evaluate for AT needs, the 50+ individuals in attendance at the expo had the opportunity to learn about the power and potential of assistive technology to break down barriers for people with disabilities in education, employment and independence.

Thank you to our partners who participated for sharing your knowledge and expertise: Brant's Driving School; Transportation Solutions; the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation; the University of Pittsburgh; the Center for Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology (CART); Penn State AgrAbility; Laurel Medical Solutions; Life and Independence for Today (LIFT); Wheelchairs and More; Tobii Dynavox; Goodwill; the PEAL Center; and staff from Penn State's Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, our Hiram G. Andrews Center, our Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services and our Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Mike Jacobson, DuBois BVRs assistant district administrator, coordinates the expo in collaboration with LuAnn Demi, Penn State DuBois occupational therapy assistant program director. If you are interested in attending this event in the future as a consumer or vendor, please contact Mike at 814-371-7340 or mijacobson@pa.gov.

"It's extremely important to educate our community about how AT can be used to help someone gain independence, succeed at work and improve their overall quality of life. It's even more important for a rural community such as ours, where assistive technology resources are not as abundant."

– Mike Jacobson, Dubois BVRs Assistant District Administrator



Herr's



"I would encourage other employers to reach out and open your doors to these individuals because they just want a chance like anybody else has. Give them that chance...You won't be disappointed."

– Paul Pierce

This partnership didn't just provide students with summer employment, though, it also led to permanent employment for two of the participants. Patrick, one of the students hired after the program, currently works in the re-packing department, where he assists with packaging small snack bags for bulk orders. His advice for other students with disabilities is to "just work hard. Don't slack off and keep a positive attitude."

Through the collaboration of our Norristown Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office, Oxford School District and Herr's in Nottingham, Pa., students who happen to have disabilities accessed real-life, work-based learning experiences last summer!

When Herr's first expressed an interest in collaborating with OVR, a business services rep (BSR) from our Norristown BVRs office, representatives from Oxford School District, an Early Reach coordinator from our York BVRs office and a parent of a student with a disability who is also a Herr's employee presented to Herr's HR, production and warehouse management teams on the benefits of partnering to help high school students with disabilities access real jobs, with real pay. Paul Pierce, second shift chip production manager at Herr's shared, after learning about the opportunity: "I was excited about it [the program] because I had expectations of what they [the students] would bring to our company."

Working closely with Oxford School District, our Norristown office identified student participants for the work-based learning experience who then received training on interviewing and resume writing, before applying and interviewing for the opportunity.

To help prepare Herr's and their employees for a successful experience, one of our Norristown BVRs office's BSRs provided training to the HR team on disability etiquette and reasonable accommodations. After the summer, Stacy Zeager, Herr's HR business partner, shared that the students were not the only ones who learned throughout the program. "I think this is a good experience for our supervisors," she said, "in terms of... understanding that this is something that we can do."



The Mobile Fab Lab



Our Erie Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) team and Carnegie Science Center are helping students who are blind or visually impaired fit in, not sit out. After accepting a challenge from our Erie BBVS District Administrator Dawn Sokol to find a way to include students who are blind or visually impaired in their STEM Mobile Fab Lab experience, Carnegie Science Center got creative and adapted their lab to include a hands-on, tactile-centered approach that used Play-Doh, clay and other building materials, instead of an inaccessible computer program, to create a design for fabrication. Below please enjoy an excerpt from a Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh article that shares what the first accessible lab was like for students. The excerpt picks up after the students have practiced making designs with their building materials. Jon Doctorick, mentioned in the article, is the Education Coordinator for Carnegie Science Center's Mobile Fab Lab and one of the individuals who worked to make it accessible.



"A short time later, the group hustles back to the classroom-turned-makerspace and Doctorick talks to them about creating something—virtually anything they can think of—using the materials provided. He explains how the process works and that they'll be able to take home a vinyl cutout or sticker of their artwork.

The chatter intensifies as the kids get down to business. Jazmin Chiemara, who is 11 and blind, thinks about a snowflake but opts instead to make a bird and a heart with some help from her aide. Andrew goes for the Batman logo as Darren turns his attention to fashioning a U.S. Army star emblem.

Soon, the constant whir of the vinyl cutter serves notice that no one is being left out. And that's exactly the result Sokol was hoping for. 'The kids realize there are different ways to create and accomplish a task,' she says. 'They love it.'"



STEM 4 U Expo

Our Philadelphia Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services' (BBVS') STEM 4 U Expo at Temple University was all about increasing opportunities for students who are experiencing vision loss, as well as stretching imaginations and raising expectations regarding their potential! At the expo, students, parents, educators and employers had the opportunity to hear from Joel Kuruvilla, an actuarial science student at Temple who happens to be visually impaired. He shared his experience transitioning from high school to college as an individual with a disability, as well as his advice and strategies for success. Also at the expo, NFB Jernigan Institute Executive Director Anil Lewis talked about coping with public attitudes towards blindness.

During the expo, students networked with assistive technology (AT) providers, advocates, employers, university representatives, and individuals who are blind or visually impaired and successfully employed in STEM fields. Client Assistance Program Advocate Julia Blackwell was on hand to answer students' questions and provide advocacy services. Our VR AT Specialist Supervisor Justin Laffey demoed some of the assistive technology that can assist individuals who are blind or visually impaired in accessing success in education, employment and independence, and Alan Sheffield, Disability Services Representative at Temple University, explained to attendees the role of disability services – to make sure that students with disabilities have access to education and that they realize the opportunities available to them. In a line that echoes the expo's purpose itself, Alan shared his thoughts on his role in disability services at the University. "They [the students] are told no throughout their lives. I'm the person that wants to make sure they are reminded that yes, they can."



"We wanted to have this event today to share with students and parents and educators that expectations are...high, that blind students can be employed in fields of STEM."

– Lynn Heitz, Philadelphia BBVS District Administrator



Edward Gately

"I am not able to find the words to type what exactly [these services] really mean to me," Edward Gately, owner of Black Rock Sheep Farm and an individual who happens to have COPD, sharing his thoughts on the assistance he received from our York Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) office and AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians (AgrAbility PA). In early 2016, after several attempts at starting new careers and struggling to continue farming due to his COPD, hypercapnic respiratory failure and asthmatic bronchitis, Mr. Gately attended a local farm show, where he learned of AgrAbility PA and the work that they do, in collaboration with agencies like OVR, to help farmers live independently and continue working or return to work in agriculture.



Fast-forward to today and you can find Mr. Gately at Black Rock Sheep Farm independently managing his sheep, sorting them for sale and navigating his farm thanks to electric gates for his pastures, corral system components and a Bobcat UTV that OVR and AgrAbility PA helped him obtain for his farm, a farm that has truly become a family business with both his daughter and son-in-law now working with him. The services from our York office and AgrAbility PA, according to Mr. Gately, have given him "the hope and knowledge that I am now able to farm dealing with the limits of my disability."



Deb Slagle



When Deb Slagle first met with her Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS) counselor, she had been released from several jobs due to not meeting the visual eligibility. Through hard work, determination and the support of our Altoona BBVS office, she is now, at 52 years old, a DCNR park ranger with law enforcement. Deb's journey to become a park ranger started in the winter of 2016, when she began to train rigorously to qualify for the police academy. In January 2017, her hard work, which included running sprints to meet the pre-exam requirements, paid off and she was accepted.

At the Academy, Deb was competing with individuals almost half her age and consistently ranking at the top of her class. She graduated in June 2017 and started her role as a DCNR park ranger with law enforcement at Shawnee State Park shortly thereafter. As a park ranger, Deb works to ensure the safety of visitors at the park and is passionate about rescuing and rehabilitating the wildlife. Deb has told her counselor and numerous other individuals that she could not have achieved her dream job without the help of BBVS, assistance that included support for corrective vision services to enable her to meet the vision requirements for entrance into the Academy.



"If it's your perfect job and it's meant for you, don't give up on it."

- Deb Slagle



Jr. Summer Academy

Our Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services' (BBVS') first Jr. Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired took place at Kutztown University last June. Throughout the five-day program, 15 middle school students experiencing vision loss resided in dorms and attended classes in assistive technology, orientation and mobility/travel training, low vision, and independent living and vocational skills development, preparing them for success in independence, education and, one day, employment. Residing on campus meant the students could put into practice, in a real college setting, what they learned in their classes, such as when they used tactile and large-print maps, white canes and assistive technology in orientation and mobility lessons to navigate campus. While the classroom training worked to build students' independent living and vocational skills, recreation and team building sessions gave them the opportunity to develop their communication, leadership and social skills.



In low-vision classes, made possible by our partners at Salus University, the students, many of whom had never had the chance to fully participate in a science class before, dissected a cow's eye, learning about the anatomy of the eye, their visual impairment and STEM fields!

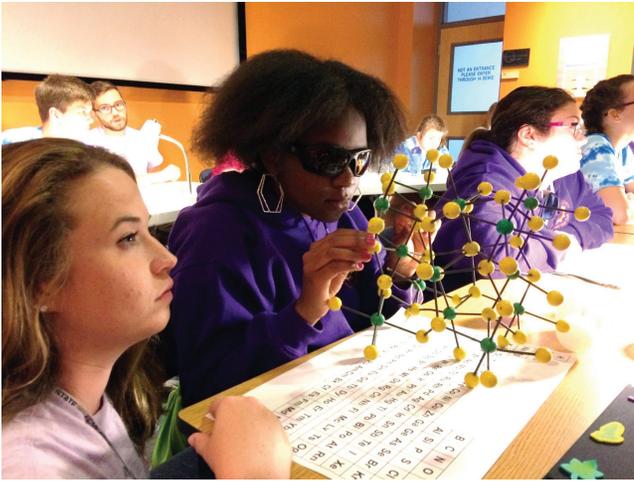
Our Jr. Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired is made possible by our Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services' partnership with the PA Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education's PA Training and Technical Assistance Network and Kutztown University.



"I think all of us should know by now: our disability, it's not going to hold us back. There is nothing that can stop us. Whatever you guys want to do, you can just put your mind to it, and you will get it."

- a Jr. Summer Academy student, speaking at graduation

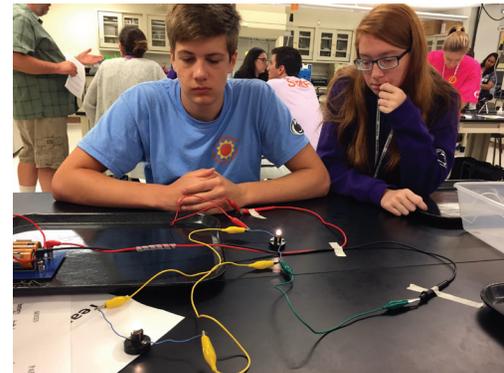
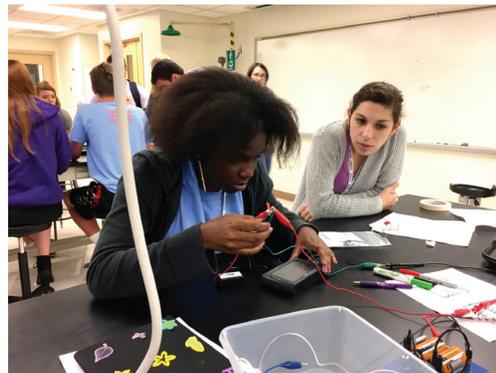
The Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired



Made possible by our Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services' (BBVS') partnership with Penn State University's Eberly College of Science and the Penn State Center for Nanoscale Science, a Materials Research Science and Engineering Center, the Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired STEM weekend gives high school students experiencing vision loss the opportunity to access introductory college-level laboratory courses, as well as complete educational activities in chemistry, physics, mathematics, forensics, biology and engineering. In this program, they gain the skills and confidence needed to advocate for full participation in their high school STEM classes. Throughout the STEM weekend, students also explore a wide range of post-secondary academic and career options in science, technology, engineering and math, and receive guidance on the skills and efforts needed to obtain those degrees and careers. The goal? Move the needle on STEM employment opportunities for people with disabilities, as research has demonstrated that only 2 percent of individuals with disabilities are currently working in the STEM fields.

We are excited to continue making STEM career pathways accessible for students experiencing vision loss through a grant received by Penn State Center for Nanoscale Science from the National Science Foundation in the amount of \$102,908 to assist with funding for the next three Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired STEM programs.

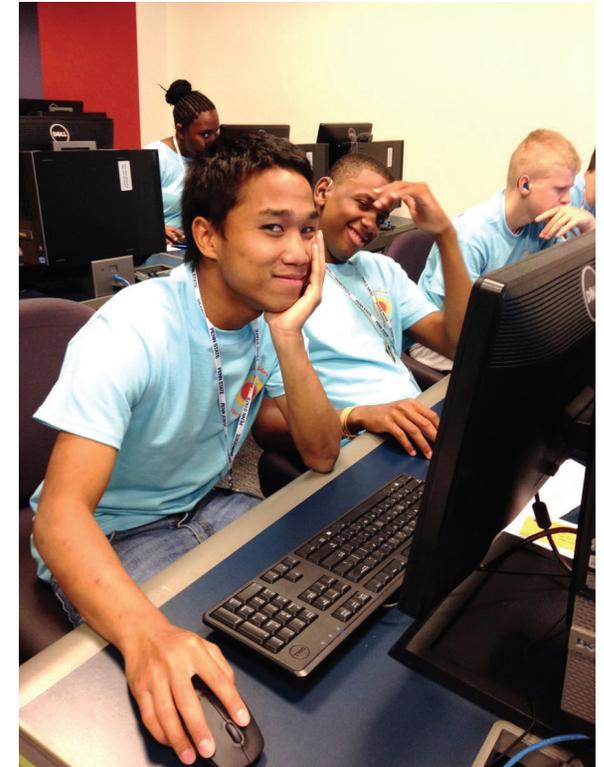
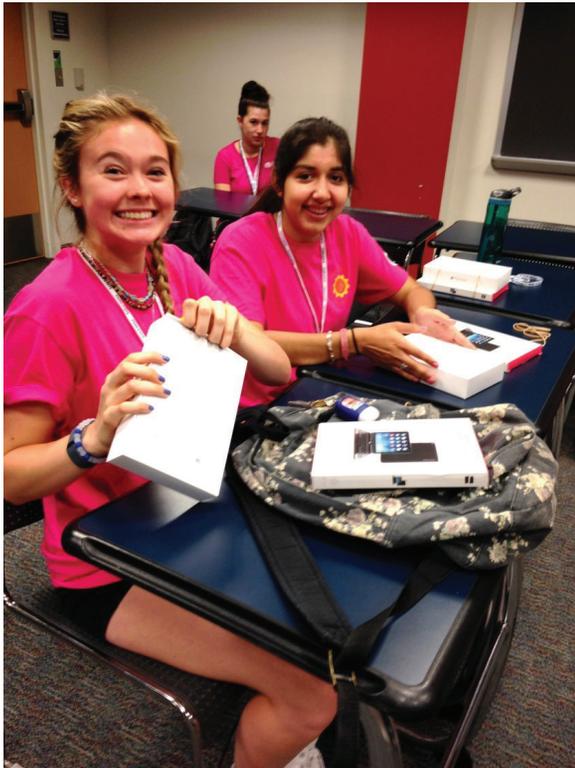
The Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired is a three-week program designed to prepare students for success in college and employment. The program takes place at Penn State University, University Park, and is offered by our Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education's Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network and Penn State University.



The Summer Academy for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

In 2017, 25 high school students from across the state attended our Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services' (BVRS') first Summer Academy for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing at Penn State University. Designed to empower students who are deaf or hard of hearing with the skills, strategies and confidence they need to succeed in education, employment and independence, this two-week program offers classes that focus on developing students' self-advocacy, access technology, networking and social skills, as well as their awareness of communication access options. Throughout the entire program, students reside on campus and, in addition to attending the classes mentioned above, are given opportunities to explore educational and career goals, as well as build their leadership, communication and interpersonal skills in recreation/team building activities.

The Summer Academy for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing is made possible by the partnership of our Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; the PA Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; the PA Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education's Educational Resources for Children with Hearing Loss advisory board and PA Training and Technical Assistance Network; Penn State College of Education; Penn State College of Health and Human Development; and Penn State Conferences and Institutes.



"Instead of the world telling them they can't and can't, this place empowers students and tells them they can."

- Ruth Ann, DHH Summer Academy student



#TheFutureIsNow



"Anything after 21 isn't promised. So, making sure that we plan, fully work with families early on and in a very crafted way, build their preparation to be able to be good advocates for their children, and for the students to be good advocates for themselves in life after high school is critical."

- Dr. Damian Johnston, Special Education and Student Services Director at Springfield School District

To better assist youth with disabilities in preparing for employment and independence, OVR began the Early Reach initiative in 2013. Since then, the initiative has grown to over 30 Early Reach coordinators (ERCs) in 15 district offices statewide who provide outreach, education and consultation services to more than 30,000 youth, their families, schools and community organizations each year.

ERCs:

- Provide group Pre-Employment Transition Services to students
- Represent OVR at IEP meetings
- Provide consultation and resources to students and families
- Collaborate with internal OVR staff and external professionals on local events, programs and initiatives
- Act as a liaison to high schools in conjunction with VR counselors
- Provide general outreach to the public about OVR services
- Provide staff trainings and workshops to a variety of audiences



The key throughout all these services is collaboration – collaboration with families, students, educators and the community – to help students with disabilities achieve success.

Dr. Damian Johnston shares how important collaborative partnerships are with organizations like OVR for the success of high school students with disabilities. "We only have the perspectives we have as educators," she states. "And while those are deep and rich, connecting with others and working collaboratively with someone who focuses primarily on the workplace is critical in helping make sure that there is a plan after school."



From connecting parents and educators to the resources they need for their child's success, to bridging the gap from school to work for high school students with disabilities, our Early Reach coordinators are reaching out early to help youth with disabilities prepare for success in employment and independence because #TheFutureIsNow!



#ILoveMyJobPA

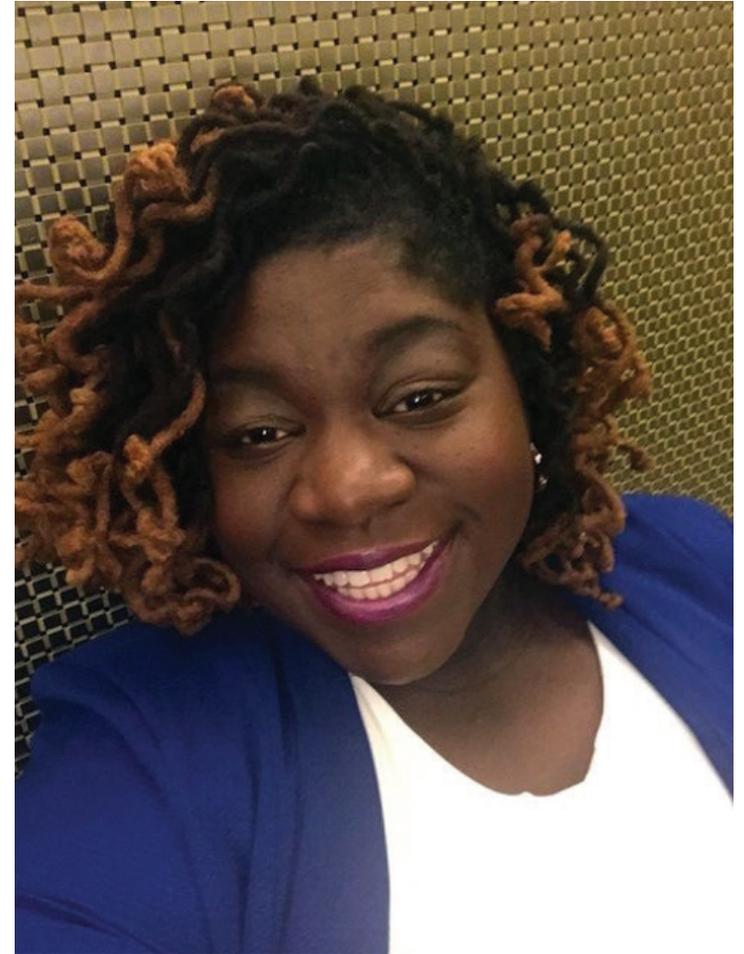
At OVR, we know that diversity is our strength, and, as a lead agency on inclusion and employment for people with disabilities, we have a great appreciation and respect for the variety of backgrounds and characteristics that make our staff unique and, in turn, our agency successful. OVR recruits from geographically-diverse states and universities across the country to attract professionals to Pennsylvania. These professionals include: vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs) and VRC interns; rehabilitation counselors for the deaf & hard of hearing (RCDs) and RCD interns; orientation & mobility specialists (O&Ms) and O&M interns; and vision rehabilitation therapists (VRTs) and VRT interns.

OVR is a nationally recognized leader in the field of vocational rehabilitation and is known as a forward-thinking and creative VR agency committed to improving the quality of life for the individuals we serve. Our employees have opportunities to grow personally and professionally through numerous trainings and outlets for development to ensure that they are continually strengthening their skill set and developing as individuals and professionals. Our staff also enjoy competitive pay and excellent benefits, along with a positive work environment built on mutual respect and professionalism.

SMART Campaign: #ILoveMyJobPA

The SMART (Social Media Alternative Recruitment Tool) campaign was established in 2016 to illustrate the diversity, visibility and success of our VR professionals, as well as share the exciting employment opportunities that are available with OVR. As part of this campaign, several of our staff have taken the time to share, in short video clips, their journey: how they started their career in vocational rehabilitation, their employment experience with OVR and how they are making a positive difference helping customers reach their academic, independent living and employment goals!

For further information on our employment opportunities, please contact:
Hattie McCarter, OVR Recruitment Specialist.
Office: 717-787-2521 | Email: hmccarter@pa.gov



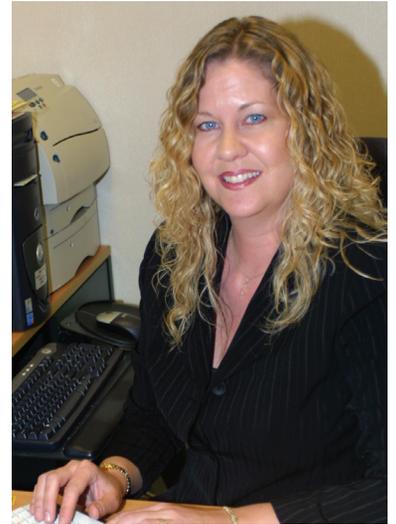
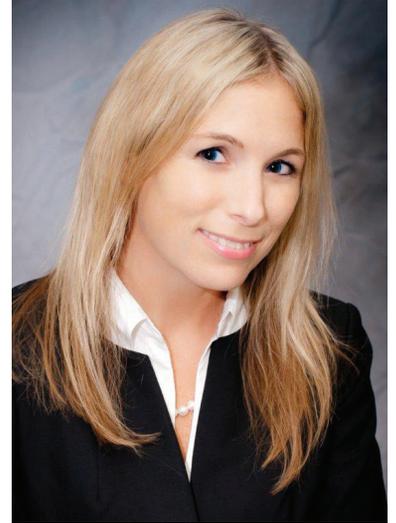
ODHH

The Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) is a key provider of advocacy, information and referral services for Pennsylvanians who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing. ODHH can assist you by answering your questions and providing you with resources regarding hearing aids, sign language laws and technology; offering tailored trainings for your organization; clarifying laws and providing legal resources regarding accommodations; and advocating for equal access at appointments, meetings or in school.

#AccessEqualsSuccess ODHH Success Story

“Life can get interesting when you have genetic progressive sensorineural hearing loss. Nothing stops me though and I have a great profession that really jives well with the diagnosis. I’m a weather anchor.. Most people need to hear me but I do not necessarily need to hear them. As with any professional job, networking is important and that is something I struggle with. In January, I decided to reach out to the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH). A meeting was schedule with Denise Brown and my world changed forever. Denise not only provided me with valuable knowledge to help me succeed, she also helped me network. In just a few short weeks after our meeting, I attended my first ever deaf and hard of hearing meet-up. Later, in the spring, I had the honor of meeting other professionals in the deaf and hard of hearing community who are part of a great organization - the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force. The ODHH opened a lot of doors for me that I knew existed; I just didn’t have the proper key. I’m looking forward to attending more events and getting to know more people in the community.”
– Dave Allen

The Pennsylvania Sign Language Interpreter and Transliterators State Registration Act Stakeholder Group was formed in 2017 by ODHH to discuss concerns regarding the act. Since February of 2017, the group has been meeting monthly to determine what changes to the act should be recommended.



OVR Directors

Central Operations



Ryan Hyde
Director

OVR's Central Operations in Harrisburg coordinates the policies, funding and resources that make it possible to simultaneously serve both Pennsylvanians with disabilities, helping them lead productive, independent lives, and the employers of Pennsylvania, helping them meet their workforce needs.

For more information, please contact us at 717-787-5244 or OVRFeedback@pa.gov.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services



Denise Verchimak
Director

Vocational rehabilitation services help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain or maintain employment. Services are provided to eligible individuals with disabilities, both directly and through a network of approved vendors. Services are provided on an individualized basis. The OVR counselor, during face-to-face interviews, assists customers in selecting their choice of vocational goals, services and service providers.

For more information, please contact us at 717-787-5244 or OVRFeedback@pa.gov.

Hiram G. Andrews Center



Jill Moriconi
Director

Established in 1959, HGAC is one of the world's first and largest comprehensive rehabilitation facilities. HGAC offers a wealth of individualized services, including counseling, evaluation, physical restoration and on-site education at the Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI).

For more information, please contact us at 814-255-8200 or hgac@pa.gov.

Blindness & Visual Services



Joe Strechay
Director

BBVS helps Pennsylvanians who are blind or visually impaired gain the skills they need to live and work independently in their communities. Services include job placement, orientation and mobility training, rehabilitation therapy and independent living skills training.

For more information, please contact us at 717-787-5244 or OVRFeedback@pa.gov.

Contact the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

OVR Central Office

1521 N. 6th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
Local Voice: 717-787-5244
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6351

Erie BBVS

4200 Lovell Place
Erie, PA 16503
Local Voice: 814-871-4401
Toll-free Voice: 866-521-5073

Philadelphia BVRS

801 Market Street, Suite 6034
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Local Voice: 215-560-1900
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6381

Wilkes-Barre BVRS

8 W. Market Street, Suite 200
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
Local Voice: 570-826-2011
Toll-free Voice: 800-634-2060

Allentown BVRS

45 N. Fourth Street
Allentown, PA 18102
Local Voice: 610-821-6441
Toll-free Voice: 800-922-9536

Harrisburg BVRS

Forum Place
555 Walnut Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Local Voice: 717-787-7834
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6352

Philadelphia BBVS

801 Market Street, Suite 6034
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Local Voice: 215-560-5700
Toll-free Voice: 866-631-3892

Wilkes-Barre BBVS

8 W. Market Street, Suite 200
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
Local Voice: 570-826-2361
Toll-free Voice: 866-227-4163

Altoona BVRS

1130 12th Ave., Suite 500
Altoona, PA 16601
Local Voice: 814-946-7240
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6343

Harrisburg BBVS

Forum Place
555 Walnut Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Local Voice: 717-787-7500
Toll-free Voice: 866-375-8264

Pittsburgh BVRS

531 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Local Voice: 412-392-4950
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6371

Williamsport BVRS

The Grit Building, Suite 102
208 W. 3rd Street
Williamsport, PA 17701
Local Voice: 570-327-3600
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6359

Altoona BBVS

1130 12th Ave., Suite 300
Altoona, PA 16601
Local Voice: 814-946-7330
Toll-free Voice: 866-695-7673

Johnstown BVRS

727 Goucher Street, Section 10
Johnstown, PA 15905
Local Voice: 814-255-6771
Toll-free Voice: 800-762-4223

Pittsburgh BBVS

531 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Local Voice: 412-565-5240
Toll-free Voice: 866-412-4072

York BVRS

2550 Kingston Road, Suite 101
York, PA 17402
Local Voice: 717-771-4407
Toll-free Voice: 800-762-6306

DuBois BVRS

199 Beaver Drive
Dubois, PA 15801
Local Voice: 814-371-7340
Toll-free Voice: 800-922-4017

New Castle BVRS

100 Margaret Street
New Castle, PA 16101
Local Voice: 724-656-3070
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6379

Reading BVRS

3602 Kutztown Road, Suite 200
Reading, PA 19605
Local Voice: 610-621-5800
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-0949

Hiram G. Andrews Center

727 Goucher Street
Johnstown, PA 15905
Local Voice: 814-255-8200
Toll-free Voice: 800-762-4211

Erie BVRS

3200 Lovell Place
Erie, PA 16503
Local Voice: 814-871-4551
Toll-free Voice: 800-541-0721

Norristown BVRS

1875 New Hope Street
Norristown, PA 19401
Local Voice: 484-250-4340
Toll-free Voice: 800-221-1042

Washington BVRS

201 W. Wheeling Street
Washington, PA 15301
Local Voice: 724-223-4430
Toll-free Voice: 800-442-6367

Office for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

1521 N. 6th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
Voice/TTY: 717-783-4912
Videophone: 717-831-1928