providing leadership on behalf of Persons with Disabilities as they prepare for and engage in employment and careers

“Working lets me...

keep contributing.”

earn a living.”

be there for the team.”

provide for my family.”

2018 ANNUAL REPORT
Our Mission
To assist eligible New Hampshire citizens with disabilities to secure suitable employment and financial and personal independence by providing rehabilitation services.

Our Vision
NH Vocational Rehabilitation seeks to become an organization committed to fulfilling the needs of customers by providing continuously improving quality services through an effort of teamwork and professionalism.
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message from SRC Chair</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message from NHVR Director</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC Mission, Purpose &amp; Vision</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC Responsibilities</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC Members</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC Committees</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC Activities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VR Program Year In Review</td>
<td>11-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Satisfaction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Success</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC Comments and Recommendations</td>
<td>18-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am pleased to submit the 2018 Annual Report on behalf of the New Hampshire State Rehabilitation Council (NH SRC). As highlighted in previous annual reports, we continue the themes of change and transition into 2018 and beyond. In May of 2018, the SRC convened an emergency meeting and VR announced the intention to enter into an order of selection (OOS) for the first time in NH history. The OOS process spawned several meetings for information gathering and recommendations. Although the SRC voted against support of the institution of the OOS, VR determined the OOS was the only choice given the dire financial situation in which they found themselves.

Since the initial meetings, Commissioner of Education Edelblut and VR Director Lisa Hatz engaged and met with the SRC leadership and the Commissioner has attended SRC meetings and provided timely updates as to the evolving status of VR services. An OOS management group has been developed to discuss procedures ongoing and to advise on how best to open people from delayed status. This group is comprised of SRC members, VR Supervisors, and VR Counselors providing a well-rounded perspective and generating valuable input. An additional consequence to the OOS was the necessity of layoffs within VR. Fortunately, several employees were able to find commensurate positions within different state agencies.

In September, the SRC held its annual day-long retreat. Subject matter continued to center around order of selection information, both federally (guidance) and locally (application) in NH. Fortunately, the wait list was opened and 100 VR customers were placed into active status. Additionally, elections were held and I assumed the role of SRC Chair at that time. Holly Cadwallader was elected to the 1st Vice Chair position and Chris Purington rounds out the team as 2nd Vice Chair. Nancy Rollins, Immediate Past Chair will remain on the Executive Committee at the request of the SRC at large. Nancy has served on the SRC and has a breadth of knowledge that is unsurpassed after many years in state service as well as private non-profits. The SRC is very grateful for her willingness to continue to serve in leadership and support our mission.

We anticipate the coming year will continue to present challenges as the order of selection continues. A working model relative to moving individuals from delayed status to open cases has been developed. The model strives to ensure effective service delivery while balancing staff limitations and ever changing caseloads. The SRC will continue to participate in the OOS management group to provide ongoing support and feedback to VR during this important time.
2018 was a year of unfortunate tumult and hardship for our agency. We were forced, due to financial challenges, to lay off staff, consolidate office space and enter an order of selection. It was very difficult to lose wonderful staff, have to move to a new space and to have a waitlist for serving customers. The essence of the agency is our staff and our customers and I realize that the actions harmed those we most care about as service providers.

With change and difficulty, however, comes strength and resiliency. Our much smaller VR leadership team and counseling staff still managed to serve a lot of customers. They lowered fears of current customers while managing the frustrations of individuals seeking services and being placed on a waitlist. They were true professionals and I am very proud of our team.

Our State Rehabilitation Council had to have many difficult conversations and make difficult decisions as we entered a road we had not been on before. They asked hard questions. They listened to corrective measures we were implementing to ensure a stable and sound fiscal future. I cannot thank our members enough for then volunteering for the Order of Selection Management group. This group is managing the waitlist along with our staff and making great decisions that will place us back on the road to success.

As I look to 2019 I have great hopes for significantly reducing our waitlist, fully staffing our agency and serving individuals with disabilities to assist them in achieving their career goals. I’d like to take an opportunity to thank our Commissioner of Education, Frank Edelblut and Deputy Commissioner Christine Brennan. They were both instrumental in working with me and our staff to place all corrective measures in place to ensure a stable and successful future.

Sincerely and with 2019 Warm Thoughts,

Lisa Hinson-Hatz
VR State Director
NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

Purpose

Providing Leadership on Behalf of Persons with Disabilities and Guidance to Vocational Rehabilitation Programs.

Mission

New Hampshire State Rehabilitation Council, through action and advocacy, partners with New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation (NHVR) to strengthen the agency’s operation and effectiveness in the delivery of quality and timely services to individuals with disabilities, as they prepare for and engage in employment and careers.

Vision

By collaborating with key disability-related organizations and building strong partnerships with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and employers’ groups, the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides leadership and advocacy that increases the number of qualified individuals with disabilities who strive to realize their goals of becoming successfully employed. The SRC maintains and widely publicizes the success of this ongoing relationship. This is evidenced by Congressional and State legislative recognition of the cost-effective benefits of the VR program, as they provide consistent financial support for NHVR services.
NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

The SRC's responsibilities include:

- Reviewing, analyzing and advising in strategic partnership with NHVR services regarding the performance of the VR agency relating to eligibility, including Order of Selection, extent, scope, and effectiveness of VR services and functions that affect an individual’s ability to obtain employment.

- Working in partnership with the state VR program, the SRC develops and reviews state goals established by the VR program, evaluates the effectiveness of the programs and services of the VR agency, and provides a yearly report of progress.

- Providing information and assisting with the development of the unified or combined state plan, plan amendments and needs assessments.

- Conducts and presents an annual customer satisfaction survey to assist the agency in making program improvements and to celebrate successes.

- Prepares and submits an annual report on the status of the VR program.

- Coordinates activities with the other Councils in the state (Independent Living, DD Council and Special Education Council) to avoid duplication of efforts and to develop prosperous relationships to assist in our mission.

- Coordinates the establishment and ongoing relationship with the Independent Living Council and Center for Independent Living program.

- Performs other comparable functions to assist the VR agency, consistent with the purpose of the SRC.
### NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ann Ackerman</td>
<td>Nashua Higher Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larry Ashford</td>
<td>Nashua Advocate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawn Breault</td>
<td>Merrimack Special Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Cadwallader</td>
<td>1st Vice Chair Walpole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Caswell</td>
<td>Bedford Advocate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Darling</td>
<td>Concord Advocate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Dickinson</td>
<td>Concord SILC Chair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa K. Hinson-Hatz</td>
<td>Ex-Officio VR Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corey Kotz</td>
<td>Milford Advocate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Lapointe</td>
<td>Ex-officio Keene VR Counselor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtney Lockwood</td>
<td>Concord Disability Rights Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Morgan</td>
<td>Concord Future In Sight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimm Philips, Rep.</td>
<td>Pembroke Parent Information Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Power, Rep.</td>
<td>Portsmouth Workforce Opportunity Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Purington</td>
<td>2nd Vice Chair Concord Granite State Independent Living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorrie Ripley</td>
<td>Concord Client Assistance Program (CAP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Rioux, Rep.</td>
<td>Nashua Deaf &amp; Hard of Hearing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isadora Rodriguez-Legandre</td>
<td>NH Council on Developmental Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Rollins, Past Chair</td>
<td>New London Easter Seals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Rudis</td>
<td>Merrimack Charles Saia, Chair Governor’s Commission on Disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Smith</td>
<td>Seacoast Mental Health Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Tracey</td>
<td>State Advisory Committee on the Education of Children/Students with Disabilities' (SAC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therese Willkomm</td>
<td>Durham Assistive Technology / UNH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

Advocacy/Outreach
Advocate for NHVR to the State Legislature and the Congressional Delegation. Develop SRC advocacy guideline and internal coordination structure. Develop data to show cost/benefit of the VR program. Develop NHVR success stories. Monitor the committee’s strategic plan accomplishment. Increase the public’s knowledge of NHVR through an SRC outreach program. Develop a SRC Speakers Bureau, deliver presentation sharing NHVR success stories. Provide SRC input into the customer satisfaction survey and customer needs assessment survey.

Governance/Membership Development
Responsible for the review and updating of the NH SRC By-Laws; making recommendations to the full SRC. Participate in review and updating of the current NH SRC Purpose, Mission and Vision statements; make recommendations to the full SRC. Prepare a process for identifying and engaging new Council members to fill positions vacated by Council members vacating and/or terming out of their slot. Assure the membership list is up-to-date; new member applications are prepared and sent to the Governor’s office; and exiting members are acknowledged and thanked for their service.

Policy
Participate in and review the development of VR policies. Monitor Order of Selection and review policy manual regulations.

State Plan
Participate in, review and monitor the development of the State Plan and monitor the multi-agency State Plan. This committee also has responsibility for providing input and recommendation on the activities for the triennial comprehensive statewide needs assessment.
# NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

## Recap of the SRC’s Year – Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| October 2017 | Committee updates were provided by Policy, SBVI, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, State Plan, Advocacy/Outreach and Governance/Membership  
Presentation by Stephen Berwick, NH Department of Education on Fair Hearing & Mediation |
| May 1, 2018 | The Commissioner of Education attends quarterly SRC meeting to provide an overview of the financial state of the VR agency. Discussion of the Agency entering an Order of Selection. |
| May 4, 2018 | An overview of the public hearing on the agency entering an Order of Selection was provided and discussed. SRC members voted not to support the agency entering an Order of Selection at this time. |
| June 26, 2018 | SRC leadership, along with other interested parties met with Department of Education and VR staff during the month to assess resources and to work to find a balance between resources and serving the needs of participants with the goal of serving all customers and exiting out of an Order of Selection.  
At the meeting this month the VR Director provided an overview of VR’s Financial and Operational Plan for 2018 as well as introducing a model for tracking the Order of Selection wait list. |
| September 2018 | SRC Annual Retreat. Topics discussed included:  
- Staffing concerns  
- Releasing 100 customers from wait list  
- VR re-allotment funds received to fund IMPACTT program  
- Presentation on the CSNA  
- Election of Officers, committee report |
Vocational Rehabilitation is a joint State/Federal program that assists eligible individuals with disabilities to become contributing members of their community. To this end, New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation supports the following programs and priorities:

- Rehabilitation Services
- Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Independent Living
- Transition & Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Supported Employment

During Federal Fiscal Year 2018, NH Vocational Rehabilitation:

- Helped 730 individuals with disabilities gain employment
- The average hourly wage was $13.67
- The average hours worked per week was 27
- The average weekly salary was $387
- The average annual salary was $20,158
People with disabilities can work and take advantage of the opportunities available to the citizens of New Hampshire. Yet they face barriers unique to their situation, barriers that prevent them from achieving their goals. Vocational Rehabilitation assists persons with disabilities to achieve their employment goals through the provision of services to address those barriers.

Who Are Our Customers

During Federal Fiscal Year 2018, NH Vocational Rehabilitation....

- Worked with 5,319 eligible customers
- Received 1,907 new applicants

---

Types of Disabilities

- Mental Health: 30%
- Cognitive: 32%
- Physical Disability: 17%
- Hard of Hearing: 6%
- Blind or Visual Impairment: 6%
- Deafness: 2%
- Communicative: 3%
- Other: 4%
NH Vocational Rehabilitation
FY 2018 in Review
October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018

In Fiscal Year 2018:

- NHVR assisted 130 individuals with a Supported Employment goal in achieving their successful outcome.
- NHVR assisted 363 students with disabilities in writing a new Individual Plan for Employment.
- NHVR assisted 16 individuals in completing their Individual Plan for Employment in Self-Employment.
- NHVR recognized five NH businesses at our 10th Annual Employment Leadership Awards.

---

Average Earnings
.. for Federal Fiscal Year 2018
the Average annual earnings of customers before and after rehabilitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$10,818</td>
<td>$20,158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No one should be deprived of an opportunity to recognize and realize their talents and potentialities because of a disability.
Types of Jobs

During Federal Fiscal Year 2018, 730 customers gained employment.

Sources of Revenue

During Federal Fiscal Year 2018, NHVR received:

- Federal Funds: $11,728,998
- State Funds: $3,109,903
- Program Income: $1,573,054
- Total: $16,411,955
Our most recent customer satisfaction score was 78 for the overall agency.

A new Request for Proposals will be going out in early Fiscal year 2019 for the upcoming year’s customer satisfaction scores.

Our priorities in a new customer satisfaction survey will be to determine customer satisfaction with the following:
- Community Rehabilitation Providers
- Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Business Relations
- Satisfaction with VR Staff
- Client Assistance Program
NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

The SRC continues to develop linkages and forge productive relationships with a number of Councils and Boards, including:

- State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Committee
- Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Advisory Committee
- Governor’s Commission on Disability (GCD)
- Granite State Independent Living
- Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)
- Client Assistance Program
- Parent Information Center
- NH Council on Developmental Disabilities
- NH Department of Health and Human Services: Bureau of Developmental Services and the Bureau of Mental Health Services
A VR Counselor recently sent the following success story to share with our SRC and staff:

While I was in the café waiting for my meeting to start, a dad of one of my former (successfully placed!) students approached me. He recognized me and wanted to let me know that his son was still employed at Home Depot and was doing great after 4 years of employment thanks to the work of NHVR. He mentioned that he had heard that NHVR has gone through some rough times recently. He said that as a parent of a NHVR success story, he values what we do and said that if we ever need someone to speak up on our behalf, he would do so gladly. I thanked him and let him know that we would definitely contact him if needed.

Another great VR Counselor sent me this success story:

A participant came to us after sustaining a disabling physical injury at a previous place of employment that rendered him unable to perform his labor intensive job. He had limited education and his work history and skills were all physical in nature. In working with his counselor his plan was developed to upskill by participating in a short-term training program through the community college for Microelectronics. This program was developed in conjunction with a local business to train future workers. As part of this program each student is guaranteed an interview with the business. This participant worked with his counselor and participated in the Work Ready NH program prior to beginning the program, so he was prepared for the interview and was hired for a 90-day probationary period! This participant has recently completed his probationary period and has been hired permanently by the business. This case is scheduled to close successfully within the next few months!

Even during a year of tremendous change and challenge our VR Counselors and Community Rehabilitation Providers maintained their focus on serving individuals with disabilities. Thank you to all our staff that played a role in the success of our customers.
NH State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

Throughout the year and as part of the State Planning Process the SRC provides advice and recommendations to the Agency in order to improve services. This year the recommendations provided to the Agency are listed below along with the Agency’s responses.

Comment: After the State Rehabilitation Council retreat Council members identified a number of presentation/discussion topics to be included in upcoming Council meetings and asked the Agency to assist in identifying and securing presenters/facilitators for the following topics:

- Understanding and ‘mapping’ the NHVR process from application through successful employment
- Client Assistance Program
- VR data - IT system; program; financial; staff
- Transition services for Youth and Students
- Effectiveness of Customer Supports - How we measure success
- Status of relationships with our ‘working’ partners - SWIB; Technical Schools; Community Colleges; etc.

Response: The Agency agreed to assist the Council in this endeavor.

Comment: One Council member asked the Agency to review the VR process and look at ways to simplify the process for participants.

Response: The Agency agreed to include this in Program Year 2018 and 2019 activities as part of the Agency’s ongoing efforts to provide efficient and effective services to persons with disabilities.

The annual assessment of customer satisfaction was completed by RKM Research and Communications, Inc. on behalf of the Agency and the SRC. A total of 440 surveys were completed as part of this endeavor. The average American Customer Satisfaction Index Score (ACSI) among all VR customers surveyed was 78. Results were provided by RKM Research and Communications to the SRC with
opportunity for question and comment. No recommendations from the Council were made as a result of this opportunity.

On 5/1/18 the SRC met and asked the state plan be amended with the following:

This Council has voted that the NH State Rehabilitation Council not support the Agency entering an Order of Selection. This recommendation from the Council was based on the following input and recommendations that have been provided to the Agency:

The Council was not fully informed in a timely manner that there were any concerns relative to the Agency’s finances.

The Council was not provided with the information, other than broad statements, of how the Agency determined that there are not sufficient resources.

The Council was not provided with any information about what strategies and actions were taken to try to avoid or mitigate the current financial situation.

The Council was not provided with information about why layoffs were needed; nor what the impact of these layoffs will be.

The Council noted that this activity occurred quickly without notification and involvement of the SRC and before they can support this action they would like to be included and informed about the financial and programmatic efficacy of the Agency.

The Council noted that additional options need to be explored before entering into an Order of Selection.

The Council does not feel that they have enough information to support the Agency in this action.

The Council noted that it had received various statements from the public and others of no confidence in the Director and placed it in the record.

The Council also noted that they would like to revisit the issue at the June meeting when there is opportunity for the Council to review the financial information and the actions that have been taken and are planned.
The Council noted that as unfortunate as it is, this is an opportunity and expressed the desire to work with the Agency and the Department in ensuring that those with disabilities get the services they need to be successful.

The Council also recognizes that while the vote is a recommendation and the Agency may decide to enter the Order based on additional information, that there needs to be more timely and complete information flow in the future.

The Council further recommends that:

The Agency at a minimum debrief the SRC at each meeting as to the status of the Agency’s financial situation, case load counts, and plans.

The Agency provide a complete overview with details on how this occurred, along with what other options were explored and the impact of these options.

The Agency at a minimum update the SRC executive leadership on financial standing and any concerns; this to include meeting monthly between DOE/VR and SRC leadership and that the Council revisit this decision at the June Meeting.

That the Agency provide the council with financial analysis, including any audit information.

That the Agency provide a detailed plan of how the Agency plans to get out of an Order of Selection in the future, with timelines.

That the Agency provide up to date Customer and Financial information to the Council.

The Council requests that an independent review of the Agency be conducted, including programmatic and financials, and specifically cited the LBA’s office.
Contact the SRC

**Call:** 603-271-3348  
Sue Roma, SRC liaison

**Fax:** 603-271-7095

**Write:**  
Chair, State Rehabilitation Council  
NH Vocational Rehabilitation  
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 20  
Concord, NH 03301

**Website:**  
http://education.nh.gov/career/vocational/advisory.htm

**Attend a Meeting or Public Forum:**  
The State Rehabilitation Council meetings and Public Forums are open to the public. SRC meetings are generally held in October, January, March and June with a special retreat each September. Public forums are generally held in February or March. The meeting locations, dates and times are posted on the SRC webpage.

http://education.nh.gov/career/vocational/advisory.htm

**Apply for Membership:**  
If you are interested in becoming a member of the SRC, you can contact Sue Roma, SRC Liaison at 603-271-3348.