

1-2011

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services Highlights 2009-2010

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

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Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR

HIGHLIGHTS
2009 ~ 2010

Maine Department of Labor

Mission

*The Maine Department of Labor is committed to serving
Maine workers and businesses by:*

- **Assisting individuals, families and communities when jobs are lost;**
- **Helping people prepare for and find jobs;**
- **Protecting workers on the job; and**
- **Researching and analyzing employment data to support job growth.**



Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Mission

*The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services works to provide full
access to employment, independence and community
integration for people with disabilities.*



Bureau Director's Message

~ *The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.* ~

William Arthur Ward



This publication is intended to provide a snapshot of the current state of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services with highlights of both our accomplishments and challenges. We hope that you will find it helpful.

Much to cheer about and still so much more to do...

A great deal has occurred in the two years since we last published the BRS Highlights document. In early 2009, the Bureau and other VR programs across the country were fortunate to receive supplemental grant awards pursuant to the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**.

The ARRA funds Maine received were allocated to the state via three funding streams: **General VR (\$2,109,034), General IL (\$242,367), Blind VR (\$239,367), and Older Blind IL (\$119,998)**. At the time these funds were approved, both the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) were struggling to meet service demands during a time of dwindling state resources.

In the face of projections of still further reductions in program services dollars, the BRS Leadership Team committed the ARRA grant funds to achieving a future vision where people with disabilities in Maine who want to work are able to get what they need to attain, retain, and/or sustain employment when they need it. Each of the divisions within BRS was challenged to develop and implement specific measurable improvement initiatives designed to eradicate critical barriers to service for VR customers. Details of this project work are highlighted in the pages that follow, including:

... Elimination of the wait for services experienced by customers of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;

... Collaborative projects to expand independent living services and expand outreach/program options for Mainers with low-incidence disabilities, including Mainers who are deaf/blind and Mainers who are deaf, hard of hearing and late deafened.

... Replacement of the Office of Rehabilitation Services Information System (ORSIS); The Bureau completed the State Request for Proposal and procurement process and recently executed a contract to replace ORSIS with a 21st century case management system.

Thank you for taking a moment to review these highlights for calendar years 2009 and 2010.

Our work remains both exhilarating and challenging. Much has been accomplished in the areas of financial management and service quality challenges. And, there is so much more to do...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill C. Duson".

Jill C. Duson,
Bureau Director

~**You can complain because roses have thorns, or you can rejoice because thorns have roses.** ~ Ziggy ~

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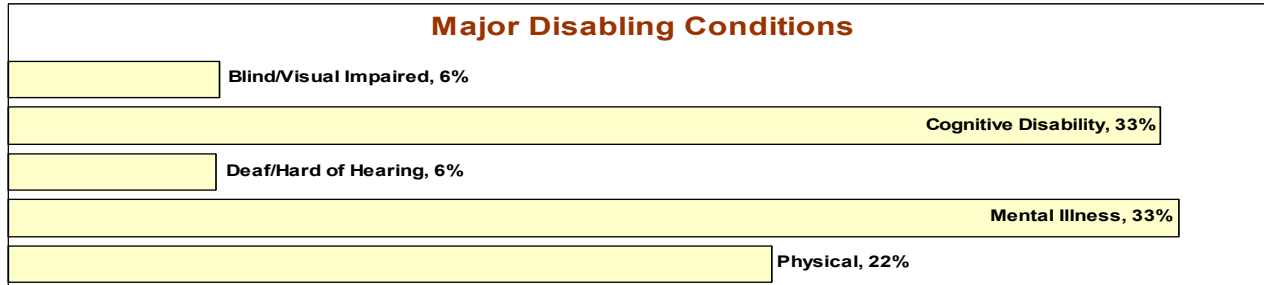
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2010 Overview

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) SERVICES: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, establishes program eligibility and the scope of services provided through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI). Included are vocational counseling and guidance, physical restoration services, education and vocational skills training, and job placement services.

❖ **10,889** Number of Mainers with disabilities assisted by BRS



❖ **4,208** Clients who received services under an employment plan

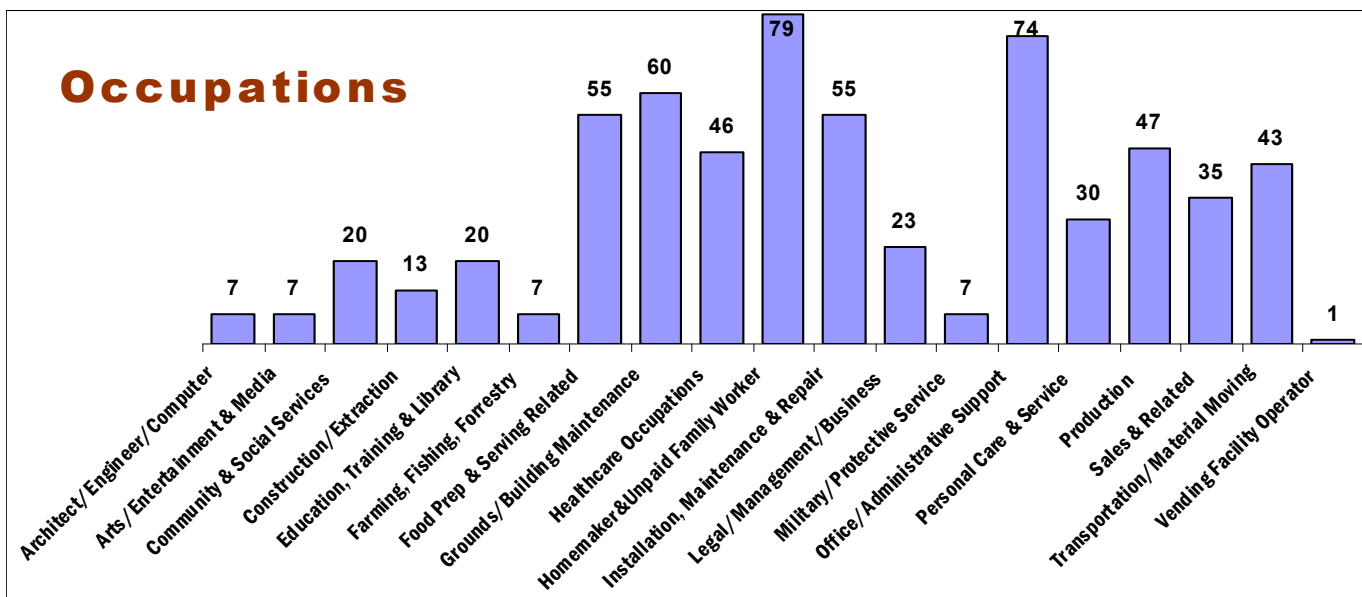
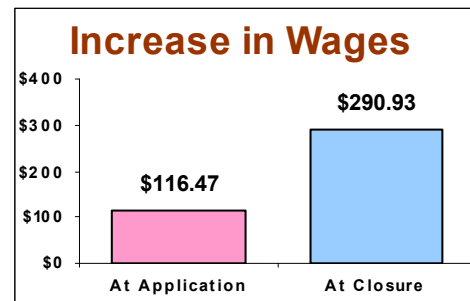
❖ **42.6** Average number of months a client receiving services under an employment plan spends from application to closure

❖ **722** Individual cases closed successfully

❖ **\$291** The average wage per week for successful individuals

❖ **250%** The average increase in weekly earnings per successful closure

❖ **48%** Average number of people who became employed in community-based jobs after receiving funded services



Revenue and Expenditures

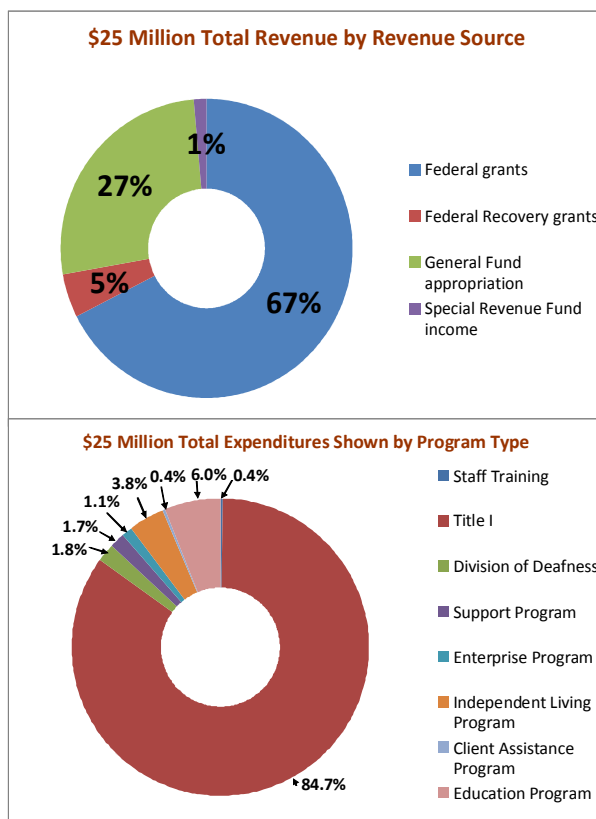
The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services receives the majority of its funding from the federal Department of Education's Title I grant program. This grant provides funding for rehabilitative services to eligible clients. This grant has a 21% state matching requirement which is met using State General Funds.

Other federal grants are: State Independent Living Services, Independent Living-Older Blind, Supported Employment, Client Assistance, and In-Service Training. Some of these grants have state matching requirements.

The expenditures of the federal grants are legally restricted to the purposes specified in the grant award agreements.

The Bureau was also awarded additional Title I and Independent Living grants funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These funds are being used to expand the programs.

Special Revenue income is received from the Business Enterprise Program (cafeteria and vending machine facilities) managed by DBVI and from telecommunication funding received from the Public Utilities Commission and managed by the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. The use of Special Revenue funds is restricted to specific purposes.



Program and Funding Source	Total	General Fund	Federal Fund	Recovery and Reinvestment	Special Revenue Fund
Title I – DVR	\$17,071,820	3,307,482	12,872,579	891,759	
Title I – DBVI	\$4,393,143	956,996	3,244,909	191,238	
Independent Living - DVR	\$296,291	30,077	193,522	72,692	
Independent Living - DBVI	\$666,684	397,986	225,000	43,698	
Supported Employment - DVR	\$252,000		252,000		
Supported Employment - DBVI	\$48,000		48,000		
Staff Training	\$69,951	11,845	58,106		
Education Program - DBVI	\$1,516,838	1,516,838			
Division for the Deaf	\$332,275	161,675			170,600
Long Term Support - DVR	\$278,840	278,840			
Business Enterprise Program	\$172,482				172,482
Total	\$25,098,324	\$6,661,739	\$16,894,116	\$1,199,389	\$343,082



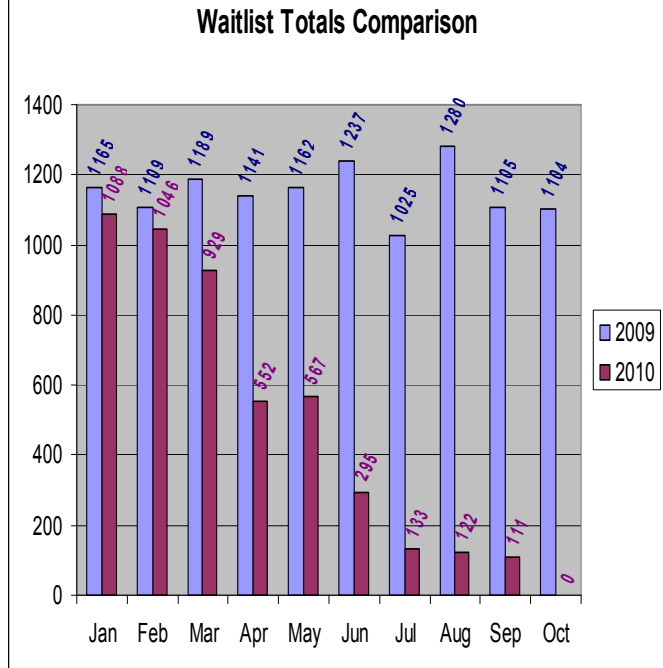
DVR

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Maine's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) assists eligible individuals with disabilities who wish to achieve or retain employment in the community. Any individual who is committed to work and has a disability that creates a barrier to employment is encouraged to apply. In an effort to improve services to Maine people with disabilities, DVR took on an aggressive multi-staged project to eliminate its wait list for cost services. Since 2001, there has been an order of selection and wait list in place for individuals to receive services. We are proud and thrilled to report that as of October 1, 2010 there is no longer a wait list for cost services for people to receive services. DVR tackled this project aggressively starting in January, 2009 by:

- ◆ Targeting and changing business practices that were not efficient or central to core mission.
- ◆ Engaging key **partners** within the workforce development and human services systems to coordinate services and leverage funds.
- ◆ Developing a goal of providing the **“right service at the right time”** to its consumers by evaluating each major process point with consumers.

Using Recovery Act money for the project: **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009** funding allowed the department to hire limited-period positions, providing they offer support to Title I applicants/clients. The time limited project staff (7 Rehabilitation Assistants and 9 Rehabilitation Counselor Is) assisted DVR to implement our streamlined service delivery process. These funds were targeted to achieve sustainable system improvements from which our customers will continue to benefit long after the stimulus funds and the project positions are gone.



In addition to eliminating the wait list, DVR has undertaken some **cost savings measures** to help stretch our case service dollars. Some of these measures include: contracting directly with manufacturers to lower the cost to the state for purchasing hearing aids, updating transportation reimbursement protocol, developing guidelines for counselors when purchasing computers and making referrals for job development. DVR has also purchased a new **case management system** which will **improve efficiency** by providing better case flow and case management support, including improved reporting, remote access, centralized database, and integrated fiscal operations.



DVR by the Numbers

Individuals Served in 2010

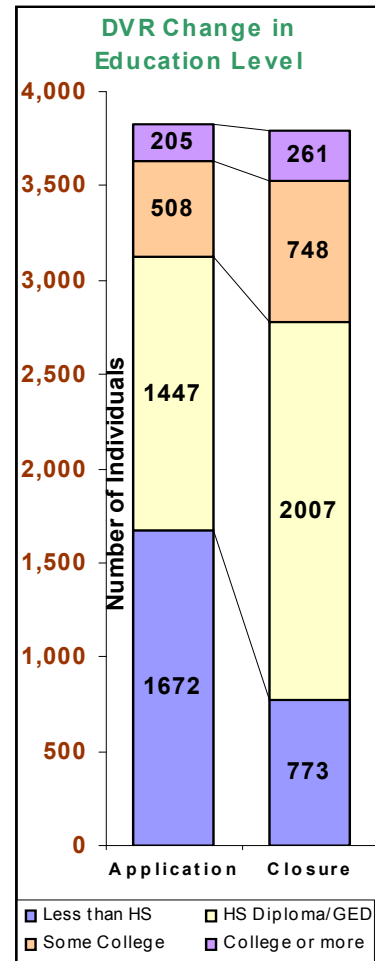
- 3,133** New Applicants
- 2,857** Found Eligible for Services
- 3,620** Receive Services through Employment Plans
- 573** Individuals Placed in Employment

Employment Outcomes

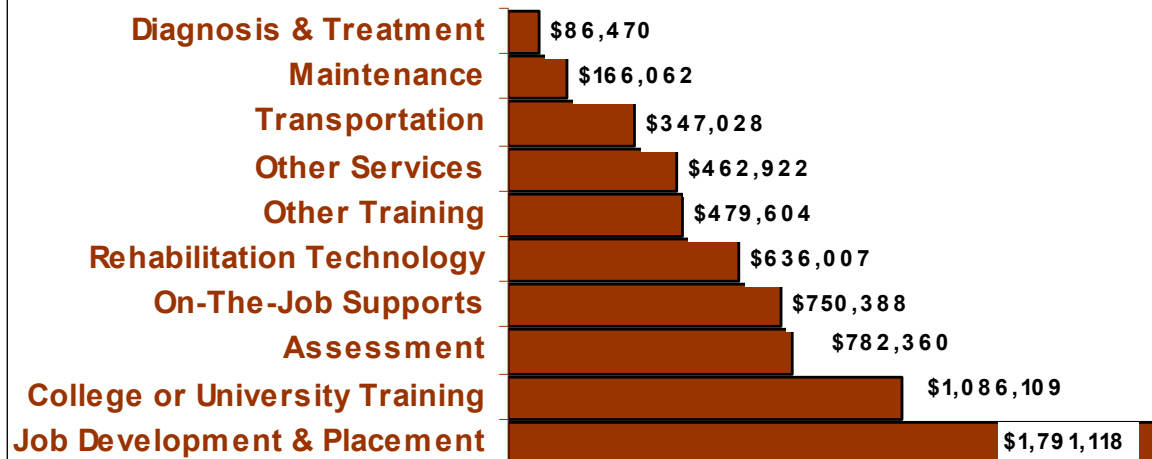
- \$116.32** Average Weekly Wage at Application
- \$316.43** Average Weekly Wage at Closure
- 272%** Increased Earning Capacity

Age at Application

	#	%
13 - 24	1608	42%
25 - 54	1891	49%
55 - 64	297	8%
65 +	38	1%
Totals	<u>3834</u>	<u>100%</u>



DVR Case Service Categories & Cost



The Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) provides many services to individuals who are blind or have low vision. Services may include individual counseling and guidance related to employment and adjustment to blindness issues, use of adaptive technology, low vision therapy, alternative skill training in communication such as braille, instruction to develop independent travel skills (orientation and mobility), and instruction of daily living skills geared to being more self-sufficient. These services are provided through various programs, including:

- ◆ **Vocational Rehabilitation:** Primarily for working age adults who are seeking employment. Services may include individual vocational counseling and guidance, vocational assessment, orientation and mobility instruction, low vision services, independent living services (vision rehabilitation), and more.
- ◆ **Business Enterprise:** Provides training and support to manage and operate snack bars, cafeterias, and vending machine facilities on state, federal and municipal properties.
- ◆ **Independent Living Services (IL):** For individuals who are older and are blind or have visual impairments. Provides training in adaptive skills and alternative techniques for accomplishing daily tasks that enable the individual to be more self-sufficient.
- ◆ **Education Services for Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired:** Provides for adaptive instruction services to students in home or local schools related to academics and independence.

In 2010, DBVI provided services to more than 750 people seeking employment through its VR Program. In addition, the DBVI IL program has assisted more than 400 individuals who are older and blind in learning the compensatory skills needed to remain independent in their homes and communities. DBVI also provided 280 children, who are blind or visually impaired, with specialized educational services that assist them to access their education curriculum and prepare for life (including employment) after graduation. Most of these educational services are direct instructional services and technical assistance within their school system as part of their Individual Education Program (IEP).



DBVI by the Numbers

Individuals Served in 2010

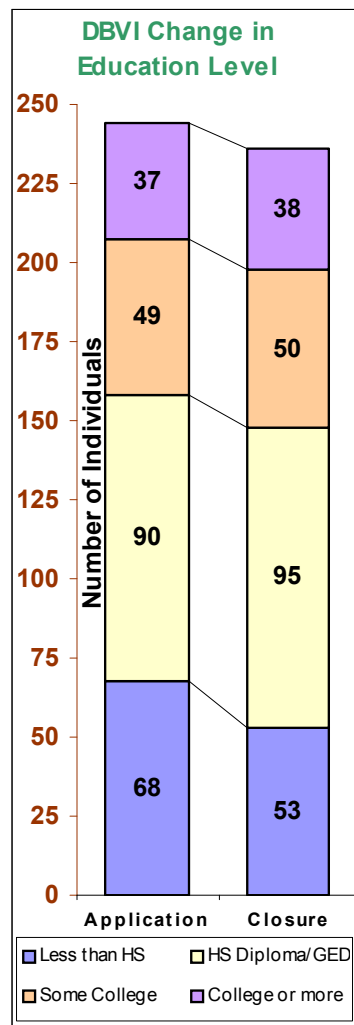
- 190** New Applicants
- 175** Found Eligible for Services
- 588** Received Services through Employment Plans
- 149** Successful Outcomes

Employment Outcomes

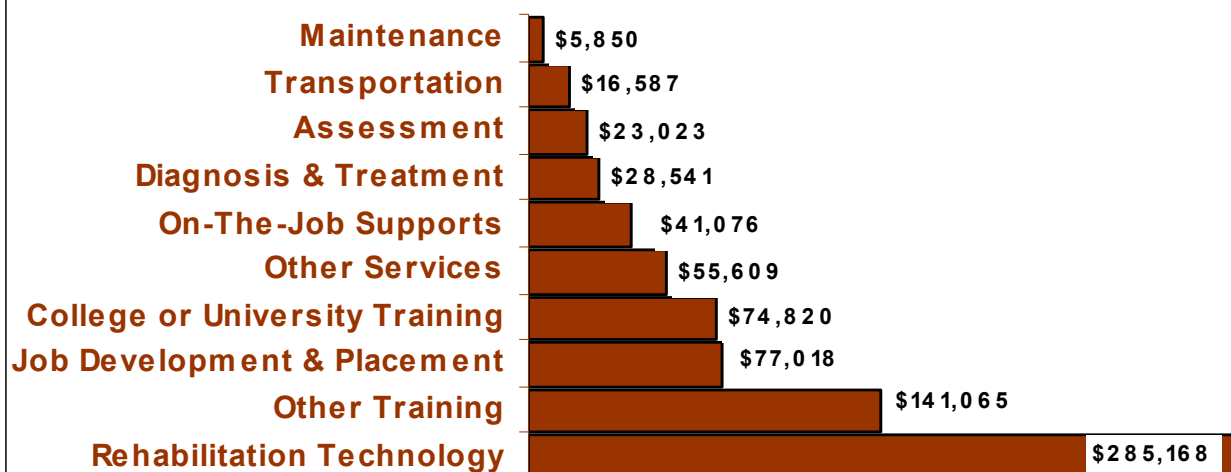
- \$115.51** Average Weekly Wage at Application
- \$189.43** Average Weekly Wage at Closure
- 164%** Increased Earning Capacity

Age at Application

	#	%
13 - 24	26	11%
25 - 54	98	41%
55 - 64	30	12%
65 +	87	36%
Totals	241	100%



DBVI Case Service Categories & Cost



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - DBVI Projects

DBVI embarked upon six innovative projects to increase employment and independent living opportunities for people with visual impairments in Maine.

- **Building Employer Relationships:** A collaborative effort with **The Iris Network**, in Portland, that utilizes their vast network of business relationships to create “real work” training sites for DBVI consumers. Trainees work in real employment settings, gain skills, and compete for positions at the host business and similar employers.
- **College Preparatory:** This was a collaboration between DBVI, **The Iris Network, Catholic Charities Maine – Vision Services, and the University of Maine**, Orono. This was an intense one-week program offered to Maine’s high school juniors, seniors and college freshmen with visual impairments. The students were exposed to the higher level of expectations in college, and strategies to become self-advocates for their own college success.
- **Customer Claims Representative Training:** The **Bureaus of Rehabilitation Services and Unemployment Compensation** joined together to write programs for computer software that audibly reads computer screens to persons who are blind, and trains DBVI clients to use the adaptive programs in performing the job of Unemployment Insurance Claims Representative. Trainees gain the skills necessary to become employed in this position or in a similar position, in the private sector.
- **Staff Training for Transition from High School to the World of Work:** This project offers a number of training components mapped out sequentially throughout a year. It improves DBVI’s infrastructure for working with partners related to the unique needs of transition aged youth, who are blind or have low vision, by increasing the capacity for all staff in Maine’s blindness system, in preparing this population for life after graduation from high school.
- **Deaf-Blind Interpreter & Support Service Provider Training:** This collaborative effort between the **DBVI, Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened, the Helen Keller National Center, the Maine Education Center for the Deaf, and the University of Southern Maine Interpreter Training Program** was used to build capacity and availability of professional interpreters and volunteer Support Service Providers for adults who are deaf-blind in Maine.
- **Community Connections Project:** DBVI and **The Iris Network** are working on this initiative to enhance current activities that bring persons with visual impairments together in a social interaction environment, where the power of immersion and peer mentoring is used to teach self-advocacy skills.



mma_kids_with_shirts

Don Grady is a shining example of how Maine DVR assists people who face the potential loss of a passionate career when an unexpected injury occurs. In his case, a back injury caused him to face the possibility of no longer being a direct trainer of martial arts, a field he had been involved in since the age of 10, and for which he won numerous awards and championships. Martial arts were a significant part of his life and his identity. His injury caused him to struggle with the question: "Where do I go from here?"

With the support of his former martial arts mentor, his Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Adra Lovley, and consultant, David Hill from Maine's Small Business Development Center, Don started down the path to develop his own business with the goal of training martial arts instructors, who have basic knowledge, to further develop their teaching skills to help adults and children.



Don developed teaching techniques which would enable him to move minimally and safely. Utilizing inspirational and motivational techniques, his methods include detailed description of correct form, watching his students work, and repeatedly critiquing their skills toward refinement of their form to the best of their abilities.

Don applied for DVR assistance after attempting to develop his own studio and realizing he lacked the skills needed to be successful.

Sandy, his friend at the time (now his wife), was instrumental in offering her knowledge of bookkeeping and encouragement for him to learn business development skills.

According to his VR Counselor, Don cooperatively and enthusiastically worked to develop a small business plan which ultimately led to the fruition of his dream. Don applied for and secured a bank loan to purchase a building and property which became the home for his studio. Each month, Don, Adra and David meet to review his progress, and his budget and marketing strategies, which include a bright red roof easily seen by people passing in cars on Rte. 1 in Waldoboro, ME, as well as by diners enjoying a meal at the famous Moody's Diner.

Admittedly, there were times when Don felt impatient, thinking that the "careful steps of preparation" involved in developing a small business were keeping him from actually opening the new facility. Through perseverance, he pursued the necessary steps which led him to where he is today. Don now recognizes the value of his hard work and expresses gratitude for the help he received to "lay a strong foundation for small business planning and success." He looks forward to continuing on the path toward business stability and growth. For further information about Don's business, please visit his website at: www.dongradysmmaacademy.com.



VILLAGE CANDLE STORY



Charlene Ouelet wanted to get her life on track and get back to work. She was receiving rehabilitation services from the DBVI and our partners at the Iris Network for her blindness, but she knew she needed

more. Charlene was experiencing dual sensory loss of both vision and hearing, and requested rehabilitation training at the Helen Keller National Center in New York. DBVI helped her to prepare for this rigorous program and, upon her return, linked her up with the new Job Training Project at the Iris Network funded by DBVI through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Job Training Project helped Charlene locate a work experience in a manufacturing and distribution business employing more than 70 people in Topsham. Paul Aldrich, owner of the Village Candle, said "Offering Charlene a chance, fit our company culture and values." Aldrich further stated, "I did not know what it would take to hire someone with a vision and hearing loss, but I trusted that the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired had the answers."

Charlene was offered a three month work experience in the Finance Department using state of the art adaptive equipment such as a screen magnification program, a video magnifier, and an amplified telephone. "The accommodations worked very well, and Charlene made a very smooth transition. She has become a model employee," said Aldrich. In summing up her experience Charlene said, "My co-workers are very helpful and the work is challenging and interesting. The Village Candle is a great place to work and I love their products!"

This story has a truly happy ending. At the completion of a very successful work experience, Charlene was hired by the company as a permanent, part-time employee in the Finance Department. "The Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired stood by me through some difficult times and provided the services I needed to get a great job. I could not have asked for more!"





Nancy Melanson and John Shattuck, DDHHLD



Annual Tea Award Recipients: Left to Right: Mark Myers, Debbie Myers, Yuri Shepard-Kegl, Rod MacInnes, Sherry Walrath, Gloria Bernier, Patty Sarchi & Othello, Absent: Jane Gallivan



Jonathan Connick, Chair of the Commission for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing & Late-Deafened presents the Clifton F. Rodgers Award to Rod MacInnes.

The Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened

was established to “provide advocacy for the rights of deaf, hard-of-hearing and late deafened persons in the areas of employment, education, legal aid, health care, social services, finance, housing, and other personal assistance.” As a part of its mission to serve this population, the DDHHLD provides, through a contract with Maine Center on Deafness, the administration of the:

- **Telecommunications Equipment Program (TEP)** enabling people with disabilities to access telephone services and
- **Civil Rights/Advocacy** ensuring equitable access to goods and services for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or late deafened.

The DDHHLD also provides information/referral and advocacy services, specifically focused on access to State agencies. This past year the Division provided this direct service to 250 people, and received approximately 3000 “hits” to our service resource guide web site www.maine.gov/rehab/dod .

In 2008, the DDHHLD and the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened developed a Five-Year Plan based on past statewide needs assessments. The goal of this plan is to “Ensure that Maine citizens who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or late deafened have equal access to participate in all activities and opportunities of employment, recreation, government, state and community services.” To access a copy of the Council’s Five-Year Plan, connect to the Division’s web site at www.maine.gov/rehab/dod.



Purpose: The division was established in 2006 to provide non-operational technical support services within the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), which result in systems improvement and assures the delivery of quality services consistent with the BRS mission.

Areas for General Consultation and Technical Assistance

- ☆ **Project Management**
- ☆ **Effective Use of Performance Data**
- ☆ **Case Management and Quality Assurance**

◆ **BRS Partnership with DHHS Yields Results:**

SIQA works closely with the **Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)**, the **Office of Adult Mental Health Services (OAMHS)** and the **Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disabilities (OACPD)**, to assure effective delivery of quality employment services across systems. This year, both the OAMHS and the OACPD adopted BRS standards for community employment services. Now, for the first time in Maine's history, employment service providers operate with the same quality standards, regardless of the funding source for those services. Additional collaboration is underway that also engages the **Institute for Community Inclusion** to design and implement a comprehensive Workforce Development System for Employment Specialists, which will include basic certification training, advanced topical training, and a mentoring component.

◆ **Making Data and Technology Work for BRS:**

Advances in technology offer great opportunities to people with disabilities and BRS. SIQA provides technical support to many projects, and most recently received the **MDOL Teamwork Award** with colleagues from **DBVI** and the **Bureau of Unemployment Compensation** for a successful training project for individuals who are blind. Accurate and timely data, accessible materials and effective use of the internet have been key to many initiatives, including DVR's **NoQ4U** project and efforts with the **DHHS** to evaluate and improve our employment outcomes. With the **Muskie School of Public Service** and **Bureau of Employment Services**, SIQA played an integral role in the redesign of <http://employmentforme.org> for individuals with disabilities, employers and providers. Most excitedly, SIQA is leading the procurement of **AWARE VR for BRS**, which will replace our antiquated electronic case management system by September 2011 to better support quality service delivery.

◆ **Strengthening Relationships with Our Business Partners:**

A pilot, entitled, "**We Mean Business**," is in full swing as consultants from the **CareerCenter** were paired with BRS staff to contact health care sector companies in the greater Augusta/Waterville area. Brief interviews were conducted with over a dozen of these businesses to learn more about their operations and, particularly, their hiring practices and challenges. The encouraging results from these initial outreach efforts included one large hospital beginning to use the **Maine Job Bank** to post vacancies; a new offering of soft skills training at the **Rockland CareerCenter**; the identification of specific occupational training needs (e.g., pharmacists, CAN-M); and increased informational interviewing opportunities for job seekers with disabilities. The next phase of this initiative, in 2011, will move to businesses in the **IT** sector and conclude with the **Hospitality/Recreation** industry. The data gathered through this pilot effort will help shape an integrated model for future **DOL/Business Relations** that supports diversity in the workplace.



Joshua Howe demonstrates the AWARE VR client management system to Joe Roquebecil at the 2010 Statewide conference



Challenges Met – Road Ahead

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation:

Now that **DVR** has met the goal of eliminating the waitlist for all people in all categories, we will need to remain vigilant in our efforts to maintain no wait list by collecting data regarding our expenditures/case costs, numbers of clients entering our system, counselor case load sizes, and how quickly clients move through our services. Ensuring the availability of our services and maintaining no wait list will also be challenging as costs continue to rise, and available state and federal funds are being cut. In addition, Maine's overall economy is worse than it has been in two decades which makes it much more difficult to find quality work placements for our clients.



Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired:

The division implemented a strategy that would increase the number of competitive closures. **DBVI** has had difficulty consistently meeting the prescribed level of competitive closures, but not only did DBVI meet this standard in 2010, it has now met this criterion standard for the past three consecutive years.

DBVI, at the direction of the state legislature, conducted a study to determine the current and future needs of residents of Maine who are blind or have low vision. This challenge was met by convening a large group of stakeholders that focused on the three major programs administered by DBVI. The outcome was a comprehensive report that laid out a ten-year plan to address the identified needs.

The Road Ahead includes a Comprehensive evaluation of the DBVI Education of Blind Children Program, an increase in public education and outreach activities, and to achieve a 100% level of accessibility of agency documents.



Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened:

During 2009, staff of the **DDHLD** and members of the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened began to implement initiatives prescribed by the Commission's 5 year plan. This plan is a comprehensive and ambitious effort to influence a broad array of disciplines, interests and unique populations, while preserving the integrity of the Division and the Commission's basic values of inclusion, collaboration, leadership and empowerment. Some of the more notable goals met are the installation of video phones (VP) for all Deaf state employees and American Sign Language fluent service providers. VPs were also installed in all 11 CareerCenters throughout the state. The Commission added to its statutory authority by having all members appointed by the Governor, and including "Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened" in its name and charge. In 2010 the Division and Commission has continued to implement time-defined strategies that will bring improvements to the overall range and depth of services and opportunities, which to date have not been fully available to the deaf, hard-of-hearing and late deafened citizens of Maine.



Bruce Archer and Flash at the 2010 BRS Statewide Conference.





Lewiston staff at the 2010 BRS Statewide Conference



RSA Commissioner Lynnae Ruttledge and BRS Director Jill Duson at BRS Statewide Conference



Portland staff at the 2010 BRS Statewide Conference

The Office of the State Accessibility Coordinator

Maine's Accessibility Coordinator is housed in BRS. The office provides training and technical assistance to all departments, reviews compliance under the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** Section 504, and responds to complaints on accessibility from the public.

Highlights of the past year include --

- As part of a statewide ADA Coalition, affiliated with the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center network, the Accessibility Coordinator works for community access. The Coalition organized the Denis Pratt ADA Awards, which Governor John E. Baldacci presented to businesses, individuals and public agencies.
- In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the ADA, Governor Baldacci reaffirmed Maine's commitment to the principles of equality, inclusion, and full accessibility. By issuing an Executive Order, he directed that all State of Maine Departments review their communication accessibility, grievance procedures, employment practices, and staff training for ADA compliance.

Challenges for 2011 –

- Ensure departments maintain their ADA Coordinator capacity.
- Promulgate resource materials and trainings to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of websites, audiovisual materials, and other communication media, working with the Information Technology Accessibility Committee.



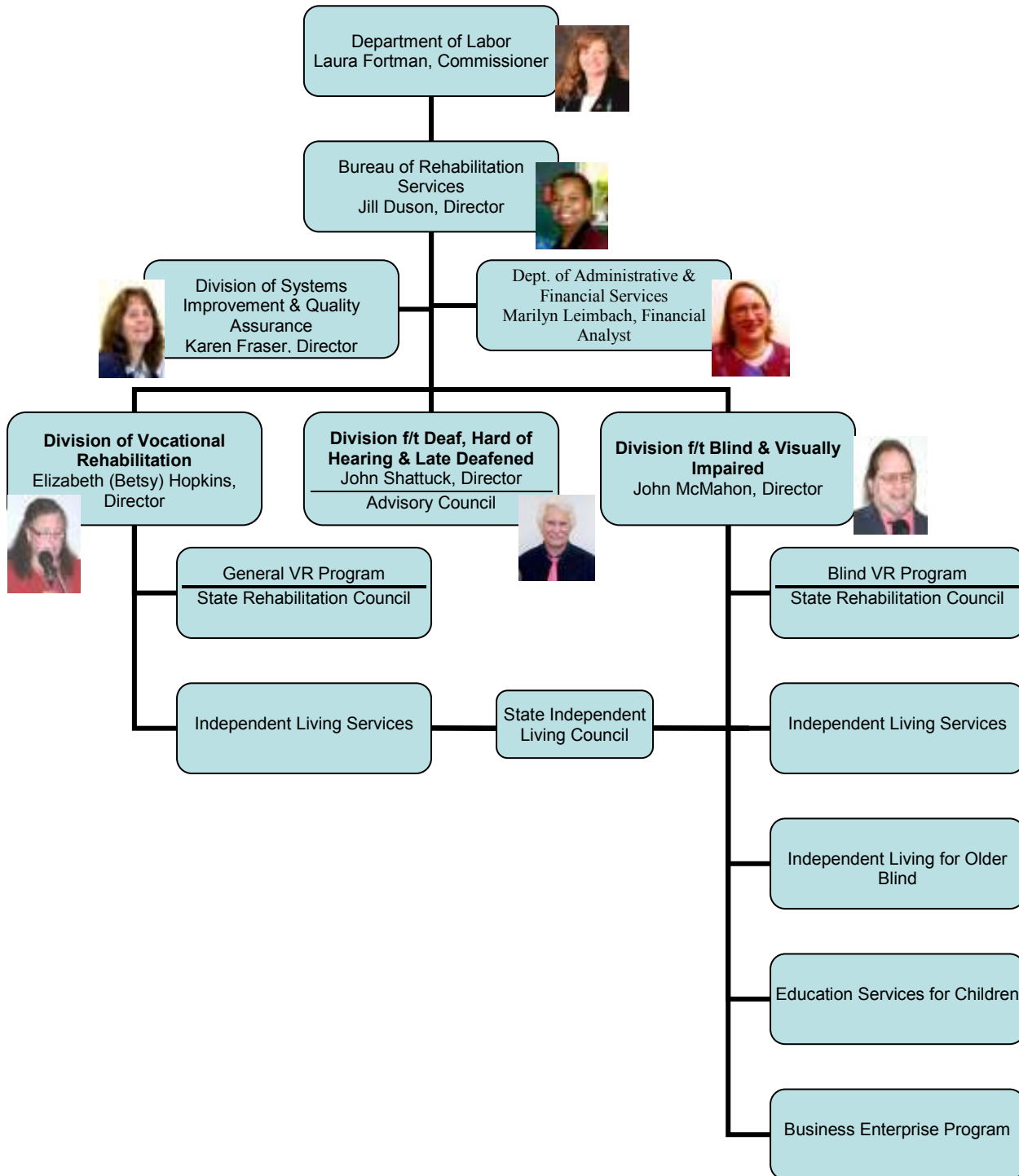
Everson Stinson and Dale Ruopp



BRS staff at 2010 Statewide Conference

Organizational Structure

150 Staff deliver public vocational rehabilitation and independent living services through three primary divisions.



BRS Office Directory

Locations & Phone Numbers

Southern	
185 Lancaster Street Portland , ME 04101-2453 207-771-5627 or 1-877-594-5627 TTY: 1-888-817-7113 Fax: 207-775-7870	5 Mollison Way Lewiston , ME 04240-5805 207-753-9000 or 1-800-741-2991 TTY: 877-796-9833 Fax: 207-753-9051
Central	
21 Enterprise Drive, Suite 2 Augusta , ME 04333-0073 207-624-5120 or 1-800-760-1573 TTY: 1-800-633-0770 Fax: 207-287-6249	91 Camden Street, Suite 202 Rockland , ME 04841-2421 207-596-2641 or 1-877-421-7916 TTY: 1-888-212-6229 Fax: 207-594-1858
Northern	
45 Oak Street, Suite 1 Bangor , ME 04401-6664 207-561-4000 or 1-888-545-8811 TTY: 1-800-498-6711 Fax: 207-561-4027	98 North Avenue, Suite 16 Skowhegan , ME 04976-1923 207-474-4958 or 1-800-760-1572 TTY: 1-888-697-2912 Fax: 207-474-4914
53 Prescott Drive, Suite 2 Machias , ME 04654-9751 207-255-1926 or 1-800-770-7774 TTY: 1-800-381-9932 Fax: 207-255-3091	91 Military Street, Suite 3 Houlton , ME 04730-2421 207-532-5300 or 1-800-691-0033 TTY: 1-888-697-2897 Fax: 207-532-5309
66 Spruce Street, Suite 3 Presque Isle , ME 04769-3222 207-760-6300 or 1-800-635-0357 TTY: 1-888-697-2877 Fax: 207-760-6316	
Central Administrative Office 150 State House Station Augusta 04333-0150 1-800-698-4440 TTY: 1-888-755-0023 Fax: 207-287-5292	

Partners in Advocacy, Advisory Boards & Councils

The Client Assistance Program: Operated by CARES Inc., provides information, advice, advocacy and, if determined necessary, legal representation to persons who have concerns about the rehabilitation services they receive from DVR and DBVI. www.caresinc.org



DVR State Rehabilitation Council: The mission of the State Rehabilitation Council is to partner with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the development of state goals, priorities, policy, and practice; and to review and analyze the division's results and performance in support of securing and maintaining employment, through a process of informed choice, for individuals with disabilities. <http://www.mainesrc.org/home>



DBVI State Rehabilitation Council: The mission of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to provide leadership and diverse viewpoints in partnership with the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired to develop and evaluate programs and services; to identify priorities that help create opportunities, increase independence and broaden access to the workplace for citizens of all ages who are blind or visually impaired.



The Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened: This Advisory Council provides a review of the status of services to deaf and hard-of-hearing persons; recommends priorities for the development and coordination of services to deaf and hard of hearing persons; evaluates the progress made as a result of recommendations made in the preceding report of the chair (of the Advisory Council); states goals for activities of the division during the subsequent fiscal year; and outlines steps to be taken by the division to carry out its obligations and responsibilities to the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities. http://www.maine.gov/rehab/advisory_councils/dod/index.shtml



State Independent Living Council (SILC): The purpose of the SILC is to "promote a philosophy of independent living (IL), including a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, individual and system advocacy; to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with significant disabilities; and to promote and maximize the integration and full inclusion of individuals with significant disabilities into the mainstream of American society." (Sec. 701 of the Act; 34 CFR 364.2). <http://www.mainesilc.org/>

