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State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Annual Report, October 2000 - September 2001

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Rehabilitation Council

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**STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
FOR THE
BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**



ANNUAL REPORT
October 2000 – September 2001

MAR 07 2002

MISSION:

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.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Council is to work in conjunction with the Director of the Division concerning policy and program issues, including the delivery of services. The Council provides a formal means to influence the direction of services to the blind and visually impaired population of Maine at the systemic and policy level.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES:

- **Supported successful legislation, which resulted in increased staffing to provide additional instructors for children, for independent living and for computer training.**
- **Defeated a bill that was unfavorable to guide dog users.**
- **Updated the 2002 State Plan, which received approval by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.**
- **Participated in updating of state rules.**
- **Provided strong advocacy for Vocational Rehabilitation employment issues.**
- **Accomplished 193 successful vocational rehabilitation closures, the 7th consecutive year of increases.**
- **Reviewed client satisfaction survey results noting an extremely high rate of satisfaction with services provided. Compiled survey results for the past 4 years for comparison.**

- **Advocated for consumer choice to be ensured in the selection and provision of services provided.**
- **Conducted Legislative Awareness Day at the State Capitol.**
- **Participated in the 4th annual "Eye Opener" Golf Challenge with the Visual Impairment Program at the Togus VA Hospital, The Iris Network, the Blinded Veterans Association and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.**
- **Participated in the planning of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.**
- **Provided annual training for Council members.**
- **Celebrated White Cane Awareness Day with public events in Augusta, Bangor and Portland.**

GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002

- **Hear and respond to the concerns and issues raised by blind and visually impaired Maine persons to ensure that the work of the Council is as effective as possible.**
- **Advocate for resources to meet the needs of persons with vision impairments in Maine.**
- **Continue to build partnerships with visually impaired persons, employers, providers of services and advocacy groups.**

PLANNED INITIATIVES:

- **Participate in system of mentoring for blind citizens seeking employment or higher education.**
- **Recruit additional Council members from under-represented groups especially business and labor.**
- **Continue to measure consumer satisfaction.**
- **Complete analysis of the results of the comprehensive assessment of consumer needs.**

**CONSUMER SATISFACTION
SURVEY SUMMARY
2001**

**“How would you rate our staff on
courtesy and helpfulness?”**

Excellent/Very Good	98%
Good/Fair	2%

**“How would you rate the promptness
with which we responded?”**

Excellent/Very Good	84%
Good/Fair	15%

**“How did we do in treating you as an
individual?”**

Excellent/Very Good	93%
Good	7%

How do you rate:

- Mobility Instruction?

Excellent/Very Good	81%
Good/Fair	19%

- Rehabilitation Teaching?

Excellent/Very Good	79%
Good/Fair	21%

- Low Vision Services?

Excellent/Very Good	81%
Good	18%

- Personal Adjustment Counseling?

Excellent/Very Good	79%
Good/Fair	21%

- Computer Skills?

Excellent/Very Good	64%
Good/Fair	36%

- Job Placement?

Excellent/Very Good	100%
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“Did you help choose your goal and services?”

Yes	82%
Somewhat	15%

“Did you achieve your goals with the help of this program?”

Yes	79%
Somewhat	17%

“Were you informed of your right to appeal decisions, and of the services available from the Client Assistance Program?”

Yes	92%
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“Overall how satisfied are you with services received from the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired?”

Delighted/Very Satisfied	90%
Satisfied	10%

**Additional detailed information
is available on request**

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP:

**Daniel T. Bence, Chair - Augusta
Representing Blind Veterans**

**Dale Morgan, Vice-Chair - Gardiner
Representing Maine Parent Federation**

**Tony Ackerman - Windham
Representing Consumers**

**Marjorie Awalt - Augusta
Representing Consumers**

**Andrea Bickford - Bangor
Representing Vocational
Rehabilitation Counselors**

**Jane Boutilier - Sangerville
Representing Parents**

**Anisio Correia - Portland
Representing Consumers and CRP**

**Senator Beverly Daggett - Augusta
Representing the Legislature**

Benita Davis - Augusta
Representing State Library Services

Jack Desjardin - Lewiston
Representing Consumers and Business

Patricia Ellis - Augusta
Representing Consumers

Debbie Fillyaw - Augusta
Representing Consumers

Diane Frigon - Augusta
Representing Client Assistance Program

Susan Hall - Bangor
Representing Parents

Robbie McNich - Calais
Representing Consumers

Leona McKenna - Augusta
Representing Consumers

Steven Obremski - Portland
Representing Consumers and CRP

Jane O'Loughlin-French – Bangor
Representing the Public

James Phipps, Esquire – Portland
Representing Consumers and Business

Donald Russell - Lincoln
Representing Consumers

Patricia Sarchi - Bangor
Representing Deaf-Blind Consumers

Jean Small - Bangor
Representing Education Services

Ginger Soucy – Augusta
Representing Consumers and
Guide Dog Users

Richard Wood - Mexico
Representing Consumers and Business

For more information
contact Dan Bence (207) 621-7307

