



2010-11 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



Vocational
Rehabilitation

EMPLOYMENT
IS OUR
TOP
PRIORITY

Overview

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation administers the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program and the Bureau of Rehabilitation and Reemployment Services (BRRS), Florida's Injured Worker Program. The Division has 951 employees statewide.

The VR mission is: "To provide services to eligible individuals with physical or mental impairments that will enable an individual to achieve an employment goal and enhance their independence."

VR is a federal/state partnership that works with people who have physical or mental disabilities to prepare for, gain or retain employment. Florida's Injured Worker program is a state program that provides rehabilitation and reemployment services to persons injured on a job, covered by the state Workers' Compensation Administration Trust Fund, to help them return to work.

Four additional programs receive funding through VR: the **Adults with Disabilities** program, provides funds to 40 school districts and 10 state colleges to give adults with disabilities the opportunity to enhance their skills; the **Independent Living Program**, provides services through a statewide network of private non-profit, non-residential, locally-based, and consumer-controlled Centers for Independent Living; **Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST)**, provides assistive technology products and services; and **The Able Trust**, provides transition services to high school students with disabilities.

According to the 2010 American Community Survey Three-Year Estimate, there are 2.2 million Floridians age 16 and over who have a disability. Of those, only 19.5 percent, or 428,791, are employed. In state fiscal year 2010-11, VR achieved numerous employment successes despite daunting economic challenges. Although Florida's unemployment rate remained at historically high levels (around 11.4%), VR continued to achieve employment outcomes for VR customers and injured workers. Counselors are innovative and creative as they focus on services that will lead VR customers to achieve their employment goals.

For more information, contact:
Florida Department of Education
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
 2002-A Old St. Augustine Rd.
 Tallahassee, FL 32301-4862
 (850) 245-3399 (Voice/TDD)
 (800) 451-4327 (Voice/TDD)
Rehabworks.org
FLJobConnections.com

An equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers on this document may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay Service at 711.

Meet VR's New Director



Aleisa McKinlay

Aleisa McKinlay became Director of the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) on November 1, 2011. She looks to build on former Director Bill Palmer's foundation and help VR reach the next level. She joined VR in February 2009 as the Bureau Chief of Partnerships and Communications. Prior to joining VR, she was Chief of Adult Community Mental Health at the Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF), as well as the Director of the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illnesses (PAIMI) Program at the Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities (now Disability Rights Florida). In addition to holding a law degree, McKinlay has significant experience in the administration of public mental health services and will be a tremendous advocate for the needs of VR customers. "There have been many positive changes within VR since I arrived in 2009," Aleisa says. "I look forward to the future as we strengthen services to our customers, and strengthen ties between VR and our many external partners – in times of scarce resources, coordinating, prioritizing and maximizing what we have are essential strategies."

VR Facts at a Glance

	2009-10	2010-11
Persons with disabilities who entered gainful employment	3,874	5,018
Average hours worked per week	30.36	31.06
Average hourly earnings	\$10.63	\$10.89
Projected average annual earnings	\$16,791	\$17,597
Total projected earnings in the first year	\$65,048,692	\$88,302,131
Average monthly caseload	45,912	50,515
Average monthly caseload per counselor	121	127

BRRS Facts at a Glance

	2009-10	2010-11
Number of injured workers reemployed	1,236	1,235
Number of injured workers provided reemployment services	2,702	2,693
Projected average annual earnings	\$24,756	\$27,736

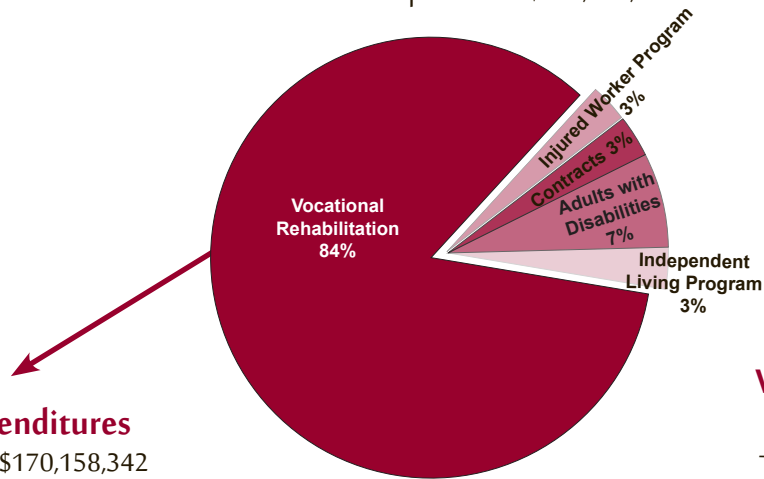
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

2010-11 Performance Highlights

VR is a federal/state partnership – 78.7% of funds for VR program expenditures come from federal sources and 21.3% from General Revenue.

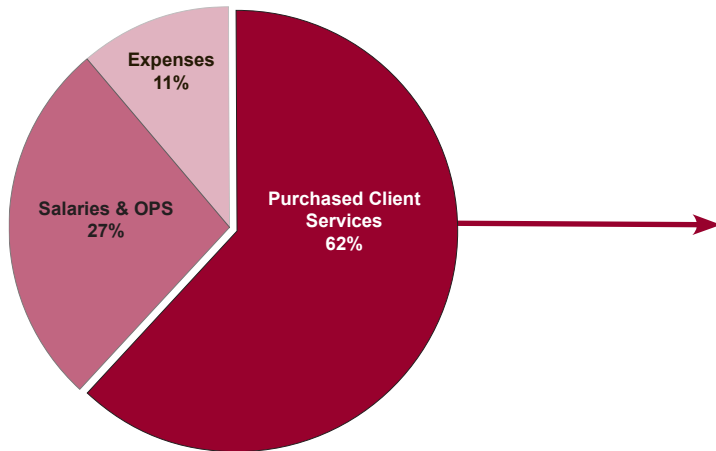
2010-11 Division Programs

Total Division Expenditures \$197,787,436



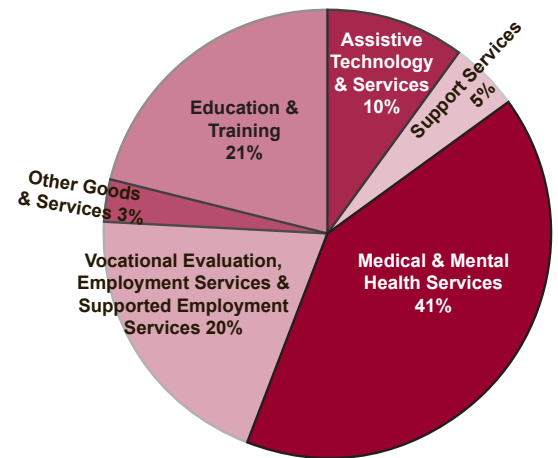
2010-11 VR Expenditures

Total VR Expenditures \$170,158,342

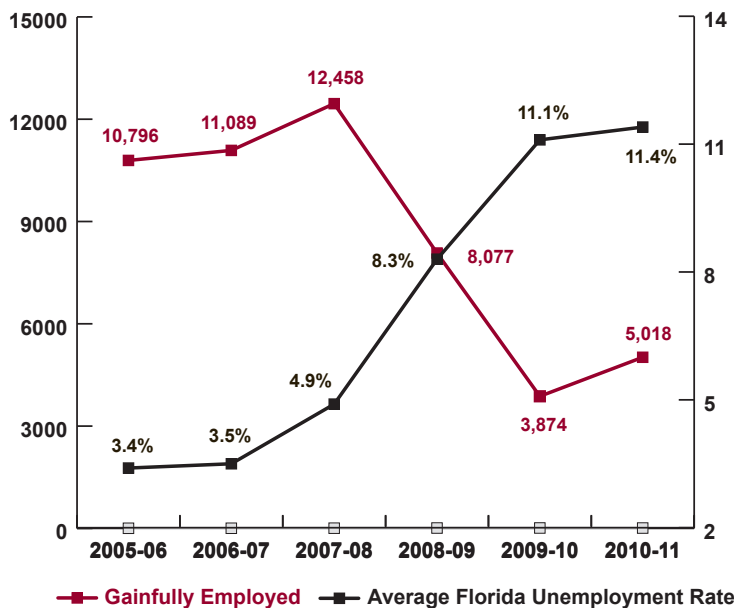


VR Purchased Client Services Expenditures by Category

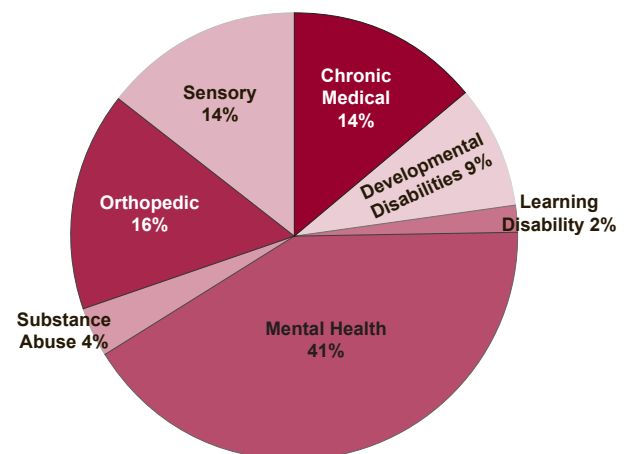
Total PCS Expenditures \$105,033,253



VR Customers Gainfully Employed*



VR Customers Gainfully Employed* by Disability Category



*Gainful employment occurs when a customer has job stability for at least 90 days and is placed in integrated, competitive employment.

SUCCESS STORIES

A Special Graduation Day



FT. LAUDERDALE — Graduation is a special time for every hard-working student, but for **Megan Menconi**, graduating from Florida International University meant more than embarking on a new chapter in her life. It meant starting on a career path she's excited about, and not letting her disability dictate what she can and cannot do.

Megan was born deaf in her left ear with accelerated hearing loss in her right; however, she never used her disability as an excuse. "She is a very motivated person and goal oriented," says Lucia Mavrakis, Megan's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor. VR provided Megan with hearing aids and paid her college tuition. "I was on cloud nine," says Megan when she heard the news. "I had wanted to go back and finish my degree for a long time."

Thankful for the second chance VR gave her, Megan worked hard in school.

While attending school, Megan worked part time as a receptionist for a law firm, where she developed an interest in the legal field. When she took a job at Leslie & McLaughlin, LLP, her new bosses saw her potential and immediately put Megan into a paralegal program. "She's phenomenal, we absolutely adore her," says Megan's supervisor, Jody Leslie of Leslie & McLaughlin, LLP.

As a paralegal, Megan answers client phone calls, handles the mail, drafts legal pleadings and letters, coordinates hearings with the court, and makes sure the discovery is properly documented and given to opposing counsel. "She's personable, efficient, and an integral part of our office," says Jody.

Now, equipped with a bachelor's degree in public relations, Megan says it was her experience with VR that helped her find the drive to succeed that she never knew she had. "I have a college degree!" she says. "Without VR, I wouldn't be working in this job and looking to the future." Megan hopes to continue with the firm and, eventually, she would like to combine her degree with her law experience and one day open her own PR firm specializing in media law.

Man Gets Second Chance through Vocational Rehabilitation

TITUSVILLE — **James Williams** was looking for a second chance when he came to his local Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office. James, who has learning disabilities and struggled with drug addiction, unsuccessfully tried to find employment on his own. That's when his sister Aimee, suggested he go to VR and get the extra help he needed. Now employed with the city of Titusville, James is thankful VR was able to help him turn his life around. "VR changed my life 100 percent," James says. "I was on a dead end road. Now I have opportunities."

"James wanted to make progress in his life," says his VR Counselor Maria Capella. Maria offered him guidance and counseling as well as the support and assistance he needed to help him beat his drug addiction. After James continued to show that he was dedicated to getting well and finding employment, Maria enrolled him in VR's On-the-Job Training (OJT) program to give him the skills and work



experience he needed to be successful on the job. On-the-Job Training is a VR program that gives customers the chance to work on an actual job site and gain real-world experience. VR pays the employee's salary during OJT, along with reasonable training costs and any accommodations needed.

James trained as a records clerk at the Titusville Archive Center for three months. His supervisor was so impressed with his work that she hired him permanently. "James is an ideal candidate," says Titusville Archive Center's HR Director Carlene Price. "He is a hard worker, always on time and very personable." Carlene knew that whatever James had gone through, he just needed a second chance. "He has really proven himself," she says.

James loves his job and says that family support, as well as support from Maria, was important in helping him accomplish his goals. James plans to remain a productive member of society.

On-the-Job Training Proves Its Worth for Young Woman with a Disability

FT. MYERS — When asked how long she has worked at Auto Glass Warehouse, **Yelanie Cruz** clearly and confidently states, "I've been here a year, a month, and two weeks." It's that attention to detail that has endeared Yelanie to everyone she works with. "We're just blessed," says Ernie Gonnelly, owner of Auto Glass Warehouse and Yelanie's boss. "We're really, really happy that it worked out so well." Ernie is talking about VR's On-the-Job Training (OJT) program, where employers train potential employees and give them the opportunity to experience working in a real-world setting. VR pays the employee's salary during OJT, along with reasonable training costs and any accommodations needed. It's a win-win situation.

Yelanie, who has a learning disability, needed the extra training time that OJT provided to learn how to answer the phones and file properly. Now Yelanie not only answers the phones and files paperwork, she also enters business transactions in Quick Books, calculates price quotes, talks to insurance companies, and more. Ernie is very proud of Yelanie's progress.

Ernie has become a firm believer in VR's OJT program, because it gave him the chance to hire a new employee when times were tough. "It gave me the opportunity to have another employee and see how the program works, and now that I understand it, I think it's a great deal," he says.

Yelanie is thankful she found VR. "VR helped me a lot," she says. "Lynn [Engle, her VR counselor] helped me figure out what I would be good at. She connected me with Jessica [Salois, her job coach], and she helped me find this job — the one that was right for me."

For Lynn, Jessica, Ernie and Yelanie, VR's OJT program has proven its worth. Lynn sums it up best, "It shows how a team can work together to help the business and the individual."

