



2012-13

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



EMPLOYMENT IS OUR **TOP** PRIORITY

Message from the Director



Florida's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has enjoyed another productive year! In SFY 2012-13, 6,523 Floridians with significant disabilities found employment and hope for a better future through the good work done by VR staff and our community partners – a 7% increase over SFY 2011-12.

Aleisa McKinlay

Major initiatives within the division include: ongoing improvements to our management information systems, the procurement of a division-wide learning management system, ensuring that our offices are customer-friendly and fully compliant with the ADA, increased collaboration with Florida's Agency for Persons with Disabilities, refinement of our customer self-employment processes, and increased participation with other state VR agencies in benchmarking, quality improvement, and performance management activities. We completed an internal climate survey, achieving the highest ever level of overall employee satisfaction, at 87%. Finally, we also accomplished a major move for VR Headquarters, on time and under budget.

It is critical that we continue to understand the changing needs of VR customers and never cease in our quest to serve them more effectively. People want to work, and we want to give them the tools they need to achieve that goal. The best decisions are made when all relevant information makes its way into the marketplace of ideas, and people talk through the challenges and opportunities presented. Our model customer has changed a great deal in the last five years, and we are learning how to help them succeed.

We continue to listen to staff, to customers, and to our community partners. As a result, we have made many substantive changes in our infrastructure and our business practices. We look forward to continuing that work in SFY 2013-14, and to stronger, strategic collaborations across the board. It is a privilege to be part of this most exciting joint venture!

VR Mission

To help people with disabilities find and maintain employment, and enhance their independence.

VR Vision

To become the first place people with disabilities turn when seeking employment and a top resource for employers in need of qualified employees.



Statutory authority and governing guidelines may be found in 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapter III, Part 361 and Chapter 413, Part II, Florida Statutes (FS).

VR Facts at a Glance

	2012-13	2011-12
Persons with disabilities who entered gainful employment	6,523.....	6,071
Average hours worked per week.....	30.20.....	31.99
Average hourly earnings	\$10.98.....	\$10.86
Projected average annual earnings.....	\$17,242.....	\$17,286
Total projected earnings in the first year	\$112,467,902...	\$104,944,723
Average active monthly caseload	55,457.....	55,035
Average monthly caseload per counselor	127.....	132
Rehabilitation Rate.....	43.4%.....	48.9%

Overview

The Florida Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation administers the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, Florida's employment service for people with disabilities. The division maintains 80 service locations across the state, and has 931 employees.

VR is a federal/state partnership that helps people who have physical or mental disabilities get or keep a job. According to the 2012 American Community Survey Year Estimate, there are 2.3 million Floridians age 16 and over who have a disability. Of those, only 17.3%, or 402,665, are employed.

Our mission is to increase that number. VR differs from other state agencies that provide support and other work services to individuals living with a disability in that we do not maintain long-term caseloads or ongoing responsibility for the health and welfare of vulnerable individuals. Once an individual has been successfully employed for a designated period of time (90 or 150 days), the VR case is closed.

Another focus of VR is transitioning students from school to work. The School-to-Work Transition program helps students with disabilities train for a job, continue their education,

and/or find a job after high school. Students who apply for services while in high school are served by 163 VR transition counselors. The number of youth employed following VR services has increased in each of the last four years.

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 and senior citizens with disabilities who are unlikely to enter the workforce skills consistent with their abilities and needs.

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. Their mission is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence and productivity of individuals with disabilities. Services are intended to lead to the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in their communities of choice.

The Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST) provides assistive technology products and services.

The Able Trust partners with VR on 'High School-High Tech,' transition services to high school students with disabilities.

Determination and Drive Help Transition Student Diaz Find a Job with Disney

Orlando – The next time you're shopping at the World of Disney in Downtown Disney, that friendly face at the cash register could be Edwin Diaz (*center*). Edwin, who has cerebral palsy and a mild intellectual disability, is thrilled to have his first "official" job.

"Working at Disney is a good fit for me, and I'm happy to be here," he says.

Edwin worked hard and volunteered long hours to get where he is today. He put a lot of energy into finding a job, even though he was caught not only in the high unemployment rate for younger workers, but also in the higher unemployment rate for people who have a disability. Fortunately for him, he had Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) on his side.

Edwin first came to VR in high school as a transition student. Against all odds, he graduated from high school with a regular diploma. He met with his counselor, and they decided he should attend Mid Florida Tech, where he majored in marketing, merchandising, and parts operations. VR helped pay for his tuition and books. After he graduated with honors from Mid Florida Tech, Edwin began looking for a job, but there wasn't a lot out there for someone with a certificate and a disability. Employers were reluctant to give the young man who uses a walker for balance a chance.

When VR counselor Naseana Francis took over Edwin's case, she sat down with him and, after reviewing his case together, they updated his plan for employment to better match his abilities. "He's very professional," says Naseana. "He just needed to be given the opportunity to show he could do the job."

Edwin worked with his job coach, Susan Bronislowski, with Hands On Education, on his interviewing and job skills. She encouraged Edwin to volunteer with different companies, so he could have some job experience to include on his resume. Edwin volunteered at Florida Hospital Celebration and Florida Hospital Kissimmee for two years.

Susan then set up a 12-week On-the-Job Training with Give Kids the World, where Edwin scheduled volunteers and did office and computer work for the organization. Unfortunately, at the end of the training, there weren't enough funds to hire Edwin. He continued to help out at the organization, because he enjoyed the people and wanted to stay active.

And then he landed the interview at Disney.

They were very impressed that Edwin had been volunteering for more than two years and offered him a job, but not just any job. They wanted to find a good fit for Edwin where the bus could drop him off, he could get to work easily, and he could use his training and job skills. That's why you'll see Edwin smiling as he runs the cash register at the World of Disney store in Downtown Disney.

Naseana is very happy that Edwin is working at Disney. "They have a great worker," she says. "I hope he is able to grow with Disney." Susan agrees, "He's a great guy. He never said 'no.' He never said 'I can't do it.' There's no holding him back." Edwin hopes to stay with the company and move up in the future. For now, he's happy to work and volunteers for extra hours, if he is needed.

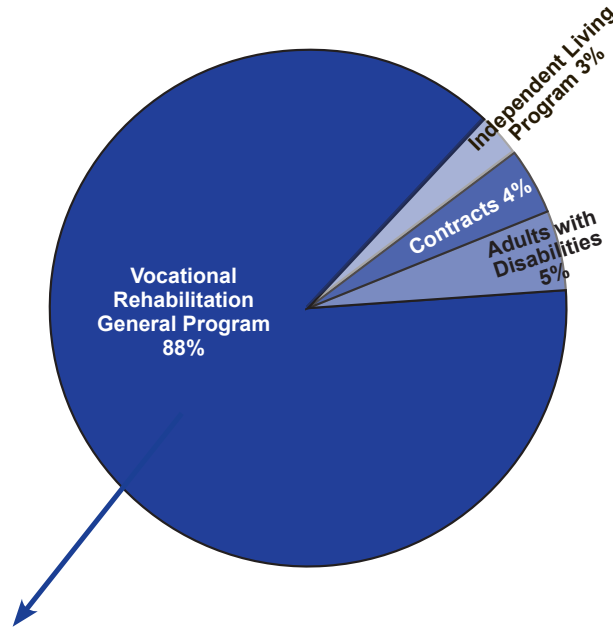


Performance Highlights

VR is a federal/state partnership – 78.7% of funds for VR program expenditures come from federal sources and required match of 21.3% from state general revenue.

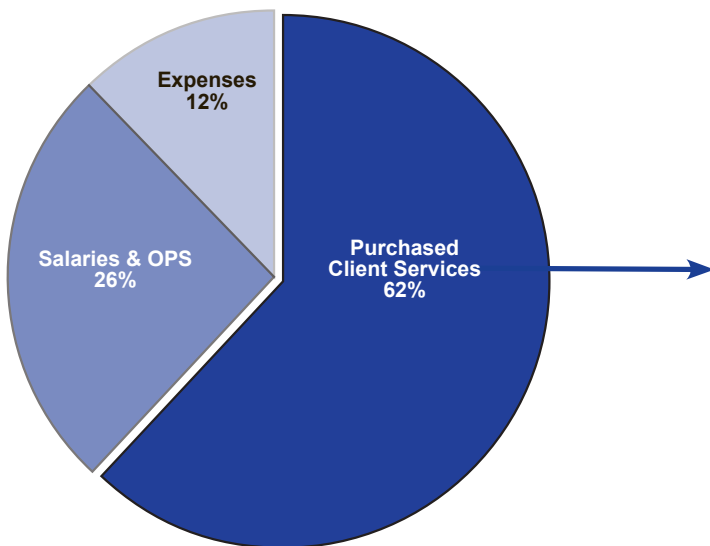
2012-13 Division Programs

Total Division Expenditures \$195,244,146



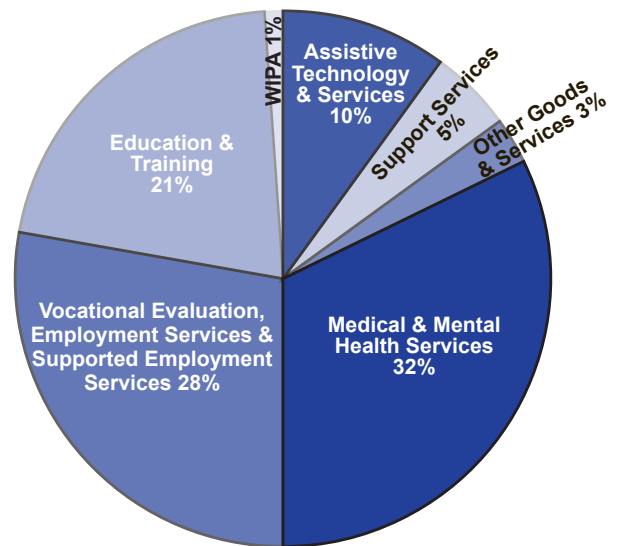
2012-13 VR General Program Expenditures

Total VR Expenditures \$178,286,676



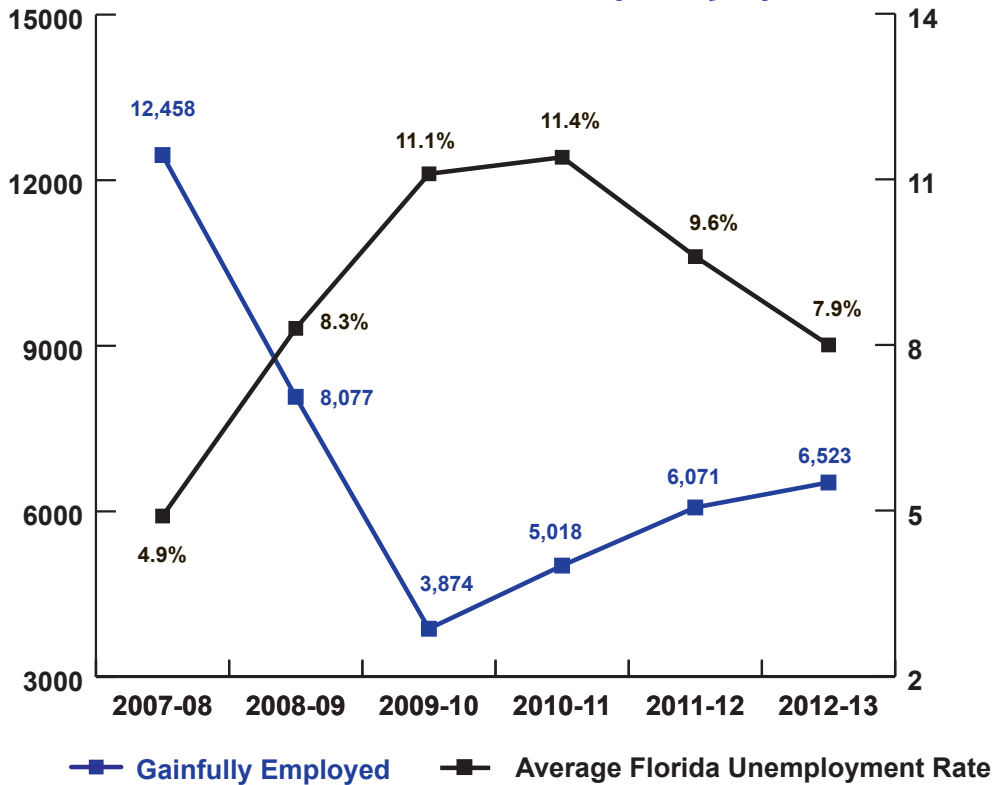
VR Purchased Client Services (PCS) Expenditures by Category

Total PCS Expenditures \$111,055,749



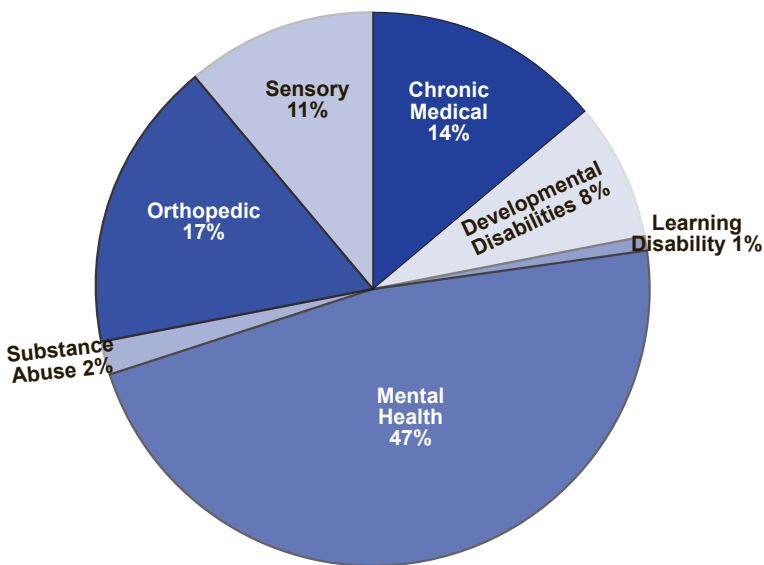
For every \$1 invested in rehabilitating the customer, an estimated \$9.15 was returned to the economy in state fiscal year 2012-13.

VR Customers Gainfully Employed*



* Gainful employment occurs when a customer has job stability for at least 90 days and is placed in employment that is competitive, integrated into the community, and for which they receive at least minimum wage. This table shows that there is an inverse relationship between the number of VR customers gainfully employed and Florida's unemployment rate. As the unemployment rate decreases, the number of gainfully employed customers is likely to increase.

VR Customers Gainfully Employed* by Primary Disability Category



The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) defines primary disability as the individual's primary physical or mental impairment that causes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.

Order of Selection Waiting List Status Summary

October 18, 2013

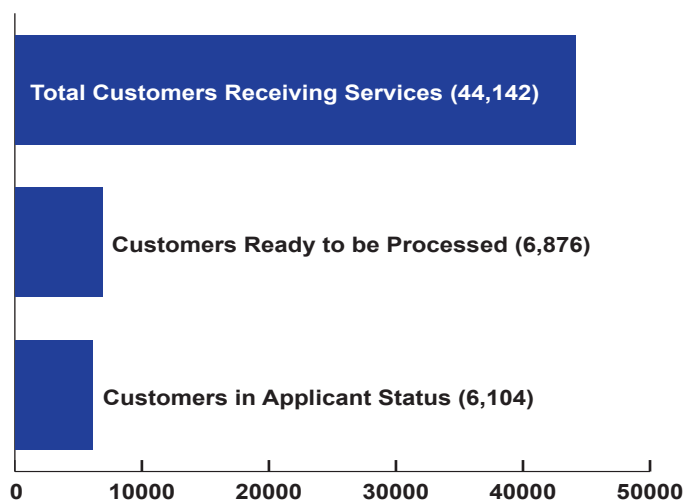
Under Order of Selection, all eligible individuals are placed on a prioritized waiting list based on the significance of their disability. Federal law requires that individuals with the most significant disabilities be served first.

Category 1 – Most Significant Disabilities (0)

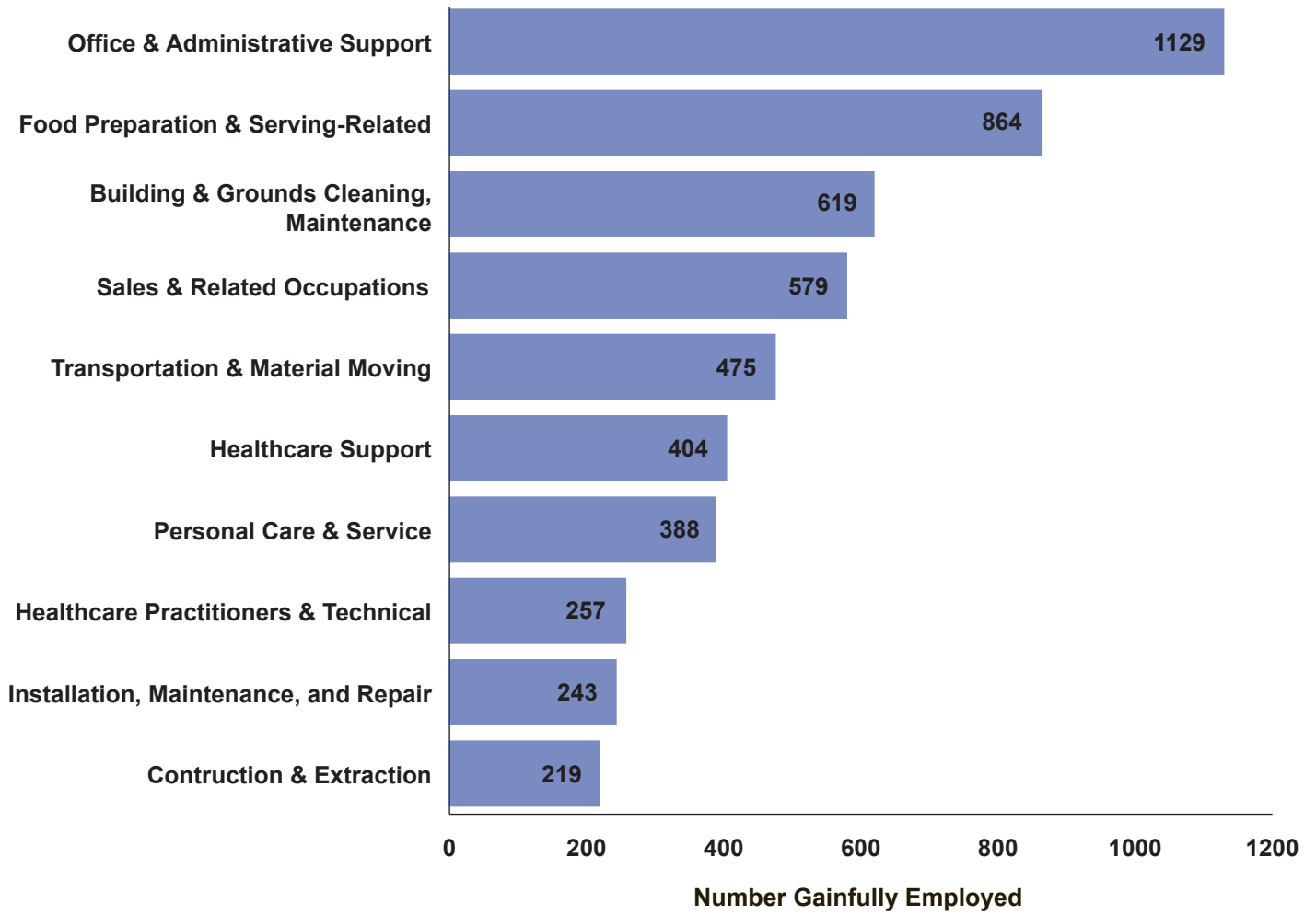
Category 2 – Significant Disabilities (0)

Category 3 – Other Disabilities (914)

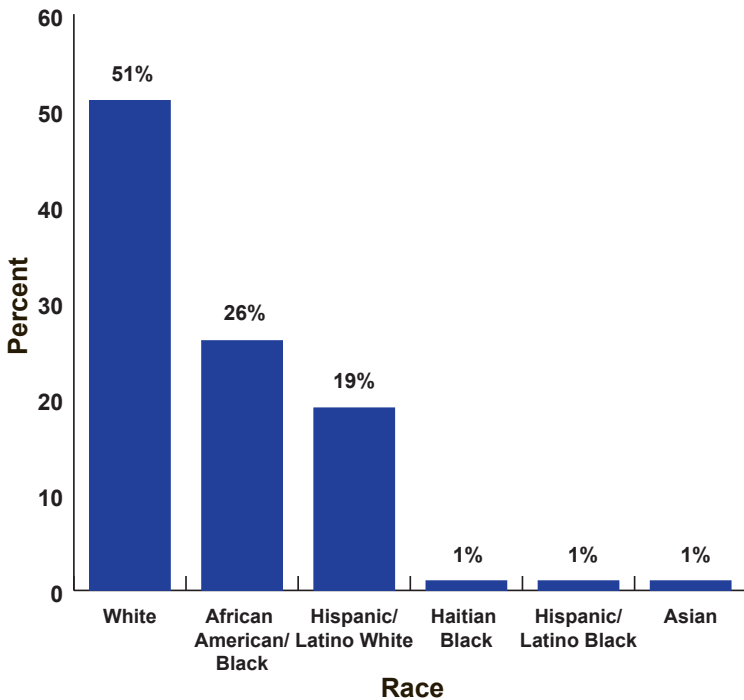
Categories 1 and 2 were open SFY 2012-13 – no waiting



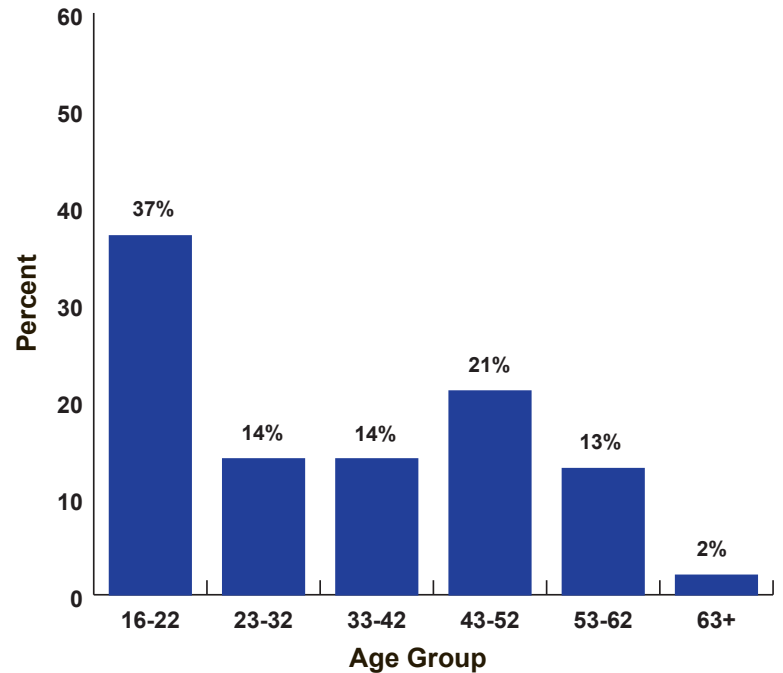
Top 10 Occupations for 2012-13 Customers Gainfully Employed



Number of Customers who Received Services Under an Individualized Plan for Employment by Race and Ethnicity



Age Groups of Customers who Received Services Under an Individualized Plan for Employment



Chef Michelle Jones Gives Back to Others with Disabilities

Ft. Lauderdale – Michelle Jones' story is one of perseverance and inner strength. Michelle (*below*) has a cognitive disorder, as well as learning disabilities. As a single mom and sole provider for her family, she desired a career that would include her passion for cooking and also help others in similar circumstances.



Fortunately for Michelle, she learned about Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and how they help people with disabilities become employed. VR paid for Michelle's tuition and books at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, where she earned a bachelor's degree in culinary arts and management.

After graduation, Michelle found a job as an instructor at Atlantic Technical Center in Coconut Creek. She teaches Food Theory and is a certified

ServeSafe instructor. She also owns a private catering business and has catered various chamber and charity events. An interesting side fact is that Michelle has several VR customers in her classes, and these students are benefitting from her experience and enthusiasm.

Michelle wanted to share her story to give the students she works with, as well as other people in need of VR services, "a sense of hope." Her VR counselor, Michael Coard, knew that Michelle would be successful. "She was always very enthusiastic, and eager to learn and teach," he says. Michelle feels that her experience with VR, "was very good overall."

Not one to rest on her laurels, Michelle is currently pursuing a master's degree in food science and working to launch her own food line. She loves to give back to her community and supports healthy eating habits, especially for our younger generation. She continues to inspire and challenge those around her to never give up and always work hard to achieve your dreams and goals in life.

Goodwill's Fashion Consultant

Englewood – "The brunette ladies like to wear blue dresses, and the blonde ladies prefer red." This astute observation comes from Rialto Goodwill's Fashion Consultant-in-training, Ben Davis (*below right*). Ben, who is the dressing room attendant for the store, enjoys talking to customers and helping them with their clothing choices. He is also 80 percent deaf in both ears, is legally blind without his glasses, and has an organic brain injury that occurred when he was born prematurely.

But persistence is his middle name. Ben searched for a job for more than three years before learning about Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). VR Counselor Canada West saw the determination in Ben and knew that Morgan Howell, a job coach with Loveland, would be the perfect person to help Ben find that elusive job. Morgan mentored Ben on how to act in the workplace, which was one of the reasons Ben had not been able to hold a job for very long, and taught him the ins and outs of the city's transportation system.

Morgan brought Ben to Goodwill so he could try out a few of the different jobs to see which one would best suit him. Ben sorted clothing, put out wares, and greeted customers, but he really found his niche as a dressing room attendant.

"I take the clothes that people hand me and put them back on the rack. I let them into the dressing room, and I make sure they only take in six items at a time," Ben says. "And when they ask me how do I look, I tell them." "Ben's a natural salesman," says Morgan.

Ben has been working at Goodwill since March 2012, and when asked about his favorite part of his job, Ben replies honestly, "I like lunch time and pay day." But he quickly adds, "I also like talking to the ladies and making them smile."

Canada and Morgan are proud to see Ben thriving at his job. "He's a very hard worker, and he's doing a great job," says Canada. "He's come a long way and has maintained his job for a long time. He works four days a week and recently got a raise."

Ben not only works at Goodwill, he also volunteers at his church's day care one day a week. He enjoys spending time with the children, playing games or matchbox cars, helping with snack time, and exploring the church grounds. Ben also participated in the Special Olympics last year, winning a silver medal in golf.



This well-rounded young man is well-liked by his coworkers, and Morgan, who now works at Goodwill as the manager of employment, explains why, "He's enthusiastic. He looks forward to coming to work and is always early. And he's always happy and pleasant with the customers."

Ben's first goal after he got his job was to get his driver's license, and then buy a car. He accomplished both goals within eight months, and he's very proud of his '95 Ford Thunderbird. Ben looks forward to a long and happy career at Goodwill, helping the ladies resolve their fashion dilemmas.



Vocational Rehabilitation

For more information, contact:

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Rehabworks.org

FLJobConnections.com

An equal opportunity employer/program. TTY users dial 711 to connect with the telecommunications relay service (TRS). Video phone users can call through the video relay service (VRS).