

Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council

Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2019-2020



The Mission of the Council is to inform and advise the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Legislature and the Governor on the diverse issues affecting employment of people with disabilities.



This report covers the activities of the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020. Alternate formats and additional copies are available upon request. Contact:

Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council Support Project

55 Utley Drive

Camp Hill, PA 17011

(717) 975-2004

1-888-250-5175 (Voice)

(717) 737-0158 – (TTY)

racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org

Current and past reports are also available on the PaRC website:

www.parac.org

Pennsylvania State Law requires the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) publish an annual program report on a different timeline than this product. Therefore, the PaRC reports limited OVR data. For a more detailed OVR report, you may request OVR's Program Report from:

Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

1521 N. 6th Street

Harrisburg, PA 17102

Cover Photo: PA Rehabilitation Council Members

ERIE COUNTY: *Ms. Passle Helminski*

BLAIR COUNTY: *Mr. John Seely*

BUCKS COUNTY: *Ms. Michele Leahy, Dr. David Mann*

ALLEGHENY COUNTY: *Ms. Claire Senita, Mr. William Frase, Ms. Cindy Duch*

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY: *Mr. Koert Wehberg, Esq., Mr. Steve Pennington, Esq., Ms. Juliet Marsala, Mr. William Del Toro Vargas, Mr. Rob Wallington, Mr. Fred Wright*

LANCASTER COUNTY: *Ms. Deborah Arcoleo, Ms. Susan Soderberg*

Not shown: DAUPHIN COUNTY: Mr. Matthew Seeley, Esq.



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PaRC OFFICERS (2019 – 2020)



***Passle Helminski
(Chair)***



***John Seely
(Vice Chair)***



***Cindy Duch
(Member at Large)***

NEWLY ELECTED PaRC OFFICERS (2020 – 2021)



***Passle Helminski
(Chair)***



***Juliet Marsala
(Vice Chair)***



***Cindy Duch
(Member at Large)***



**Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council Members
(Including Category of Representation)
July 2019 - June 2020**

Shannon Austin – OVR Executive Director (Ex-Officio Member from May 2019)

Deborah Arcoleo – Intellectual Disabilities

Cindy Duch – IDEA (Member-at-Large 2019-2020)

William Frase – Community Rehabilitation Provider

Passle Helminski – Cognitive Disabilities (Chair 2019-2020)

Michele Leahy – Mental Health

Dr. David Mann – Current / Former Customer (until July 2020)

Juliet Marsala – Rehabilitation Counselor

Stephen Pennington, Esq. – Client Assistance Program

Matthew Seeley – Statewide Independent Living Council (until July 2020)

John Seely, Jr. – Business/Industry/Labor (Vice Chair 2019-2020)

Claire Senita – Young Adult (until July 2020)

Susan Soderberg – Business/Industry/Labor

William Del Toro Vargas – Physical Disabilities

Koert Wehberg, Esq. – Sensory Disabilities / Visual

Robert Wallington – Business/Industry/Labor (effective April 16, 2020)

***Current Vacancies** – State Workforce Board (pending)



**A Message from Our Past & Current Chair:
(July 2019 – June 2020)**



Ms. Passle Helminski and Service Dog

Dear Fellow Pennsylvanians, Governor Wolf, Secretary Oleksiak (Labor and Industry), Acting Secretary Jennifer Berrier (Labor and Industry), Mark Allan Schultz (RSA Deputy Commissioner), Shannon Austin (OVR Executive Director), OVR State Board Members, OVR Administrative Staff and the Legislature,

It is my honor to have been elected to serve as Chair of the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council for another year.

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council will continue to fulfill its mandate under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Most importantly, the Council will continue to collaborate with OVR during this challenging time as they continue to work on opening the Order of Selection as soon as possible, so that Pennsylvanians with disabilities, who are eligible for OVR services, can move towards the goal of competitive integrated employment.

Similarly, the Rehabilitation Council will continue to educate the General Assembly on legislation that removes barriers to employment and the advancement of Pennsylvanians with disabilities, especially within the Commonwealth's Civil Service hiring framework.

The Council has been and will continue to be involved in receiving reports from the Office of Administration, Work Force Development Boards, Statewide Independent Living Council, Department of Education/Bureau of Special Education and OVR. Strengthening these relationships and working together will positively affect successful employment and independent living outcomes for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

As Chair of the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council, I look forward to the COVID-19 pandemic ending so we can meet face to face, instead of virtually, to collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure that Pennsylvanians with disabilities, who rely on OVR services, will be served in a timely, efficient, and empathetic manner.

Respectfully,

Passle Helminski, BA, MA, MFA



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PaRC MEMBERS

*I want to make our mission statement a living, breathing part of everyday life, which is the reason I wanted to become a member of the PaRC. ~**Passle Helminski***

*President Fred Wright of AFSCME Local 1739 informed me of the importance of PaRC and its impact serving people with all disabilities to have a better quality of life. Over 28 years of my introduction professionally to people with disabilities, I believe that everyone, no matter of their ability, should have the right to be treated equally without discrimination or bias. I hope I can serve as well as everyone who have served previously to represent all people with disabilities in their desire for a better quality of life. ~**Robert Wallington***

*I wanted to join the PaRC to help OVR to better serve job seekers with disabilities through my experiences as a parent of a child with a disability and as an employment services professional. ~**Bill Frase***

*I chose to join the SRC because during my career I have been able to witness the power of work in the lives of Pennsylvanians with disabilities, both from a business perspective and from a provider perspective. Being part of the SRC allows me to continue to follow my call and my passion to make employment a reality for all Pennsylvanians! ~**Sue Soderberg***

*I was not aware of the PA Rehabilitation Council. It came to my attention when former member extraordinaire Bill Chrisner suggested I join the Council. As the Director of Parent Advising at the PEAL Center, the Parent Training and Information Center for PA, I felt there was info I had to share with the other members of PaRC. My son has autism and we navigated the special education system and then had to navigate the OVR system. Both very different and both very complex, but we made it through. I felt that the experiences we had and what we learned may help others. So, I jumped into PaRC, became the IDEA/Transition Committee Chairperson that day and have now been on the Council for 5 years. I have learned much and met many people who are all fantastic advocates for people with disabilities and their pursuits of employment. I am looking forward to upcoming advances in PA for the employment of people with disabilities. ~**Cindy Duch***

*I joined the PARC to advance gainful, integrated employment for Pennsylvania residents with disabilities so that they may live fruitful and fulfilling lives. ~**Koert Wehberg***



COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE REHABILITATION ACT AS AMENDED BY WIOA 2014

Review, analyze, and advise the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) regarding the performance of its responsibilities, particularly those related to eligibility (including order of selection); the extent, and scope and effectiveness of services provided; and the functions performed by State agencies that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.

Partner with OVR to develop, agree to, and review State goals and priorities in accordance with the VR State Plan. The Council and OVR evaluate the effectiveness of the VR program and submits reports of progress to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Commissioner.

Advise OVR on activities authorized to be carried out under the VR State Plan. Assist in the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations.

Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services and consumer satisfaction regarding functions performed, VR services provided, and employment outcomes achieved.

Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Federal U.S. Department of Education Commissioner of RSA on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the State.

Coordinate activities with other disability related councils within the State.

Establish working relationships between the Council, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Centers for Independent Living.

Perform other functions consistent with VR services deemed appropriate by the Council.



PaRC Members, OVR Staff, & Guests during a Full Council Meeting



OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PA OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged everyone especially Pennsylvanians with disabilities seeking employment. OVR has had to come up with new creative ways to continue to provide services to support individuals in their employment efforts.

There is positive news from OVR regarding the Order of Selection (OOS) waiting list. OVR has reported that from July 1, 2019 through December 7, 2020 there were approximately 12,000 individuals on the waiting list. The good news is that approximately 9,000 of these individuals as of December 2020 have been removed from the waiting list and have developed their Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) meaning they are in some phase of employment planning. As we emerge from the pandemic, the council is hopeful more individuals will move into employment planning and employment.

The members of the PA Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) take their responsibility of advising OVR and reporting on the status of employment for persons with disabilities in Pennsylvania seriously. Members understand how employment greatly impacts an individual's quality of life. Fifty one percent of the Council's membership must be individuals with disabilities as required in the Rehabilitation Act.

In order to advise OVR, the council reviews OVR's customer satisfaction surveys from individuals using their services and the various policies pertaining to services OVR provides. PaRC members also participate on various workgroups formed by OVR to discuss various policies and topics and make recommendations. As needed, the PaRC makes requests to OVR for additional information to aid them in the understanding of an issue.

OVR staff provide quarterly reports on the progress of the current state plan goals at the PaRC quarterly public meetings. When a new state plan needs to be developed, the council and OVR develop a timeline to meet the deadlines established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Then through a series of conference calls and worktime at PaRC public meetings the council makes their recommendations through their attachment called (description a) which becomes part of OVR's state plan. OVR responds back to the recommendations made by the Council. At this point, the state plan is put out to the public for comment through the PA Bulletin and a series of public meetings at the OVR district offices.



SUCCESS STORIES – This is what it’s all about....

OVR services along with other supports including their families, helps people get to work which improves their quality of life and strengthens their communities. During the pandemic these workers, some of them “essential workers” were on the job.

Emily is employed at Weis in Mechanicsburg, PA and Tanner works at Weis in Burnham, PA. Ethan works part-time for the UCP Lewistown central office in an administrative role. He also works part-time with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

These individuals participated in the Supported Employment program through UCP of Central PA. **Thank you to all of them!**



EMILY



ETHAN



TANNER



WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED AS A COUNCIL THIS YEAR

The closing of the Order of Selection in all categories by OVR continued to be closely monitored by the Council this past year with regular updates from the OVR Executive Director on the number of individuals that OVR was able to provide services to again. The main goal of the council is to assist OVR in evaluating how to resolve the situation and open all categories of the order of selection as soon as possible as we continue to deal with the pandemic.

Thirty-two conference calls were held by the committees this year. Listed below by committee is the major work and activities of each committee for the year.

The Council had five standing committees this year in addition to the Executive committee - Legislative and Public Awareness, Policy/State Plan/Customer Service, Transition and Education, CareerLink/WIOA, and Social Media/Outreach.

Executive Committee

- The PaRC completed and submitted their 2018 - 2019 Annual Report to their fellow Pennsylvanians, the Governor, Secretary of Labor & Industry, RSA Commissioner, OVR staff and State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, PA Legislators, Stakeholders, and State Workforce Development Board in December 2019. To view the 2019 Annual Report and other reports from previous years, go to www.parac.org. The 2019 – 2020 Annual Report will be completed and disbursed by December 31, 2020 as required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- The committee and staff planned and held four quarterly Council meetings this year. Educational presentations (speakers) this year on topics related to Council responsibilities included: Mr. Michael Gamel- McCormick, Disability Policy Director, Special committee on Aging for Senator Casey discussed efforts to increase, stabilize, and strengthen the recruitment and retention of direct service professionals addressing wages and benefits; Staff from the Office of Administration, Mr. Jason Swarthout, Director, Talent Management and Mr. Chris O'Neal, Director, HR Delivery Centers discussed state employment for persons with disabilities; Mr. Ralph Roach and Mr. Rob Hodap from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation informed members about the ADA assessment toolkit OVR was using this coming year to evaluate CareerLink sites in consultation with the local workforce boards; Mr. Ralph Roach also updated the Council on the new OVR job retention services/essential procedures policy and a CareerLink update. Ms. Kim Gerlach, OVR provided a Vehicle Modification policy update. Mr. Norman Bristol Colon, Executive Director for PA Census 2020 provided a presentation on getting the word out especially to persons with disabilities about the importance of participating in the Census. Our stakeholders (Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Department of Education/BSE, State Workforce Development Board, Client Assistance Program, State Independent Living Council, Disability Rights PA) provided quarterly reports throughout the year.
- The PaRC Chair/designee provided four quarterly progress reports on PaRC activities/work to the OVR State Board during 2019 – 2020.

- The Executive committee is responsible for recruitment maintaining the required areas of representation as stated in the Rehabilitation Act. Governor Wolf appointed one new member during this past year: Mr. Robert Wallington was appointed to represent the labor category.
- There were two Ad Hoc committees working on recruitment and the Council bylaws and decision-making matrix.
- The Executive committee continued their working relationships with other disability related Councils and agencies in the state/country some of which are mandated including: OVR State Board, OVR Citizen Advisory Committees, Statewide Independent Living Council, Client Assistance Program, Department of Education/BSE, Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, PEAL Center (IDEA), State and Local Workforce Development Boards, Disability Budget Coalition, Disability Rights PA, PA Transportation Alliance, Governor's Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Employment First Commission and the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils.
- Two officers of the Council participated in the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Council's training in the Fall which keeps the Council informed of national VR issues and up to date on SRC mandated responsibilities.
- Other outreach activities included the Chair attending the Barker National Institute on Disability Awareness in Erie, PA with former Governor Tom Ridge as the speaker.
- The Council was a sponsor of the Disability Pride Virtual PA, a month-long celebration of 30 years of ADA as part of their outreach/advocacy.

Legislative and Public Awareness Committee

- Members invited the following individuals to present at a Full Council meeting to maintain a network of federal, state, and local level contacts to assure exchange of relevant and current information:
 - ❖ the Office of Administration presented on state employment for people with disabilities
 - ❖ Mr. Michael Gamel-McCormick, Disability Policy Director, Special Committee on Aging for Senator Bob Casey presented on Senator Casey's disability related legislation and funding for VR services
 - ❖ Ms. Steph Hardman, Legislative Assistant to Rep. Dan Miller presented on HB 1548 - Amending Title 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in civil service reform, providing for excepted service hiring and promotion authority, and imposing duties on the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Members identified and followed proposed State and Federal legislation, that affect the VR system and issues impacting the employment of persons with disabilities including legislation pertaining to COVID-19
- Members disseminated approved position papers concerning full funding for OVR, hiring practices within the State, accessible transportation, and a Disability Caucus.
- Members continued to develop collaborative relationships with other organizations to maximize combine legislative impact for people with disabilities.
- Members informed State Elected and Appointed Officials and their staff on the following:
 - ❖ the need to facilitate an Expedited Hiring Process so that people with disabilities interested in Civil Service and non-Civil Service jobs have an alternative path to

employment with the State, similar to Schedule A on the Federal level; the committee supports HB1548 (An Act amending Title 71, in civil service reform, providing for excepted service hiring and promotion authority; and imposing duties on the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation)

- ❖ the significant consequences for Commonwealth residents with disabilities who want to work, as well as the Commonwealth itself as a result of OVR closing the Order of Selection due to the financial impact that Pre-Employment Transition Services had on OVR's budget
- Members plan to continue to inform State and Federal Governments on the impact their decisions about COVID-19 can have on OVR and most importantly the state's economy and workforce.
 - ❖ More specifically, the members will stress the importance of and work for full funding of OVR, legislation and disability related efforts related to COVID-19 so that individuals can continue to work or return to work following a pandemic.

OVR Policy/State Plan/Customer Satisfaction Committee – main activities/work

- Members continued to participate in the following OVR policy workgroups: Vehicle Modification, College Policy, and Supported Employment with OVR staff and other stakeholders.
- A minor revision was made to the current State Plan attachment (description a) for 2020 – 2024 adding (2019 public meeting comments). There are five areas (issues) in the attachment that Council continues to receive updates from OVR at the quarterly public meetings: 1). the closure of the order of selection for all categories, 2). a review of Hiram G. Andrew Center's return on investment, 3). a review of OVR's statutory and regulatory obligations to obtain public comment and/or consult with stakeholders, providers, VR staff, and individuals with disabilities in the development, implementation, and amendment of OVR's policies and procedures, 4). Strengthen collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders, and 5). Review of OVR policies and procedures.
- Members reviewed OVR's Customer Satisfaction surveys on a quarterly basis and offered recommendations to OVR on any areas of concern.
- Temple University was chosen to perform the comprehensive statewide needs assessment with OVR and the Council.

Transition and Educational Services Committee – main activities/work

- Due to COVID, participation at the Transition Conference and the PA Department of Education's (PDE) PADES annual conferences this year for outreach and awareness were limited in both conferences. There were no in-person conferences this year.
- A goal of this committee was to improve communication with the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) regarding transition. Ms. Amy Pastorek, Assistant Bureau Director and/or Ms. Jeannette Alexander have attended the PaRC quarterly meetings representing PDE/BSE and providing updates. We look forward to more of a focus from PDE on Transition activities and activities that are being provided to students in PA as a result of the PDE/OVR MOU and the MOU Toolkit when both of those documents become available in February, 2021.

- The committee has been monitoring the increase of competitive integrated employment options through the Employment First (EF) Law. PaRC has representation on the Employment First Oversight Committee (EFOC) with Ms. Cindy Duch and Mr. Steve Pennington, Esq. (representing the Client Assistance Program) on the committee. The EFOC is working with other agencies to collect data that is relevant to the implementation of EF. The second report of the EFOC has been sent to the Governor in October 2020.
- A responsibility of the Transition and Education committee is to monitor OVR and the Department of Education's efforts to implement the best practices regarding transition throughout the State.
- There has been consistent review of customer satisfaction surveys of transition with OVR. There remains a very low percentage of surveys that are returned to OVR. OVR contends that it is difficult to have individuals return surveys. PaRC has brought up to OVR the comments that are made on the surveys as areas in need of improvement within OVR and its District Offices.
- On a quarterly basis the committee, also reviews information collected for Act 26 (Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act of 2016) provided by OVR.
- The committee receives periodic updates from HGAC staff on how they evaluate their policies and training programs at Hiram G. Andrews to assure that students are receiving top technical training and certifications in an integrated setting, so that graduates are job ready. This year due to COVID, HGAC closed buildings in mid-March. As much as possible, classes were delivered virtually with some students returning to in-person learning. Many of the programs require in-person learning. PaRC was not able to visit HGAC for a yearly review of the site and programs due to COVID.

CareerLink / WIOA Committee – main activities/work

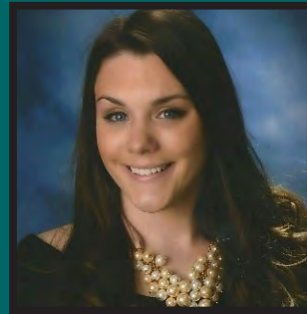
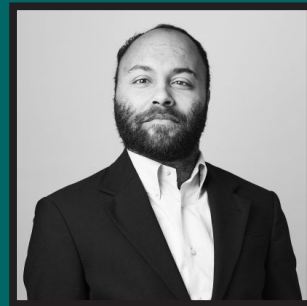
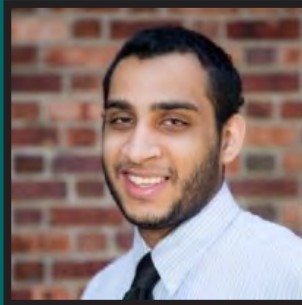
- The Director of the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) provided quarterly updates on what is happening across the state regarding projects, CareerLinks, employment, etc. This committee also is working to ensure persons with disabilities can access the CareerLink sites physically and programmatically.
- The SWDB is a mandated partner on the Council. The Council is actively working on recruiting a SWDB member as soon as possible; they are mandated in the Rehabilitation Act as a required member.
- The PaRC Chair provided a presentation at a SWDB meeting in an effort to recruit a member from the SWDB.
- The committee also invites staff from the Equal Opportunity Commission to provide a report on their work on their quarterly committee calls regarding CareerLink accessibility reviews which have been delayed this year due to the pandemic.
- Members continue to work on increasing their participation/involvement in State and Local Workforce Development boards on behalf of persons with disabilities.

Social Media / Outreach Committee – main activities/work

- Members and staff continued to work on increasing the council's social media presence on Facebook, and the PaRC website at www.parac.org. Several member stories were shared this past year on Facebook.

- Some members from the Pittsburgh area participated in Representative Dan Miller's Disability Summit in Pittsburgh manning the PaRC resource table as part of their outreach goals for the public to learn more about OVR and the PaRC.
- Members have been developing Social Media Guidelines to use in assisting members and staff on content, protocol, etc. on all their social media platforms.
- This coming year the committee plans to update the PaRC website as well as the PaRC recruitment video and work to increase their outreach to the public. Emphasis will be on streamlining all social media platforms to increase the PaRC's outreach to the public.

2019 – 2020 COMMITTEE CHAIRS



*Top row, left to right: **Passle Helminski**, Chair of Executive Committee July 2019 – present, **William Del Toro Vargas** - Chair of Policy & State Plan/Customer Satisfaction Committee, **Koert Wehberg, Esq.** - Chair of Legislative & Public Awareness Committee*

*Bottom row, left to right: **Cindy Duch** - Chair of Transition & Education Committee, **Juliet Marsala** - Chair of CareerLink Committee, **Claire Senita** - Chair of Social Media Committee*



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council 2019-2020 Federal Position Paper

The Council is mandated by statute with informing and advising the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Legislature, and the Governor in PA on the diverse issues affecting employment of people with disabilities. This document summarizes the Council's position on key federal laws and policy issues.

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides for programs that help people with disabilities achieve employment and independence, such as vocational rehabilitation (VR). In order to access federal funding for these programs, states must appropriate some funding. This investment is good for taxpayers, for example, VR customers in PA who found competitive employment in state fiscal year 2018-2019 generated \$50,500,000 in savings, both from taxes paid and fewer benefits used.

WIOA can be strengthened if you support certain policy positions:

- Keep VR a mandatory program with single source funding.
- Increase funding substantially for providing VR services to veterans with disabilities returning to civilian life as well as continuing to screen injured veterans for traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Reverse changes to the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) that reduced the standards/requirements to be a qualified rehabilitation counselor working with business or customers.
- SUPPORT **S.117**: Disability Integration Act of 2019, **S.260** & **H.R.873**: The Transformation to Competitive Employment Act, **S.150** & **H.R.582**: Raise the Wage Act
- Require all commercial health insurance providers to cover brain injury rehabilitation.
- Promote career development and job advancement by expanding the definition of post-employment services to include training and other services necessary for career advancement.
- Clarify when to advise customers of their right to request mediation or due process through the Client assistance Program to review a decision made by VR.
- Require legal training for all impartial due process hearing officers and staff.
- Increase funds for the Older Blind Program to better service the growing aging, blind population.

Transportation. Accessible, affordable, and safe public transportation is critical for ensuring that people with disabilities can participate in the workforce. Unfortunately, many communities (especially rural ones) lack disability-friendly and accessible public transportation options, even when states are required by law to provide them. Consequently, we encourage you to support changes to the public transportation system that promote and enforce equal access for people with disabilities.

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (Able) Act provides for the creation of savings accounts for those who experience a significant disability before age 26. Money

in these accounts can pay for disability related expenses and are not subject to taxes or considered for means-tested benefits. We encourage you to support an amendment to the Able Act that would allow all people with significant disabilities (regardless of onset age) to have such accounts.

PaRC MEMBERS WORKING ON CAPITOL HILL



Pictured from left to right: Passle Helminski, Claire Senita, Representative Ed Neilson, Michele Leahy, John Seely, William Del Toro Vargas



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council's 2019-2020 State Position Paper

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) is mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 2014, to review, analyze, and advise the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) regarding the performance of its responsibilities, particularly those related to eligibility (including order of selection); the extent, scope and effectiveness of services provided; and the functions performed by State agencies that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. The PaRC's Legislative Committee respectfully submits, with approval by Executive Committee and/or Full Council, the following Position Paper for your review and consideration:

Sustain Full Funding for OVR Services to match all available Federal Funds

- **Action Requested:** *Funding for the "Transfer to the Vocational Rehabilitation Fund" needs to be at least \$50 million for non-profit commonwealth organizations especially since the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that 15% of funds must be spent on Pre-Employment Transition Services. This will allow OVR's level of funding to remain constant with previous years and ensure that OVR is able to draw down all available Federal funds.*

Expedited Employment

- **Action Requested:** *The PaRC recommends, through legislation or regulatory action, for the State to establish an Expedited Hiring System so that people with disabilities in Civil Service, Non-Civil Service, and State Contractor hiring positions have an alternative path to employment similar to Schedule A on the Federal level.*

Collaboration of Services for Persons with Neurological Injuries in Pennsylvania

- **Action Requested:** *Collaboration is needed between all state agencies working with persons with neurological injuries to ensure that there is no break in services from in home services to employment services. Additional dedicated funding is needed for this population.*

Adequate Funding of the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)

- **Action Requested:** *The PaRC agrees with the Disability Budget Coalition's recommendation as follows: To the extent feasible, increase the state appropriation for the ODHH to \$650,000; authorize ODHH to increase its staff for all its offices or its contracting, or both, at its discretion, within the increased budgetary allocation; move ODHH's budget from the Labor and Industry General Government Operations line item to a separate line item within the overall Labor and Industry budget*

PaRC supports the following regarding Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

- **Action Requested:** *Line item appropriation of \$2.7 million which will enable the CILs to: maintain quality staff and a stable location, effectively deliver services that facilitate transition from nursing homes and other institutions to the community, provide assistance to those at risk of entering institutions, and facilitate transition of youth to postsecondary life (the fifth IL Core service) and provide reasonable benefits; increase the number of individuals served; and lower the cost per individual.*

Transportation

- **Action Requested:** *Transportation Network Providers, like Uber and Lyft as well as all taxi service providers must be required to provide accessible vehicles on demand to people with disabilities. In addition, they should likewise be required to show that all drivers have been educated/trained on the requirements of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act; especially with respect to the provision of service to individuals who use service or guide dogs. The State must work with Amtrak and the Federal Government to ensure that all train stations in the Commonwealth are physically and programmatically accessible, which is not the case today. The Rural Shared Ride System should be regionalized to enable transportation providers to cross County lines in order to assist people with disabilities who use these rides to obtain, maintain, and/or regain employment.*

Disability Caucus

- **Action Requested:** *The PaRC encourages both the House and Senate to establish a bi-partisan and bi-cameral caucus to review and support legislation that would enable people with disabilities to have equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives and to be productive and contributing members of their communities.*

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council's Legislative and Public Awareness Committee support the following State Bills:

[SB390:](#) An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, in public assistance, further providing for nonemergency medical transportation services.

[SB852:](#) An Act relating to the delivery of services and programs to persons with disabilities; conferring powers and duties on the Office of the Governor; establishing the Office for People with Disabilities and the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities; and providing for the powers and duties of the office and the advisory committee and for funding of the office and the advisory committee.

[HB539:](#) An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in licensing of drivers, further providing for Medical Advisory Board.

[HB986:](#) An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, in public assistance, further providing for nonemergency medical transportation services.

[HB113:](#) An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public-School Code of 1949, providing for students with disabilities at institutions of higher education.

HR74: A Concurrent Resolution declaring that the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is committed to equal rights for individuals with cognitive disabilities to technology and information access and calling for implementation of these rights with deliberate speed.

HB1363: An Act establishing a bill of rights for individuals with intellectual disabilities or autism; and conferring powers and duties on the Department of Human Services

CAPITOL HILL, HARRISBURG



Pictured left: Claire Senita, Michele Leahy

Pictured right (first row): Michele Leahy

(Back Row): Passle Helminski, William Del Toro Vargas, John Seely, Legislative Staff Member



Mr. Robert Wallington

PaRC MEMBER STORY

Robert J. Wallington Sr. has worked for a non-profit organization for fifteen years which supports adults with intellectual disabilities. His first position with the company was a Flex Direct Support Professional. While in this position, he discovered his true passion for helping fellow employees with work related issues and concerns. He soon became a union steward to fight for better working conditions for all employees. Through this path, Robert has been able to improve the work environment for fellow employees by providing education and access to available services.

In April of 2014, Robert was appointed to the position of chief steward as well as being elected to the union's Executive Board. He was later hired to serve as a union representative and chief organizer for AFSCME Local 1739. During the summer and fall of 2016, Robert was chosen to represent AFSCME by AFSCME International Faces & Voices, to be part of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's national bid for President. It was through this highest of honors that he was one of a few chosen and placed on her national brochure as part of her media campaign for President.

In May 2017 through partnership with Pennsylvania Department of Labor, District Council 1199C, and Special People In Northeast (SPIN), Robert has sat as Chairman to offer Apprenticeship programs for Direct Support Professionals and Early Childhood Education represented by AFSCME Local 1739 and SPIN.

On April 16, 2020, Robert was appointed to the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PARC) which serves as advisers to the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). This same spirit of advocacy has led him to help families achieve success together by teaching them how to utilize effective negotiation and conflict resolution skills.



State Plan Attachment (2020 – 2024)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

(a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council.

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

- (1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;*
- (2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and*
- (3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.*

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) used the following sources to develop its recommendations to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR):

1. the PaRC annual report (Federal Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019);
2. OVR Customer Satisfaction Surveys;
3. review of items in 2018 State Plan Attachment (description a);
4. comments received at 2018 and 2019 Public State Plan Meetings;
5. participation in the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) monitoring (2019);
6. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) FFY 2016 - 2018 OVR/Institute on Disabilities at Temple University;
7. local Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) meetings and/or minutes; and
8. quarterly reports received from OVR at PaRC Council meetings.

Commendation: The Council supports OVR in their efforts to open the order of selection as soon as possible for the benefit of Pennsylvanians with disabilities seeking employment services through OVR.

1. The Closure of the Order of Selection (OOS) for All Categories

Issue: The closure of the Order of Selection (OOS) for all categories represents a significant challenge to people with disabilities having access to employment services

when they are needed. OVR must develop appropriate internal controls and other adjustments in order to re-open the OOS as soon as possible and update the PaRC regarding progress on at least a quarterly basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS/MEASURABLE GOALS:

- A. OVR provides quarterly reports (at a minimum) to the PaRC on how many people were added to and removed from the waiting list in each category each quarter.
- B. OVR provides quarterly reports (at a minimum) to the PaRC and the State VR Board on new application response times.
- C. OVR establishes a clear deadline for reopening the OOS with intermediate steps and goals to re-open the OOS on time. OVR provides quarterly reports (at a minimum) to the PaRC on progress and factors affecting progress toward achieving the goal of re-opening the OOS on a permanent basis by the deadline.
- D. Identify resources and opportunities outside of OVR for organizations to provide employment services to OVR customers on the waitlist.

2. Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC)

Issue: OVR's current fiscal problems require a review of HGAC's return on investment.

RECOMMENDATIONS/MEASURABLE GOALS:

- A. OVR should conduct a study at a minimum of every 3 years and report on the return on investment (compared to community-based VR services) for students attending HGAC. HGAC's yearly budget averages approximately \$23 million, which includes staff, operations, brick and mortar and other costs. Overall, the cost per customer is reported as significantly higher at HGAC than that of non-HGAC customers. The report must include:
 - (1) an analysis on return on investment.
 - (2) an impact statement on customer choice.
 - (3) a review of the extent to which its programs are provided in an integrated setting.
 - (4) an assessment of the availability of HGAC programs in the community; and
 - (5) a determination of what other partners like the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) should be paying/contributing.
- 3. Conduct a review of OVR's statutory and regulatory obligations to obtain public comment and/or consult with stakeholders, providers, VR staff, and individuals with disabilities in the development, implementation, and amendment of OVR's policies and procedures.

Issue: Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.20, OVR is required to solicit public participation when it proposes to develop, amend, or otherwise modify substantive policies/procedures affecting OVR services.

RECOMMENDATIONS/MEASURABLE GOALS:

- A. OVR should provide quarterly information on the number and names of new/amended policies, such as a college policy or vehicle modification policy, being developed or in consideration for future development/modification, including how they differ from any existing policy and the potential number of customers impacted by the policy.
- B. Inclusion of the Council in the development/amendment of the policy/procedure, the proposed timeline of implementation, including schedule of public comments and plans to educate stakeholders on the new/amended policy/procedure.

4. Strengthen Collaboration and Partnerships with Stakeholders

Issue: OVR has made significant changes to services without including key stakeholders throughout the change development process. OVR needs to make sure that those changes will not unnecessarily reduce the achievement of outcomes in terms of quantity and quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS/MEASURABLE GOALS:

- A. Before OVR makes any substantive changes, the PaRC will be informed of what needs to change and why, and what affected stakeholder representatives are being included in the change development process.
- B. OVR provides (at a minimum) quarterly reports to the PaRC on all substantive changes either anticipated or currently in development with information on progress, including key stakeholder representative involvement and contributions to the process.
- C. OVR provides annual reports (at a minimum) on feedback survey information from key partners.
- D. OVR provides quarterly progress reports with measures of quality and quantity of outcomes for partnerships, programs, and services including pre-employment transition services, local workforce development boards, supported and customized employment, business services and PA CareerLinks®.

5. Review of OVR Policies and Procedures

Issue: Clarification is required regarding public participation in the adoption or amendment of OVR policy, and OVR's obligation to consult with the PaRC, among others, on matters of general policy arising in the administration of the VR services portion of the State Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS/MEASURABLE GOALS:

- A. OVR reports to the PaRC on a quarterly basis substantive policies and procedures under review which are subject to public meetings, non-substantive administrative changes, and policies on matters of general administration of the VR program which require consultation. Additionally, include quarterly reports on workgroups.

CAPITOL HILL, HARRISBURG



Pictured left to right: Claire Senita, John Seely, Passle Helminski, Michele Leahy, Amanda Wolfe (Policy Development Specialist), William Del Toro Vargas



PA REHABILITATION COUNCIL COMMITTEE GOALS (2020 - 2021)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Goal #1: Continue to improve relationships and collaboration with the PA State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Citizen Advisory Committees and other stakeholder organizations in the Commonwealth to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance the number of individuals served.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Provide support and guidance on quarterly calls with CAC chairs. Also help develop a handbook/training manual, bylaws, agendas, invitations, topics/project lists, etc.
- 2.) Continue to attend OVR Board Meetings and invite board members to council meetings, special projects, and retreats.
- 3.) Continue to partner with OVR, State Independent Living Center (SILC), Client Assistance Program (CAP), Disability Rights PA (DRPA), Governor's Oversight Board on Employment First and others on issues affecting persons with disabilities and employment.

Goal #2: Continue to provide leadership and guidance to new and all members and committees in accordance with the mission and bylaws of the Council and the Rehabilitation Act as amended by WIOA 2014.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Past chair and chair should provide ongoing support and encouragement to new members. New council members should have opportunities to attend conferences and trainings to increase their knowledge base. New members should be given the opportunity to ask questions of both council members and OVR staff.

Goal #3: Continue to increase public awareness in Pennsylvania about OVR services and the Council's mission and responsibilities through increased attendance and participation by council members at stakeholder meetings, youth organizations and disability and civic organizations

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Attend conferences/trainings and expos to highlight both the Council and OVR Transition conference, PADES conference, NRA,

NCSRC, Blind Expo, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Social Media and Outreach committee events, projects, success stories, etc.

Goal #4: Continue oversight of the following: PaRC budget, quarterly meeting agendas, annual report, strategic planning, annual retreat, member recruitment, election of officers and annually review bylaws with any revisions with the members.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Each member on the committee should provide input and help with these duties as listed in the goal.

CAREERLINK/WIOA COMMITTEE

Goal #1: Work with OVR to help the Workforce Development Board (WDB) to ensure each CareerLink is physically and programmatically accessible at all its locations.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Work with OVR and WDB to review and improve all training practices: need to know what they are and if they are working.
- 2.) Work with OVR and WDB to review and improve physical site locations and program accessibility.

Goal #2: Identify, review, and monitor the CareerLink reportage system for both the Department of Labor and Industry and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Staff will continue to seek representatives from the EOC and State Workforce Development Board to report out on statistics / issues regarding employment for persons with disabilities.

Goal #3: Increase the PaRC's participation in State and local WDB meetings.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Educate / advocate about the PaRC and OVR and learn about what these state and local boards are doing in the state.

Goal #4: The committee will review quarterly reports from the SWDB and inform the Council on issues related to WIOA.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Staff will request quarterly reports from the State Workforce Development Board staff. Members will keep the Council informed.

LEGISLATIVE & PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEE

Goal #1: Increase the PaRC's advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities in regard to obtaining and maintaining employment

Steps to achieve goal:

- 1.) Continuously monitor, review, and prioritize pending State and Federal Legislation that directly or indirectly affects the employment of people with disabilities. This would include making recommendations to the Executive Committee and/or the Full Council to oppose or support State or Federal initiatives.
- 2.) Continue meeting with Congressional Delegations from PA in Washington at least one time a year to position the PaRC as a resource to federal legislators concerning legislation and services for persons with disabilities.
- 3.) Continue visiting state legislators in Harrisburg at least twice a year and their district offices to advocate for legislation that has an impact on the disability community, particularly related to employment.
 - a. Educate lawmakers and other decision makers of the impact their decisions about COVID-19 can have on OVR and most importantly the state's economy and workforce. This includes continuing to stress the importance of full funding of OVR and supporting legislation and disability related efforts related to COVID-19.
- 4.) Continually monitor information, resources and disseminate information to the PaRC's Legislative Network through Legislative updates and Legislative Alerts.
- 5.) Educate and train new committee and Council members on how to advocate with legislators on the local level and nationally.

Goal #2: Increase advocacy on behalf of the returning disabled veterans who are seeking employment and employment supports through Pennsylvania state services.

Steps to achieve goal:

- 1.) Invite speakers to at least one Full Council Meeting from different veteran's organizations to educate Council members on how to advocate for support services and encourage reciprocal participation by Council members in their organization.
- 2.) Meet with Veteran Advocates in District Offices to gain a better understanding of the needs of returning Veterans seeking employment.

Goal #3: Develop collaborative relationships with other organizations, which have similar missions and mutual legislative goals, to maximize our combined legislative impact for people with disabilities.

Steps to achieve goal:

- 1.) Continue to work with the SILC, Workforce Investment Boards, PACARES, the OVR Board, the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network, the Disability Budget Coalition, the Governor's Advisory Council, the Employment First Oversight Commission, and any other organizations as deemed appropriate.

OVR POLICY, STATE PLAN, AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION COMMITTEE (OPSP&CSC)

Responsibilities:

- 1.) Lead the Council's involvement in producing the VR Portion of Combined State Plan
 - a. Develop the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council's section of the Plan
 - b. Review and provide feedback to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) about its sections of the Plan
 - c. Attend public meetings for the Plan
- 2.) Review, analyze, and provide feedback to OVR and Council on OVR policies and procedures
- 3.) Review OVR customer satisfaction data and provide feedback to OVR and Council on the state of customer satisfaction

Goal #1: Maintain a positive working relationship with the Department of Labor and Industry, OVR and Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations.

Steps to Achieve the goal:

- 1.) Use the OPSP&CSC to engage OVR and other partners about employment policies and procedures. Create dialogues with these partners that help advance the Council's mission.

Goal #2: Support the development of the Plan.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Consulting OVR's timeline for development of the Plan, establish with OVR deadlines for OPSPC and Council involvement and input for the Plan. OPSP&CSC will work to have the Council meet its various deadlines regarding the Plan.
- 2.) Identify and review input into the Plan from:
 - a. The various OVR advisory bodies,
 - b. Previous public hearing comments, and
 - c. OVR customer satisfaction survey results.
- 3.) Review with OVR the status of and progress with the current plan during select OPSP&CSC meetings and at all Full Council meetings.

Goal #3: Monitoring of OVR policies and procedures.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Participate in OVR workgroups formed to draft new policies or revise existing policies.
- 2.) Verify that Council staff has complete and current counselor manuals, numbered memoranda, etc. in the office reference library.
- 3.) Review any memorandums OVR sends to the Council.
- 4.) Ensure Citizen Advisory Committees' (CACs') access to OVR policies and procedures for review and comment, so that the Council may have an opportunity to incorporate CAC input into its own feedback.
- 5.) Evaluate the effects of program policy changes.

Goal #4: Partner with OVR to review, evaluate and make recommendations based on results on the combined Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Evaluate data on a quarterly basis.
- 2.) Evaluate questions and recipients on an annual basis.
- 3.) Provide specific recommendations to increase survey responses and improve customer satisfaction.

Goal #5: Partner with OVR to develop, implement and review the comprehensive statewide needs assessment survey.

Goal #6: Partner with OVR to review due process issues to assure good quality outcomes for consumer customers. OVR will share same report that goes to OVR Board on a quarterly basis.

SOCIAL MEDIA / OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Goal #1: Develop a Handbook that includes guidelines and best practices for effectively using Social Media

Goal #2: Promote and increase awareness of OVR and the Council's mission through the PaRC webpage and Facebook

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Post and/or share positive and/or informative stories on Facebook to engage the audience and widen the Council's online presence. This may include

photos and/or viral videos related to disability issues and the employment of people with disabilities.

- 2.) Introduce PaRC members by posting a short autobiography and photo on Facebook to keep the public informed of who is representing them.
- 3.) Post Disability Awareness Months and/or related positive stories, videos, and/or photos on Facebook.
- 4.) Use Publishing Tools and Events on Facebook to post CAC meetings, PaRC Meetings, State Board Meetings, OVR request for comment/listening tours, and other pertinent events/meetings deemed appropriate.

Goal #3: Promote PaRC and OVR at various events across the State

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Attend events across the State related to disability issues, employment, etc. This may include setting up a PaRC resource tables and/or other responsibilities as assigned by the event.

Goal #4: Publish Success Stories from consumer and business customers to inform the public about OVR services

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Share and/or post success stories about OVR customers on Facebook.
- 2.) Publish stories from OVR consumer customers and/or business customers as funds are available.

Goal #5: Revamp the PaRC Website to update the appearance

TRANSITION & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Goal #1: Participation at the Transition Conference and the PA Department of Education's (PDE) PADES annual conference for outreach and awareness to the public about what the PaRC does and the purpose.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Participation in the Transition Conference.
 - Identify who will attend.
 - Complete appropriate forms/payment for exhibiting.
 - Coordinate with attendees/staff what materials will be needed on Exhibit table.

- 2.) Participation in the PADES Conference – TBA
 - Identify who will attend.
 - Complete appropriate forms/payment for exhibiting.
 - Coordinate with attendees/staff what materials will be needed on Exhibit table.

Goal #2: Improve communication with Bureau of Special Education (BSE) regarding transition.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Attend PA Secondary Transition Community of Practice State Leadership Team meetings.
- 2.) Ensure that PDE/BSE representative or designee reports at each Transition/Education Committee meeting.
- 3.) Ensure that a *State of Transition* in PA report from PDE/BSE is provided at each quarterly PaRC meeting.

Goal #3: Monitor the increase of competitive integrated employment options through the Employment First Law.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Participate in webinars – various national and state webinars on Employment First.
- 2.) PaRC is to have a representative on the Employment First Oversight Committee.

Goal #4: Committee will monitor OVR and the Department of Education's efforts to implement the best practices regarding transition throughout the State.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Coordinate with OVR and PDE/BSE on trainings being held by PaTTAN, PDE/BSE, OVR, PEAL Center, etc.
- 2.) When possible, participate in trainings with PaTTAN, PDE, and OVR.
- 3.) Review customer satisfaction surveys of transition.
- 4.) Reports from our PDE/BSE member at our quarterly meetings and on committee calls.

Goal #5: To have OVR evaluate their policies and training programs at Hiram G. Andrews to assure that students are receiving top technical training and certifications in an integrated setting, so that graduates are job ready.

Steps to achieve the goal:

- 1.) Evaluate the steps being taken to ensure students without disabilities are being included in HGAC programs to ensure it is an integrated setting.

- 2.) Evaluate and monitor the resources at HGAC to ensure they are up-to-date and are conducive to attracting all students to the programs and that the program is fiscally responsible.
- 3.) New council members are invited to participate in training at HGAC.

PaRC MEMBERS



pictured (front row): Susan Soderberg, Dr. David Mann, Claire Senita, Passle Helminski, Matthew Seeley, Esq.

***pictured (back row): Juliet Marsala, John Seely, William Frase, Deborah Arcoleo, Cindy Duch,
Fred Wright, William Del Toro Vargas, Koert Wehberg, Esq.***

Missing from photo: Michele Leahy, Steve Pennington, Esq., Robert Wallington



If you are interested in becoming a PaRC member, please review the standards below that members have developed.

PaRC Member Expectations

Active Participation:

In order to fulfill its federal requirements, the Rehabilitation Council must have active participation by its members. Active participation is defined as:

- Attend all four (4) of the scheduled full Council meetings in any fiscal year. Severe weather and personal emergencies are understandable exceptions.
- Participate on at least one standing committee or ad-hoc committee during the fiscal year.
- Respond to action items during or between Council meetings. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
 - Review of support documents for meeting action items.
 - Review and return of surveys, draft documents, etc. when requested.
- Attend Office of Vocational Rehabilitation public meetings, State Board meetings, Consumer Advisory Committee meetings, etc. when feasible.

Represent the Rehabilitation Council in Meeting and Work Groups:

Although members represent diverse constituencies and points of view, it is important for the Rehabilitation Council to speak as a single entity in meetings and work groups. The Council recognizes that individuals may also wish to convey additional opinions or information during discussions. In order to assure consistency without restricting members' actions, the following guidelines were adopted on April 14, 1999:

If a Rehabilitation Council member is serving on a rehabilitation related work group, committee or is giving testimony as a ***designated and official spokesperson of Council***, the following guidelines will apply:

- The Council member shall state that s/he is representing the Rehabilitation Council.
- The Council member shall state the Council's official position on the subject being discussed if one exists or is known. If the Council's official position is unknown or has not been developed, the Council representative shall indicate that s/he will request the Council's office to forward the position or ask the Council to review the subject and render an official position if one is needed.
- The Council member may have a different, personal opinion on the subject being discussed. If this is so, the Council member should state that it is a personal opinion and not the official position of PA-Rehabilitation Council.
- The Council member shall not commit financial support and/or other resources of the Council to any non-RC committee, workgroup, function, etc., without the previous authorization of PA-Rehabilitation Council.
- In order to receive reimbursement for expenses occurred while acting as a designated Council spokesperson, the member shall follow established procedures for obtaining reimbursement.

These objectives are meant solely to improve and expedite the accomplishments of the Rehabilitation Council, so as to, better the lives of persons with disabilities. Your cooperation and time are appreciated.

If you are interested in becoming a member and can meet the expectations, please complete the Appointment Request Form on the next page and return to: Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council Office, 55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA, 17011. Also, forward a word document of your resume and two references familiar with your disability related work/experiences to racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org

***When the appointment request form, resume and references have been received in the office, the PaRC members review them and make recommendations to the Governor's Office.
The Governor appoints all members.***



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council

55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011
Voice (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY (717) 737-0158 Fax (888)524-9282
Email: racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org www.parac.org

APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT REQUEST FORM

NAME

HOME ADDRESS

HOME PHONE/CELL PHONE

EMAIL

EMPLOYER (if applicable)

EMPLOYER ADDRESS

EMPLOYER PHONE

EMPLOYER EMAIL

Check the category/categories that you could represent on the council (check as many as apply):

- Representative of the PA Statewide Independent Living Council.
- Representative of a parent training and information center established pursuant to Section 671 of the individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Representative of the Client Assistance Program (CAP)
- Qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor with knowledge of and experience with vocational rehabilitation programs.
- Representative of community rehabilitation program service providers.
- Representative of business, industry, and labor.
- Representative of disability advocacy groups representing:
 - (I) Individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory and mental disabilities, and
 - (II) Individuals' representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves.
- Current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services.
- Representative of the State educational agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities who are eligible to receive services under this title and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Representative of the State Workforce Development Board.
- Young Adult
- Veteran
- Other – Please Specify _____

KEY AFFILIATIONS AND ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATION

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE HOW YOUR SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, ETC. MATCH THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REHABILITATION COUNCIL.

SIGNATURE

DATE

**Please attach a resume or brief biography and two written references. Documents should be emailed to racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org in word document format.*

Form revised 03/19

FOLD

RETURN ADDRESS

**Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council
55 Utley Drive
Camp Hill, PA 17011**

FOLD

Special thanks to all employees, businesses, and staff for their commitment to what they do!

Emily & Tanner, employees of Weis Markets, with program manager, Blake Bilger, who on this day, was serving as job coach.



Ethan, an employee of UCP, was nominated earlier this year for a STAR Award by UCP Director of Community Participation Supports April Treaster, for the core principle of "Teamwork."





Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council

55 Utley Drive Camp Hill, PA 17011

Voice (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175

TTY (717) 737-0158

Fax (888) 524-9282

Email: racucpca@parac.org www.parac.org

Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2021

❖ February 17, 2021 (Wednesday)

❖ May 12, 2021 (Wednesday)

❖ August 4, 2021 (Wednesday)

❖ November 10, 2021 (Wednesday)

These meetings are open to the public. Location of meeting to be determined.

For more information or for persons who require reasonable modifications or accommodations including a sign language interpreter, real time captioning, or alternate format, contact the PaRC Office at (717) 975-2004.

We welcome any questions or comments you may have and appreciate your interest in the work of the Council.

Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council

55 Utlely Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011

(717) 975-2004 - (888) 250-5175 (Voice) - (717) 737-0158 (TTY)

EMAIL: racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org - WEBSITE: www.parac.org

Submitted To:

The Pennsylvania Legislature

The Rehabilitation Services Administration

Tom Wolf, Governor of Pennsylvania

The State Board of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board

The Pennsylvania Department of Education

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by WIOA 2014.



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