

2024 Annual Report



Pennsylvania
Department of Labor & Industry
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

OVR Executive Director Message

Looking back at this past fiscal year, I'm filled with gratitude for the work of our staff, partners, stakeholders, and customers and the impact we've been able to make – **together**. In the face of significant challenges to the national Vocational Rehabilitation program, our resourcefulness, expertise, and hard work have, again, left a lasting footprint, uplifting our communities and the lives of residents with disabilities who reside in them. I'm thrilled to share with you just a few highlights from last year.

After last fiscal year, over 6,000 more people with disabilities were working in competitive, integrated employment, realizing the financial independence and personal and professional benefits that come from finding a job and contributing to the success of Pennsylvania's businesses and our economy.

Last summer, because of successful partnerships our local offices have fostered, students with disabilities across the Commonwealth prepared for the world of work and/or post-secondary education. Through MY Work, over 1,200 youth with disabilities gained paid work experiences at 297 sites. Our Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired and our Summer Academy for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing were both held at Penn State main campus with 36 students attending total, and through our Commonwealth Internship Program, 25 college students had the opportunity to earn real-world, paid work experiences at various state agencies.

Our Commonwealth Technical Institute at the Hiram G. Andrews Center (CTI at HGAC) had a 76% employment rate for the 2023 graduating cohort and offered 35 externship opportunities this past year! In addition to this success, after two years of planning, they launched their Early Childhood Education Program. This program will combine classroom learning with externships to local childcare facilities, strengthening Pennsylvania's workforce and public/private partnerships.

Partnerships continued to flourish, including our partnership with CleanLogic, a bath and body products company in the Norristown area. Through this collaboration, 13 individuals with disabilities began working at their distribution facility. We are thankful for our partners like CleanLogic who are striving to create competitive integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities at their company!

Due to national funding concerns surrounding the VR program the next few years may prove challenging. OVR continues to closely monitor national funding trends for the VR program and make adjustments as necessary. With OVR's staff and stakeholders working together, we will surely be able to overcome those challenges to ensure access to services, supports, and opportunities for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

I hope you enjoy reading the next few pages of just some of the faces of success from last year!



State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation

The OVR State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation was established by the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1988. The Act provides the Board authority in determining the philosophy, mission, and goals of OVR and establishes the oversight and approval structure within the Department of Labor & Industry in regard to setting agency policies and programming. The State Board provides oversight and approval to new and updated policies, programs, fiscal activities, and Agency operations and performance.

Below, please find highlights of some of their work this past year!

December 7, 2023 Meeting

- Following a motion at this meeting, the Board composed and sent a letter to Governor Shapiro to address the direct/attendant care workers' crisis in Pennsylvania. In response to the letter and proposals, the Governor's Policy Office and L&I Policy staff met with the Taskforce and Board Administrator in February 2024 and continued supporting this advocacy through 2024.



Pictured left to right: OVR Executive Director Ryan Hyde, State Board Member Mike Kiel, L&I Exec. Deputy Secretary Bill Trusky and State Board Member Kevin McDonough

March 7, 2024 Meeting

- Motions passed to add a technical clarifications addendum to the OVR Driving and Vehicle Services Policy and to waive financial needs testing for the Independent Living Older Blind program.

June 6, 2024 Meeting

- Motions passed to approve the revised OVR Audiological Services Policy and approve the exemption of all Commonwealth Technical Institute at the Hiram G. Andrews Center (CTI at HGAC) services from Financial Needs Testing requirements for 12 months.
- The Board allowed the previous motions, which expanded the Financial Needs Test and college and other post-secondary training funding, to expire and revert back to the previously approved language.

September 12, 2024 Meeting

- A motion passed approving OVR to continue researching and re-implement the order of selection (OOS) for FFY2025, closing categories Significantly Disabled (SD) and Not Significantly Disabled (NSD), and to continue monitoring funding and implementing cost-containment measures.
- A motion passed in approval to create a Reauthorization Advisory Committee to study the reauthorization of WIOA Title IV. This is currently under review with the Administrator to the State Board.

Info Session

- On May 10, 2024, a Return-on-Investment Info Session on Post-Secondary Education services was conducted and presented by the OVR Executive Team, L&I Office of Chief Counsel, and agency managers upon request of the Board. Research demonstrated that OVR's post-secondary training and education opportunities allow customers to achieve higher, career-generating outcomes and employment opportunities, increased job satisfaction, and independence.

OVR State Board Members: Theo Braddy, Jennifer Christman, Liza Conyers, Michael Kiel, Kevin McDonough, Peg Monaghan, Bruce Schwartz, Fred Wright, Robert Justice, and Lucas Leiby.

In memoriam: State Board member Joseph Drenth passed away on August 6, 2024. Joe was a champion of advocacy and passionate in helping persons with disabilities exceed expectations. OVR will remember Joe as his valuable work and input are carried forward through 2025.

For more information about the Board and their activity, please visit [the State Board's webpage](#) or reach out to the OVR Administrator to the State Board: [Chris Harbert](#).

PA Rehabilitation Council

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) is OVR's designated advisory entity mandated by the Federal VR Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title IV.

PaRC is independent of the Commonwealth, composed of citizen members of the public appointed by the Governor of Pennsylvania to inform and educate legislators, the Governor, and the public on diverse issues impacting vocational rehabilitation and employment for persons with disabilities. PaRC is also responsible to provide advisement and consultation to OVR on policies, services, and the needs of Pennsylvanians with disabilities in obtaining or maintaining competitive integrated employment.

PaRC interacts and supports OVR by reviewing and collaborating on the development of the combined state plan, conducting the statewide needs assessment, and participating in policy development workgroups. The Council has established standing committees which meet with OVR regularly to advance programs, policies, goals, and agency direction to ensure the successful and impactful application of VR services.

Through 2024, PaRC has supported OVR local offices by inviting regional District Administrators to quarterly meetings to discuss area highlights, successes, trends, and performance levels and plans to maintain this interactive, supportive reporting structure. PaRC has also established a standing CTI at HGAC Committee and is further supporting OVR Citizen Advisory Committees (CACs) by inviting CAC officers to Council meetings for further collaboration and support.

Learn more about PaRC: [PaRC's website](#).



Council Members (C) and OVR staff (OVR) at the August 2024 Full Council Meeting in Harrisburg, PA

Pictured left to right, back row: Passle Helminski (C), William Paz De Melo (C), Andrew Pennington (C), Julia Barol (C), Ryan Hyde (OVR), Chris Harbert (OVR), Susan Tomasic (C) **Pictured left to right, front row:** Michelle Mitchell (C), Jessica Keogh (C) **Council Members Not Pictured:** Christie Cyktor, Sylenthia Dent-Siebenlist, Joan Myers Goodman, Lynn Heitz, Twana Jones, Kara Donatucci Pham, Julianna Rodrigues, Kait Gillis, Rob Wallington, Cynthia Duch, and Mallory Irwin

Program Year 2023-24 Vocational Rehabilitation Highlights¹



74,269

Individuals engaged with OVR²



21,157

New applicants



6,002

Individuals placed into employment⁴



21,861

Students received Pre-Employment Transition Services³



76%

Hiram G. Andrews Center Employment Rate⁵

Occupations OVR Customers Are Working In

Service Industries:	\$15.75	2,057
Community & Social Services:	\$18.91	997
Industrial & Mechanical:	\$17.78	971
Healthcare:	\$21.95	591
Sales:	\$14.78	493
Management, Finance, & Support:	\$24.84	386
Education & Training:	\$22.16	250
Professional & Technical:	\$25.25	218
Other:	\$18.63	46

¹Program Year (PY) 2023 began 7/1/2023 and ended 6/30/2024.

²Number of OVR customers who had an open VR case as of June 30, 2024, or had their case closed during the Program Year 2023

³Includes potentially eligible students and students with OVR cases, and both purchased and staff-provided services

⁴Number of unique OVR participants

⁵Seven-year running average of program graduate employment



3,865

Students OVR provided
\$32,969,423 to in financial
aid for post-secondary
training or education

8,230

Individualized Education
Plan meetings attended by
OVR staff



1,214

Youth who had paid work
experiences through OVR's
MY Work program at 297 sites
across the Commonwealth

Students who Received Pre-Employment Transition Services



2,551

Counseling on Post-
secondary Education



6,178

Instruction in Self-Advocacy

6,394

Job Exploration Counseling



11,041

Workplace Readiness
Training

5,946

Work-Based Learning
Services



\$18.35

Average hourly wage of
individuals employed

\$51.29 M

Estimated annual government
savings⁶

\$6,341

Average per-person cost of
services for an employment
placement



8.9

Months projected time
to recover investment



3,863

Number of individual
Section 511 counseling
sessions OVR staff
conducted

315 BEP Businesses BBVS Supported

The Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program (BEP) assists persons who are blind to operate their own food or other service businesses in commercial, industrial, or governmental locations. BEP can also assist interested persons with entrepreneurial business ventures other than food service

⁶Based on estimated income taxes, total average annual SSA reimbursement, and SSA benefits that may decrease or end due to employed individuals achieving SGA levels established by the SSA.

Customers Served in Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services Programs

1,042

Vocational Rehabilitation

1,572

Independent Living



1,217

Vision Rehabilitation
Therapy



683

Orientation & Mobility

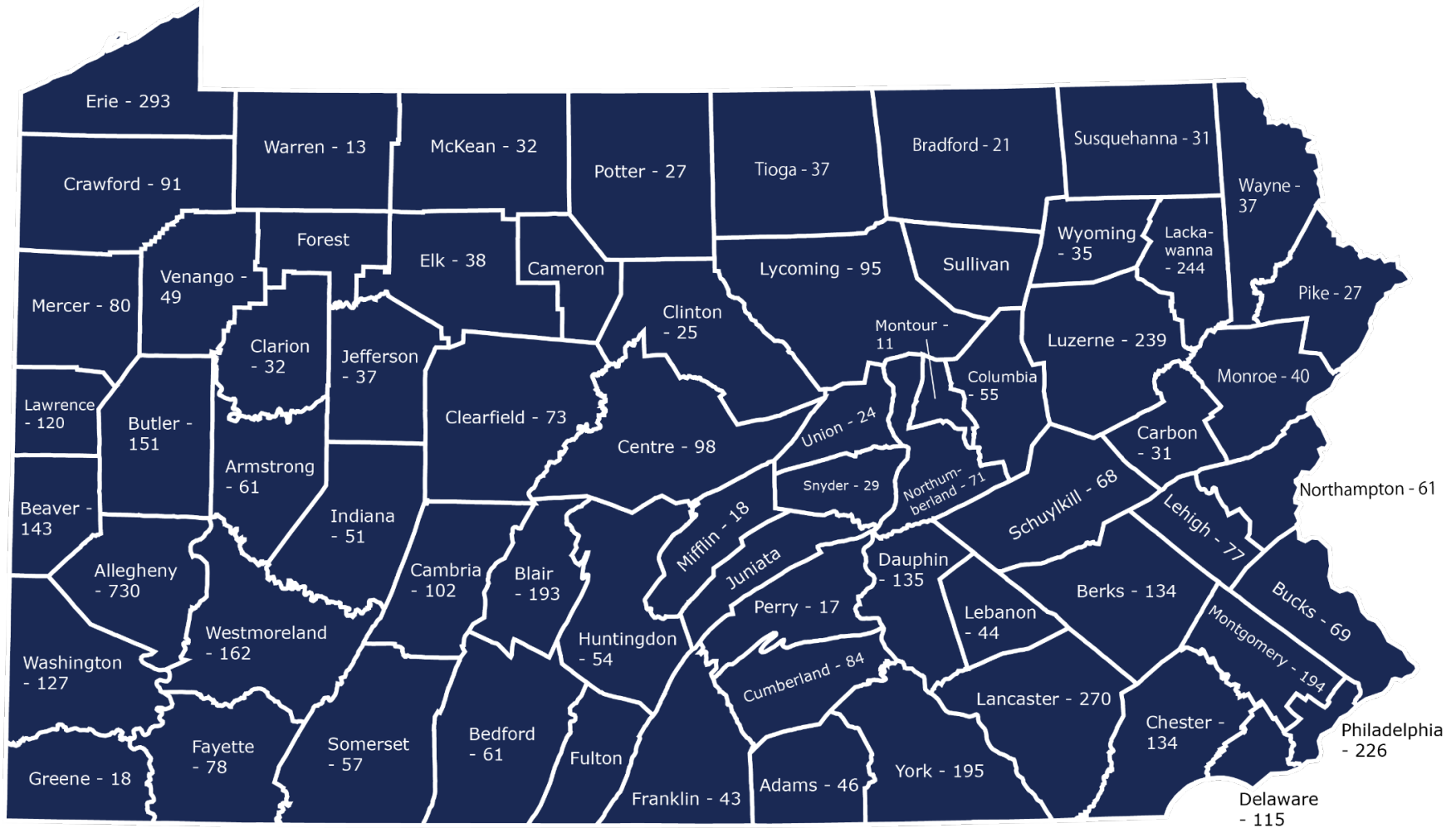
203

Specialized Services Children

112

Specialized Services: Adult

SFY 2023-24 Employment by County



*Numbers were not provided for the counties having less than 10 OVR customers employed to protect customers' privacy.

⁷The 34 CFR 361 regulations implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) require that the employment outcomes satisfy the following criteria under the Vocational Rehabilitation program: (1) competitive earnings, (2) integrated location, and (3) opportunities for advancement

Raquwan Bradford

"Never give up and keep working hard." That's the advice Raquwan Bradford would give to other people with disabilities who are seeking employment.

Raquwan is no stranger to hard work. He attended Red Lion High School and the Lincoln Intermediate Unit York Tech X Program. After high school, he attended OVR's Commonwealth Technical Institute at the Hiram G. Andrews Center (CTI at HGAC). While there, Raquwan said he was able to explore career options, identify his personal strengths, choose an employment goal, and learn independence.

He graduated from CTI at HGAC with a major in Materials Management and Distribution. Before graduation, he secured his driver's license!



CTI at HGAC Instructor Aimee Barr shared that "everyone involved saw his potential and he continued to work hard and see his efforts pay off. He always reported to class on-time and ready to work and brought his big bright smile. Ray overcame obstacles as all students do during their instruction, but Ray wanted most to be successful for his parents and show them that he could perform the work. I am very proud and wish him all the best!"

Following his training at CTI at HGAC, Raquwan started working at FedEx and has already been employed there for a year. Working at FedEx has offered Raquwan a very competitive hourly wage and an even higher shift differential. He said now he is making his own money, buying things he wants, and enjoying his independence. He also loves meeting new people at FedEx and working as a team.

Raquwan has always valued his experiences as a team member and is very appreciative of the support he received from the Red Lion High School Baseball Team Coach, Kevin Lawrence, and the entire team. He also credits his current success to the teachers at Red Lion High School, most importantly his favorite teacher, Denise Wagner, and Dr. Lorraine Munion from the York Tech X Program. He is very grateful for the support he received from his parents along the way as well.

OVR's York BVRs office started working with Raquwan while he was attending Red Lion High School. He received a variety of services from OVR including pre-employment transition, counseling and guidance, post-secondary training, driving instruction, supported employment, and job placement assistance.

Over the years, Raquwan has been involved in a variety of extracurricular and volunteer activities reflecting his commitment and dedication to achieving his goals, as well as his leadership growth. He has volunteered with the youth baseball league, wrestled in middle school, played intramural basketball, participated in mixed chorus for four years in high school, and served as baseball manager for two years, culminating in making the Red Lion Senior High School team during his final two years. His dedication continued with his role as high school wrestling manager during his senior year.

Raquwan believes that people should always maintain a positive attitude and not put limits on themselves. His new goal is to work for the United States Post Office as a full-time employee someday and buy his own home. With his "no limits" mentality and work ethic, there is no doubt Raquwan will continue to achieve his dreams.

Staff Shoutouts: Jennifer Smelko and Aimee Galdamez, VR Supervisors; Juliana Quintero and Anna Moore, VR Counselors; Samantha Poraczky, VR Specialist; Sarah Bantly and Allen Hockenberry, Employment Facilitators; and Joseph Roach and Aimee Barr, CTI at HGAC Instructors.

Susan McNeish

Since 2006, OVR's Erie Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS) office has worked with Susan McNeish to help her stay independent and employed!

Over the years, Susan has received many services from BBVS to continue working as a switchboard operator at the Erie VA hospital, and also part time at The Sight Center. Some of those services were rehabilitation teaching and aids, assistive technology and training, orientation & mobility instruction, and low vision exams and recommended aids.

Most recently, OVR's Erie team worked with Susan to overcome challenges she was having with communication by helping her obtain new glasses and computer software, as well as identifying new ways of working with her eye condition so she could continue to work. Susan said, "the computer enables me to better assist individuals with vision loss, while voice software facilitates my research and self-education to further aid others."

For Susan, being employed means "independence and financial security, pride and self-esteem." It also means she can give back, helping "others create their own independent lifestyle," as she has been able to do.

When asked what her advice for others is, Susan wanted others to know that "employment not only boosts self-esteem, but also promotes a structured lifestyle and provides a source of income that contributes to overall well-being. Establishing a daily routine can enhance one's life skills and dedication."

Susan credits her dog guides as one of the factors to her success, sharing "my dogs have empowered me to be self-sufficient, enabling me to carry out daily tasks and live independently without constant assistance."

Staff Shoutouts: Latoya Mathis, VR Counselor; Alecia Beam, VR Supervisor; Casandra Falkenhagen, District Administrator; Janet Roach, Fiscal Assistant; and Heidi Ehrhart and Renee Pakela, Clerical Assistant 2s



Jamie Pikulsky

Sometimes, from adversity, dreams are born!

After her family suffered from acute carbon monoxide poisoning due to a faulty furnace in their 100-year-old home, Jamie was left with a traumatic brain injury and PTSD from witnessing her husband and children slip into unconsciousness while, in critical condition herself, she was unable to help.

Prior to this, Jamie had worked as a Therapeutic Emotional Support Teacher for an Intermediate Unit and sold baked goods on the side with a business partner. After the distress that her family had been through, she had difficulty continuing to work as a teacher due to anxiety and memory lapses.

Her dream was to open an ice cream/sweets store in her hometown that was “a soft, nurturing place for people to congregate while feeling safe, leaving with a smile on their face.”



Jamie’s business started out with her making homemade ice cream from local farm ingredients at a friend’s coffee shop. When her friend told her he was closing the coffee business, Jamie connected with OVR to discuss opening her own ice cream and confection shop called The Corner Creamery in downtown Uniontown, PA.

Jamie worked with Duquesne University to develop a business plan and OVR’s Washington Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) office and the Washington Small Business Committee for review, revisions, and approval of the plan. In June of 2023, she submitted her final plan and received financial assistance from OVR to purchase many things for her business, including business cards, window decals, refrigerators, freezers, ovens, tables, stools, and other equipment.

In August 2023, The Corner Creamery officially opened first selling ice cream, then expanding to coffee and baked goods. Business is growing! Jamie’s shop now hosts community events and baking classes, and her menu has expanded to include additional products like pepperoni rolls and grab and go lunch items. With the addition of more products, Jamie changed the name of the store to From Scratch. It has now become a family business, with her husband running the store’s own food truck. From Scratch also outgrew their first location and moved to a larger storefront on Morgantown Street!

Of her business, Jamie shared, “It is my safe space. My business, From Scratch, would not have made it without OVR funding.” She shared that working with the Washington BVRs team has given her peace of mind having less to worry about with starting her store.

Be sure to check out [From Scratch on Facebook](#) for the latest updates from Jamie and team.

Staff Shoutout:

Darla Openbrier, District Administrator; John Miller, VR Supervisor; James Walsh, VR Supervisor; Alissa Hildebrand, Business Services Representative; Bridget Frascella, Business Services Specialist; and Stephen “Brad” Bacha, VR Counselor

David Engelman

Since he was 20 years old, David, an individual with a history of depression and substance use disorder, has had multiple incarcerations. At the time of his initial meeting with OVR in April 2022, he was enrolled in the Wyoming/Sullivan CO Drug Treatment Court Program after having just been released from prison. One of the requirements of the program was for David to find employment and, if he was not employed, to volunteer in the community or attend group therapy.

Working with his Wilkes-Barre Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor, David obtained employment at Manpower for P&G then Meshoppen Stone as a Diesel Mechanic. He then transferred to H&D Waste as a Diesel Mechanic. One of the requirements for this position was a CDL license. With financial assistance from OVR and working with Trans American Technical Institute, he met this requirement!

Today, David is working at Pensak Transport and making \$30/hour! What David enjoys about his job with Pensak is "the independence and freedom that allows me to travel from state to state while hauling loads."

He graduated from Wyoming/Sullivan County Drug Treatment Court in April of 2024 and is actively participating in his community, including serving as the Alumni Coordinator for the Wyoming/Sullivan County Treatment Court and participating in the softball league.

David now smiles and laughs often, has a career he is passionate about, and sends OVR referrals. He shared that having a job, for him, means the "foundation of a normal life and stability." His advice for other individuals with disabilities is to "not be discouraged. If it's a job you want, go for it."

Staff Shoutouts: Jessica Price, VR Counselor; Heather Nelson, District Administrator; and Kristen Leary, VR Supervisor



Catherine Smith

Catherine came to OVR's York Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) team after a long period of unemployment. She had reservations about re-entering the workforce due to: limited confidence, a past substance use disorder, chronic pain disorder, mental health challenges, bi-lateral hearing loss and a criminal background. She also worried that a return to work could trigger her anxiety and depression.

Catherine and her OVR counselor worked together to find small ways to build her confidence and transferrable skills that she continued to gain through volunteering and other experiences.

The two identified the Commonwealth of PA as a possible employer willing to give her a chance. The York BVRs team worked with Catherine to find relevant positions, assist with applications, and conduct interview prep to showcase her strengths and life and work skills, and communicate her ability to complete assigned job tasks.



Fast forward to today - Catherine is employed by the Department of Human Services as an Eligibility Determination Clerk for LIHEAP! She feels that the job is an excellent fit for her and a great way to get back into the world of work. What she likes best about her job is that it is satisfying. "Knowing I am a vital part of my community makes moving forward with my life journey rewarding. I know I help locals keep warm in the winter months. My co-workers are a joy to work with and my supervisors are compassionately accommodating."

Catherine's employer shared that they have had a positive experience working with her, stating that Catherine "is a very hard working and dependable employee. She is a quick and eager learner and completes tasks in an expeditious manner. She maintains a professional and positive attitude daily."

Catherine's advice for other individuals with disabilities is to "Keep trying. It has taken years to begin over again. Living life on Life's terms instead of feeling chained by my addictions, poor life choices and disability is rewarding. Difficult but rewarding."

Having a job means many things for Catherine, including being able to engage with family; freedom; having basic necessities like a home, food, and healthcare; and having an acceptable purpose to get out of bed every day. When asked what has helped her succeed and overcome barriers, she shared, "God. Family. Therapy."

Catherine shared, about her counselor Marie Martini, that she "has shown me that my disabilities do not define me. She has shown me ways to overcome fear and anxiety about returning to the workforce." She added that Marie "has helped me to make goals that are attainable."

After hiring and working with Catherine, her employer encouraged other employers to give applicants with disabilities a chance. "If other experiences are like ours, it is definitely worth it! We have a very valuable employee with Catherine!"

Staff Shoutout: Marie Martini, VR Supervisor

Barbara Rugh

For Barbara, working in her dream job as a mental health therapist is empowering! "It means the world as I have something that I worked hard for and I achieved when people told me that I wouldn't succeed or get a job in the field that I am in due to my disability," she shared.

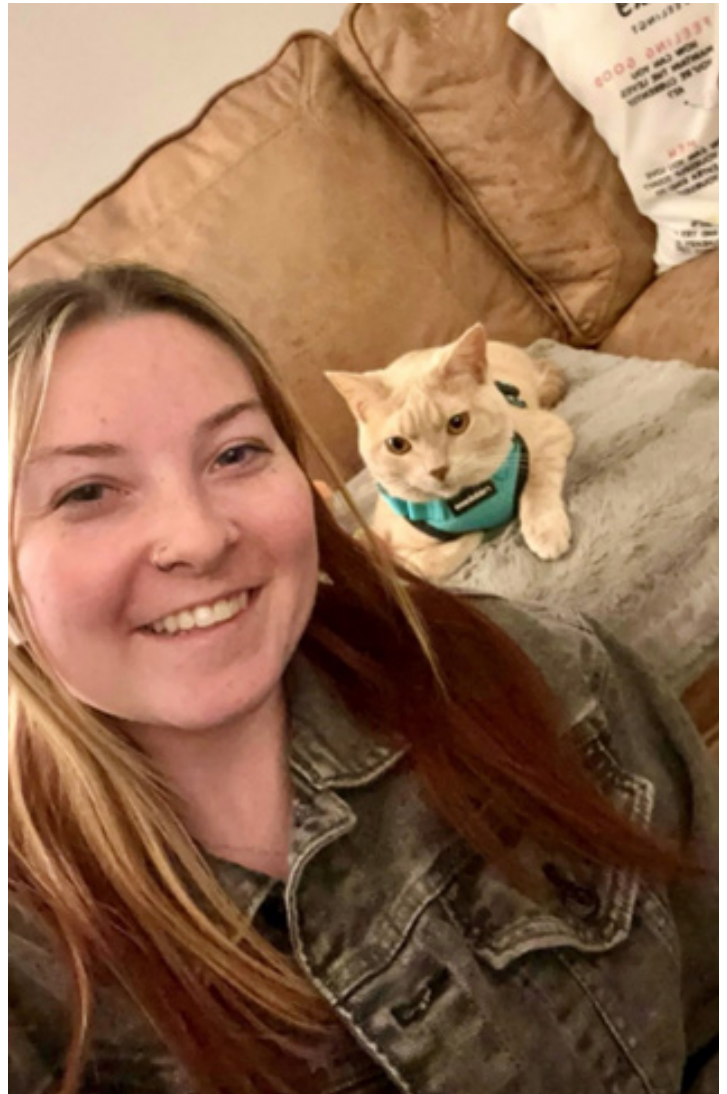
Barbara, an individual who happens to have a learning disability, started working with OVR's New Castle Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services office when she was a senior in high school. After high school graduation, with OVR's financial assistance, she pursued a bachelor's degree in social work at Slippery Rock University. She then began working as a blended case manager for Family Psychological Associates. After working a year to gain experience, she enrolled in a graduate degree program with Penn West University – Edinboro, receiving tuition assistance from OVR. Upon earning her master's degree in social work, she was promoted to a mental health therapist position at Family Psychological Associates. Barbara enjoys that her job has a "good support system and great coworkers that help me when I need it and answer my questions."

Throughout her college and career journey, Barbara has faced many challenges from her disability. She overcame them by working with OVR's New Castle team; asking for help when needed; utilizing assistive technology and accommodations; and practicing self-care.

When asked what advice she has for other individuals with disabilities Barbara said, "find your passion with employment and use that passion."

What has helped her succeed? "My family, friends, and my past OVR counselors over the years," she shared, "have helped push me to succeed."

Staff Shoutouts: Rachel Loya and Ryan Mortimer, VR Counselors



Katherine (Katie) DuBrowa

"Never give up until you have what you are looking for. I am finally employed within an organization where I am valued, appreciated, and have been able to succeed."

– Katie DuBrowa

Katie first worked with OVR's New Castle Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services office for help with post-secondary training/funding and job placement. She returned to OVR for assistance most recently to find a part-time position after struggling with her mental health following the COVID-19 pandemic. Her goal was to use her certification as a peer support specialist to start a new career path.

Through local employer collaborations, Katie's VR Counselor Rebekah (Bekah) Zagorski had a connection with Aurora Services who had shared they had an immediate need for a peer support specialist.

After talking with Aurora and Bekah about what the position would look like and some of her concerns, Katie decided it would be a good fit for her to pursue.

Katie worked with her VR counselor to complete an application, practice Q&As, and complete several mock interviews, then interviewed with Aurora's HR. The rest is history!

She began working for Aurora through an OVR On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunity, with OVR reimbursing Aurora for Katie's salary for the first 180 days. After the OJT ended, she continued working for Aurora part-time as a peer support specialist and has proven to be a valuable addition to their team. She's even been able to teach groups! Since starting at Aurora, she's received a raise and also increased her hours.

What she loves best about her job is "helping others on their mental health journey. I love witnessing the progress made by my peers." She also shared the difference having a job has made in her life. "Having a job gives me purpose," said Katie. "I have found my purpose in the work that I do every day and the peers that I help."

For Katie, her supervisor and the manager of mental health services at Aurora have helped her succeed and overcome barriers. "When I am unsure of how to proceed with something or someone on my caseload, they both provide me with advice and feedback needed in order to handle a situation independently," Katie said.

Katie recently spoke at a stakeholder meeting about her mental health and recovery, detailing how much OVR and her VR Counselor have helped reach her goals.

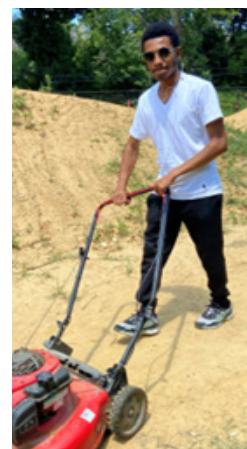
As for the future? Katie's wants to someday work full time!

Staff Shoutouts: Rebekah Zagorski, VR Counselor and Michael Pavelek, Assistant District Administrator



MY Work

- MY Work offers high school students ages 16 – 21 a supported, paid work experience in a business in their local communities.
- The paid work experience helps students gain skills to be successful in a competitive, integrated work environment after graduation.
- In 2021, MY Work expanded Commonwealth wide.
- In 2024, OVR arranged for 1,214 youth to have paid work experiences at 297 sites across the Commonwealth.
- Examples of work tasks: landscaping, painting, daycare and childcare assistance, meal delivery, clerical work, customer service, maintenance, gardening, clearing and maintaining trails, inventory management, roadwork (e.g., fixing potholes), cooking prep, camp teacher assistant work, event assistance, art camp activity assistance, cleaning, librarian assistant duties, renovation projects, local food bank assistance, detailing vehicles, animal shelter assistant work, farm assistant work, park beautification, carpentry, and much more!



2024 MY Work Partners

Abundant Blessings Thrift Store	Carlisle Rabbit Transit	East Juniata High School
AC Valley	Carlisle School District-IT	Eby's General Store
ACRES	Department	Educational Partnership
Alleghany Nation Forest	Carmichaels - Wana B Park	ELCAM
Alternative Community	Catasauqua Borough	Elk County, City of St. Marys
Resource Program	CCAC	Elk Lake School District
Ambridge Borough	Cedarbrook Senior Care and	EQT Rec Center
American Legion Country Club	Rehab	Excentia
Antrim Twp	Center Region Parks & Rec	Faith & Grace Learning CTR
Arc of Butler	Central Westmoreland Career &	Farm of Hope
Arc of York and Adams County	Technology Center	Fayette County Community
Avalon Library	Charleroi Borough	Action Agency-Food Distribution
Avonworth Park	Charleroi Library	Center
Barber National Institute	Chartiers-Houston Twp.	Fayette County Courthouse
Beacon (Keystone Community	Cherrytown Cemetery	Fayetteville Lions Club
Resources)	Chester County IU	Frackville Borough
Beaver County Rehabilitation	Chestnut Hill Township	Frank Sarris Library
Center	Child Lunch Program	Fun E Farm
Berks Animal Rescue League	Christian Home of Johnstown	Futures
Blind & Vision Rehabilitation	Citizen's Library	Genesius Theater
Services of Pittsburgh	City Island	George Jr. - Grove City
Blossburg Borough	City Mission	Gettysburg Rec Park
Blue Ridge School District	City of Connellsville	Gettysburg Visitors Center
Boyce Park	City of New Castle-The Parks	Gettysburg YWCA
Braddock Public Works	and Recreation Program	Girard Boro
Bradford County	City of Uniontown	Goodwill
Brentwood Library	Clare House/Habitat for	Great Commission School
Brentwood Park	Humanity	Greene Twp
Bucks County IU	Clarion Library	Hanover Parks and Rec
Bucks IU	Clarion Limestone	Harrisburg Area Community
Bucks Parks and Recs Silver	Clarks Summit University	College
Lake Nature Center and	Community Arts Center	Hazleton
Core Creek Admin Office	Community Counseling Center	Heidelberg Borough
Buhl Park	Community Integrated	Hempfield Behavioral Health
Burgettstown Library	Employment Services	Hempfield Rec
CADA North Versailles	Connellsville Area Community	Homestead Cemetery
California High School	Ministries	Homestead Library
Calvary Methodist	Coudersport Arboretum	Homewood
Cambria County Duman Lake	Cranberry Municipal Building	Hope Rescue Mission
Park	Cross Creek Park	Hope Springs Farm
Camp Agape	Cross Creek Township	Hughestown Township/Duryea
Camp Allegheny	Crozer Library	Borough/Pittston City/Avoca
Camp Coffman	Dallastown HS	Borough
Camp Ginkgo	Bethlehem United Methodist	Humane PA
Camp Hill Borough	Delaware Valley School District	Indrakloka Sanctuary
Camp Kaufmann	Developmental Educations	Industry Borough
Canonsburg Armory	Services of Monroe County	IU6
Canonsburg Borough	DiCenzo	Jenks Township
Carlisle High School	DuBois Area Local High Schools	Jim Thorpe Borough

Juniata County Conservancy: Port Royal Wetlands and Greg's Woods	Nescopeck/Salem Township New Hope North Park	South Union Township - Hutchinson Park
Juniata Food Pantry	Northeast Sight Services	Spayed Club Clinic
Juniata School District	Occupational Services Inc	St. Vincent DePaul Society
Kingdom Abound	Oil City Boro	Thrift Store
Kingston Township, Swoyersville Borough	Oil City Library System	State College Borough
La Torte Springs (Cumberland County Conservancy)	Olivets	Strawberry Fields
Lancaster City Parks	Opportunities Unlimited	Stroudsburg Borough
Lark Enterprises, INC	Orwigsburg Borough	Sunbury Clerks Office
Lebanon School ELCO	Overflow Church	Suncom
Leg Up Farm	PA Furniture Mission	Susquehanna County
LeMoyné Center - Daycamp	PA Lions Beacon Lodge Camp	TAPIN
LeMoyné Center - Summer Feed Program	Parking Authority	Tri Municipal Park
Lewistown Borough	Partners in Progress	Trough Creek Valley Sportsman's Assoc.
Lewistown Golf Course	Penn Township	Trout Run Park (Lewis Township)
LGBT Center	Penns Prairie Park	Upper Dauphin School District
Life'sWork	Philabundance Community Kitchen	Valley View Retirement Village
Lighthouse Church Daycare	Philadelphia P&R - Philly Pumptrack	Varha
Link for Youth Program	Pike County	VIA of the Lehigh Valley
Living Unlimited	Raystown Lake Visitor Center	Wallenpaupack School District
Longwood Gardens	Reaching Beyond Limits	Walnut Grove
LVCIL	Reading Public Works	Washington Park (City of Washington)
Manheim Twp	Red Lion Rec	Washington Twp
Maple Springs Pool Association	Red Tomato Farm	Watsontown Borough
Markets of Hanover	Redefined Community Church	Municipal Office
McKees Rocks Borough	Richland Historical Society	Wayne County
McKeesport City Hall	Rider Park	Wellsboro UPMC
McKeesport Mayor's Office	Rimersburg Boro	West Jefferson Hills School District
McKeesport Renzi Park	Ringtown Borough	Wildriver Waterpark
McLane Church	Riverside Park - Greenville	Wilkes-Barre City
McMurray Hills Manor Nursing Home	Rodale Institute Farm	Williams Valley School District
Mechanicsburg Borough	Roosevelt Recreation Center	Williamsburg Boro
Mifflin County School	Ross Twp Municipal Center Camp	Williamsburg Library
Millersburg Schools	Ryerson State Park	Windber Recreation Park
Mingo Creek Park	Salvation Army	Wissahickon Environmental Center
Monaca Borough	Schuylkill Community Action Program	Wolfe's Youth Employability Solution
Monroeville Fire Station	Scott Township Park	Work Opportunities Unlimited
Montour County Planning Zoning Human Services	Scranton	Woz Works
Morrison's Cove Memorial Park	Second Harvest Food Bank	YMCA (various locations)
Mountain View School District	Seneca Highlands IU-9	York City Parks Camp
Mt. Lebanon Golf Course	Sharpsburg VOA	York Fresh Food Farm
Mt. Lebanon Pool and Rec Center	Shenandoah Borough	Youngwood Borough
Nehemiah Project	Sligo Borough Pool	Youth Advocate Programs
NEPA Inclusive	South Fayette Township	Youth Forestry Camp
	South Franklin Twp.	
	South Park	

DHH Summer Academy



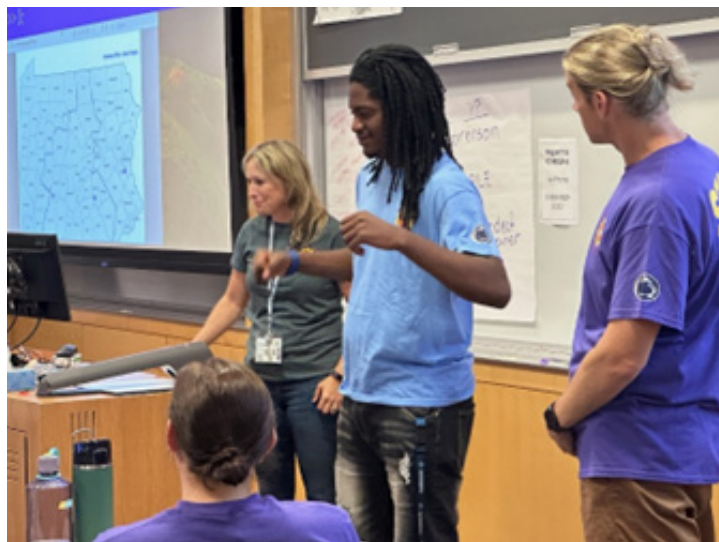
At OVR's 2024 Summer Academy for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH SA), 16 high school students spent 10 days at Penn State University's Main campus preparing for college and employment!

OVR's DHH SA provides students a supportive and fully communication-accessible environment, equipping them with independent living, social-emotional, and self-advocacy skills to help them succeed in their post-secondary education and career goals.

Congratulations to the program graduates!
We are so proud of each of you!

Thank you to the DHH SA partners at Penn State and the PA Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and to the OVR team for making this 7th year of the Academy a success!

Access the QR code to learn about Royale's experience as a first-time student at the 2024 DHH SA! Royale is passionate about helping others and has dreams of becoming a mechanic.



BBVS Summer Academy



Twenty high school students spent 10 days at Penn State University's Main campus in June 2024 for OVR's Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS) Summer Academy for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired.

While learning to travel independently with a white cane, practicing independent living strategies, exploring assistive technology, and learning about college accommodation requests and financial literacy, these students gained the skills and strategies they need to succeed in college and, one day, employment.

Congratulations to the program graduates! We can't wait to hear about your future successes! Thank you to all of the instructors and staff, and the OVR BBVS Special Programs Division for making the 2024 BBVS Academy a success!



Commonwealth Internship Program

Since its inception in 2018, the Commonwealth Internship Program has helped 100 college students gain paid, hands-on experience in the workplace and learn more about careers in public service.

Made possible by the collaboration of the Office of Administration, OVR, and partnering agencies, this program is helping students gain real-world experiences that promote skill development; build confidence and independence; and increase networking and career exploration opportunities.



It is not just the students who benefit from the program, though. State agencies gain a diverse talent pool, an inclusive workplace culture, and assistance with breaking down barriers as stereotypes are challenged and perceptions changed.

In 2024, 25 interns worked in various state agencies, including the Department of Human Services, the Department of Labor & Industry, the Department of General Services, the Office of Administration, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Community and Economic Development.



Interns handled many tasks, including managing events for agencies and the Governor's Residence; managing standard work development processes; helping to research and organize culinary training and classes; and developing surveys and conducting focus groups to inform and support agencies. Interns also provided summary reports of activities to support departmental decision-making, collected contact information and established a database and distribution list for the PA Food Policy Council, developed micro-learning, and facilitated/moderated eLearning workshops.

Commonwealth Internship Program continued



The interns even had the opportunity to visit the Pennsylvania Governor's Residence for a tour and a meet and greet/networking experience with Governor Josh Shapiro and First Lady Lori Shapiro! Thank you to the partners, staff, and students who made the 2024 internship program such a success!





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Find your local office.



OVR's mission: to assist
Pennsylvanians with
disabilities to secure and
maintain employment
and independence

