

# **2008 Annual Report**

**Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Wyoming Department of Workforce Services**



## Agency Mission

Building a workforce to meet the changing demands of Wyoming’s diverse businesses, citizens and economy.

## Division Mission

To advance opportunities for persons with disabilities in Wyoming to be employed and independent.

## Vision

Assist individuals with disabilities in overcoming challenges to employment

## Values

- We value people with disabilities;
- We value staff and their contributions;
- We value responsible leadership and management;
- We value an efficient and effective rehabilitation program;
- We value financial and human resources that meet the needs of people with disabilities.

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**Wyoming Department of Workforce Services**

**Joan K. Evans, Director**



## From the Administrator



On behalf of the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, it is a pleasure to present the 2008 Annual Report. The accomplishments of this past year serve to substantiate the dedication, expertise and professionalism of staff in efficiently and effectively advancing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to enter into successful employment outcomes. With emphasis on quality employment outcomes for clients, performance management remains the cornerstone of the Division's continuous improvement process. The Division exceeded all seven performance indicators in state fiscal year 2008.

The public Vocational Rehabilitation Program continues to be one of the most cost effective programs ever created by Congress. It enables individuals with disabilities to work and become taxpaying citizens. In state fiscal year 2008, a total of 4,167 Wyoming citizens with disabilities received a broad array of Vocational Rehabilitation services, 749 of whom secured, regained or retained employment with estimated annualized earnings in excess of \$14,059,000.

All eligible clients are being served with access to a broad array of individualized services. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is continuing its initiatives with respect to the transition for students with disabilities to postsecondary life, individuals with Acquired Brain Injuries, individuals with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness and Assistive Technology.

The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, increasing costs for medical services, evaluations and consumer training contribute to the mounting fiscal challenges confronting the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

The Disability Determination Services served approximately 3,900 Wyoming claimants during federal fiscal year 2008. The Disability Determination Services initial allowance rate was 48.3 percent, which was higher than the national average. The Disability Determination Services production per work year was 240.8. The Presumptive Disability Decision on Title XVI cases was 37.6.

Divisions, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Workforce Services have developed teams that are benefiting mutual customers by providing comprehensive services through the One Stop Centers. Using the team approach, developing cross education training will further facilitate networking opportunities with colleagues, employers, individuals with disabilities and members of the State Rehabilitation Council. Through ongoing effort, cooperative initiatives and partnerships will be forged and enhanced to provide comprehensive, client-centered services that promote opportunities for quality employment outcomes.

We encourage your review of this report, which demonstrates the positive impact the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's programs have in Wyoming. Thank you for your continued support.

Jim McIntosh  
Administrator

## Program Highlights

- 4,167 Wyoming citizens with disabilities received services ranging from vocational rehabilitation evaluation and eligibility determination to medical treatment, counseling, training and job placement; 749 persons were successfully rehabilitated.
- 82 percent of the individuals served were significantly disabled.
- 84 percent of the individuals who were successfully rehabilitated (returned to work) were significantly disabled.
- The annualized earnings for 749 individuals rehabilitated during state fiscal year 2008 is estimated at \$14,059,000.
- The annual savings to taxpayers, as a result of reduced public assistance payments to rehabilitated individuals, is estimated to be \$1,424,000.
- Social Security Disability Determination Services processed 3,831 claims during federal fiscal year 2008. Processing times continue to be some of the lowest in the nation while processing accuracy remains high.
- 673 people with the most significant disabilities received supported employment services; 223 supported employment clients were successfully rehabilitated this year.
- The Wyoming Independent Living Programs directly served 2,702 individuals. These programs responded to 9,165 requests for information and referral during the fiscal year.
- 161 Vocational Rehabilitation clients received assistance in the planning and establishment of a small business through Business Enterprise Program services; 36 individuals were successfully self-employed.
- 24 clients with a significant disabling condition received financial assistance through the Small Business Development Fund.
- 8 text telephones (TTY's), 30 amplified telephones, 9 captioned telephones (Cap-Tel™), 1 Voice Carry Over device, 22 signaling devices, 1 in-line amplifier, 1 out-going speech amplification telephone and 1 set of speakers and headphones were distributed free-of-charge through the Telecommunications Relay Service Program.

### Wayne Client, Jackson

Wayne was referred to Vocational Rehabilitation in the spring of 2006 by his counselor at the Jackson Hole Community Counseling Center in Jackson. He was troubled with health problems and unemployment and it appeared little change was in sight. Disability income and Medicare were available to him, but obstacles to work were too many and too much.

The supportive team at the Jackson Hole Community Counseling Center saw employment as therapeutic for Wayne. Vocational Rehabilitation and job coaching was brought in to help that happen.

Work experience services were provided giving Wayne the responsibility of a structured day and work expectations. Supportive job coaching and a willingness by to give new experiences a try, helped

him gain confidence. Vocational Rehabilitation assisted with new eyewear and dental restoration which also improved his presentation and confidence in securing a job.

Wayne independently obtained a position with the Browse and Buy Thrift Shop in Jackson and has worked for over a year. He enjoys his job as a clerk and sorter, and is proud of this one year of steady employment at Browse and Buy Thrift Shop.



# Programs

## General Rehabilitation

Employment for people with disabilities is the primary objective of the General Rehabilitation program. In this program, each state dollar is matched with approximately four federal dollars.

The conditions of eligibility for the General Rehabilitation program are defined under the Rehabilitation Act as individuals having:

- A physical or mental impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- The ability to benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services.

General Rehabilitation services are delivered through 16 field offices staffed by 29 Vocational Rehabilitation counselors and 20 assistants. These offices are managed by area consultants in five service regions. Evaluation of rehabilitation needs, rehabilitation counseling and guidance, referral services, assistive technology and job development are core services available to clients.

Other major services include diagnostics and evaluation, training and transportation. The client and counselor work together to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment that outlines the objectives and services required to accomplish the client's vocational goal.

## Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

Creating a positive environment for the independence and employment of people with disabilities is the primary focus of the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. The Committee focuses on employment and the removal of barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

This is accomplished in part by serving as a resource for individuals, employers, employees, businesses and people who want information about the needs and requirements of persons with disabilities.

The Committee serves as a coordinating unit for local groups and advocacy committees in communities throughout Wyoming. It also serves as a

## Paulette Client, Jackson

Paulette came to Vocational Rehabilitation in 2007, having lost her employment. Paulette had developed symptoms of weakness and fatigue due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. She had also developed orthopedic



symptoms impacting her physical capacity. She was close to retirement age; however, she wanted and needed to continue working. The situation seemed bleak as her skills were not adequate to compete for new employment. Her confidence was difficult to maintain as she was in need of dental restoration, development of new skills and a more sedentary occupation. Medical expenses exceeded her means, and she was at risk of losing her apartment. She wanted to rely on her strong work ethic to get her through, but obstacles were developing that made that seem impossible. Paulette needed to return to the workforce in a short amount of time.

Vocational Rehabilitation arranged for a work and training experience with a social service organization in Jackson, the Community Resource Center. Paulette would work and train in a reception position. She had on the job training in reception, computerized record keeping and intake skills. Paulette integrated well, and learned the job quickly, pulling on life experience and learning new skills. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services for training and dental restoration together gave her the confidence to move on, to learn and adapt to this new line of work. Paulette completed her work experience and was hired by the organization. She has responsibility for intake, service coordination and reception. Now she has gained stability in her housing and living needs. Combining her life experiences with an eagerness to learn is a winning combination for her.



liaison between the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Independent Living Council, Centers for Independent Living and the Visually Impaired Program.

The Committee provides information and technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act and other civil rights laws and issues concerning people with disabilities to employers, state and local governments, businesses and the general public.

### **Independent Living**

Wyoming is served by two Centers for Independent Living -- the Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation, Inc. in Casper, and the Wyoming Services for Independent Living in Lander. These programs provide services to people with significant disabilities that include maintaining employment.

The purpose of the Centers for Independent Living is to help people with disabilities to continue living in their homes and communities. In federal fiscal year 2008, the programs directly served 2,702 people and provided another 9,165 with information. Independent Living services in Wyoming are funded by Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

These numbers include both projects in Casper and Lander, Project Out, Transportation, Consumer Directed Care programs and the Youth Corp program. All affect an individual's independent living.

Chapter 1, Part B funds are awarded to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a formula grant based upon the State's population.

The 90 percent federal funds are matched by 10 percent state general funds and are contracted out to the two programs in Casper and Lander.

The two centers use these funds to provide case services, information and referral and consumer/system advocacy for people with significant disabilities throughout the state.

Part B funds are also used by the Wyoming State Independent Living Council. The State Independent Living Council uses funds to review, evaluate and monitor the Independent Living State Plan.

Chapter 1, Part C funds are granted to the centers in Lander and Casper. The funds are used to

cover administrative expenses, support benefits, and direct client services. This program is 100 percent federally funded.

The Independent Living - Chapter 2 - Visually Impaired Program provides independent living services to individuals age 55 and over who are blind or have a severe vision loss affecting their ability to live independently.

The program provides support groups, orientation and mobility training, daily living training, personal counseling and adaptive equipment. The federal program is awarded to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation with a required 10 percent state match.

The match is provided by a combination of funds from the Division and the contracting agency. The Division then contracts with Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation, Inc. to deliver these services statewide. In state fiscal year 2008, 485 individuals received direct services from the Visually Impaired Program project and another 3,393 received information and referral services.

### **Business Enterprise Network**

The Business Enterprise Program serves those Division of Vocational Rehabilitation clients who are interested or involved in self-employment. Self-employment includes various types of businesses, from home-based micro-enterprises to retail shops and other larger ventures.

The Business Enterprise Program can provide both technical and financial assistance, from helping a client start a new business that may be home-based to acquiring an existing business. Occasionally assistance in modifying a business for its owner is necessary when modifications are needed to accommodate the client's disability.

Business Enterprise Program funds are obtained from the vending machine services in State buildings throughout Wyoming. These funds are matched by federal dollars and comprise the Small Business Development Fund that are available to individuals who have a significant disabling condition and want to operate their own business. Vendor contracts are awarded to private enterprises through a competitive bid process. Commissions from the vending machines are the primary source of revenue for the Business Enterprise Program.

The Business Enterprise Program in state fiscal year 2008 provided training and self-employment assistance to 161 Vocational Rehabilitation clients from 25 Wyoming communities. Thirty-six individuals started small businesses. The businesses include saddle making, auto body repair, auto detailing, sewing, construction, woodworking, publishing, photography, horse training and taxidermy.

### **Transition from School to Work**

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains its commitment to transition services as defined by a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wyoming Department of Education. The Memorandum serves as a guide to enhance working relationships between the two agencies.

On June 25, 2007, the Division hired a full-time Transition Consultant who works with local education agencies and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors in coordination of services for students with disabilities. Over the past year, in three of the five regional areas, a counselor has been specifically designated to work with Transition students.

Initially, counselors provide consultation services for the student, parents and educational personnel regarding vocational options, services and opportunities available to students with disabilities.

During a student's subsequent transition meeting, a counselor meets eligible students, their parents and teachers and then helps students identify a vocational goal that fits with their strengths, interests and abilities. After a vocational goal has been identified, an Individualized Plan for Employment is developed with services indicated to assist the student in being successful in reaching their vocational goal.

The Division's increased focus and allocation of resources toward the transition school to work effort seems to be making a difference in the number of transition students who are able to benefit from our services.

During the federal fiscal year 2008, which concluded September 30, 2008, the Division worked with 936 transition students statewide. This is an increase of 17 percent over federal fiscal year 2007, when the Division worked with 802 transition students statewide.

## **Transition Partnership**

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Wyoming Department of Education have developed a Memorandum of Understanding that highlights the below elements:

- Joint training for agencies personnel;
- Uniform referral procedures;
- Technical assistance to school districts;
- Monitoring transition students' progress;
- Interagency sharing of client statistical and historical data;
- Transfer of ownership and shared payment for assistive technology devices and services; and
- Vocational Rehabilitation provision and coordination of vocationally-related services which include situational assessment, career exploration, job shadowing, rehabilitation counseling and work experience for students determined eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services.

## **Collaboration**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation collaborates with the Wyoming Department of Education in the following ways:

- The Division is a member of the Department of Education's State Transition Council;
- The Division is a member of the Department of Education's Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities; and
- The Division's Transition Consultant attends the Department of Education's conferences specific to transition issues.

Of the 936 transition students in federal fiscal year 2008, 60.3 percent of these cases were opened with students at age 18 and under. In a number of communities around the state, a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor is able to meet regularly with students in the schools. This has expedited students' receipt of services through the Division and helped families and educational personnel understanding of the variety of services that the Division can provide.



## Post Secondary Education

During state fiscal year 2008, 793 Vocational Rehabilitation clients were enrolled in post secondary training at Wyoming's Community Colleges, the University of Wyoming, and other institutions of higher education.

State Fiscal Year	Clients	State Fiscal Year	Clients
2008	222	2003	200
2007	203	2002	283
2006	174	2001	260
2005	158	2000	255
2004	216	1999	219

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation does not normally pay the full cost of a client's post secondary education; maximum efforts are made to secure scholarships and grant assistance, and clients must apply for a Federal Pell Grant to assist with the cost of training. In addition, the Division's rules and regulations on financial assistance require that if a training program is available in Wyoming, payment for out-of-state educational expenses will be calculated at the same rate available at public in-state institutions.

## Supported Employment

In the past ten years, 2,190 supported employment clients have been successfully employed.

The purpose of the supported employment services is to provide rehabilitation services for individuals with the most significant disabilities to enable such individuals to achieve employment.

An individual is eligible when:

- The individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services;
- The individual has a most significant disability; and
- A comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs of the individual identifies supported employment as the appropriate employment outcome for the individual.

Wyoming's Vocational Rehabilitation Program is designed to assess, plan, develop and provide vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with most significant disabilities consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests and informed choice, so that such

## Clients Enrolled in Post Secondary

Institution	# Enrolled
Casper College	89
Central Wyoming College	54
Eastern Wyoming College	26
Laramie Co. Community College	123
Northwest College	61
Sheridan College	58
Western Wyoming Community College	111
University of Wyoming	66
Out-of-State Institutions	26
Other Institutions	179

individuals may prepare for and engage in gainful employment.

## Acquired Brain Injury

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation having recognized the dramatic need for enhanced brain injury survivor services in the state has developed a five-year statewide Acquired Brain Injury service improvement plan titled PROJECT B.R.A.I.N. (Brain Rehabilitation And Information Network) that is designed to expand and improve rehabilitation services for brain injury survivors.

The Division has committed a substantial amount of funding \$500,000 that will be disbursed at the rate of \$100,000 per year over a five-year project period.

This project is being managed by the Brain Injury Association of Wyoming. Thus far, the project has achieved the following milestones:

1. A Community Resource Team Director has been hired to build local support groups and to recruit leaders in Wyoming communities to address the needs of acquired brain injury survivors (and their families) from the point of injury/illness.
2. Informational materials for use in hospital emergency rooms and admission departments have been developed, and are being distributed in two Wyoming pilot hospitals.
3. An annual brain injury conference is held each March to address the unique needs of this disability group and the people who provide them services.

4. The project has begun work on a communications network which includes an updated website with forums, chat, video download and an acronym directory to assist professionals working with the brain injury survivor population.

5. Work has been done with the Wyoming Department of Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities to leverage the funding of the project and increase its scope using federal Health Resource Services Administration funds. These funds have been used to hire a half-time statewide brain in-

jury educator. The educator has developed a catalogue of training packets and modules available at no cost to providers statewide. The catalogue is now available at [www.biausa.org/Wyoming](http://www.biausa.org/Wyoming) and was printed for distribution in January 2008.

6. Community Resource Team Guidelines have been developed with the input of hospital administrators, nursing and social work staff, support group leaders, brain injury survivors and family members.

7. Semi-annual Brain Injury Task Force

## Lyle Client, Torrington

When Lyle Struble first applied for Vocational Rehabilitation services in March of 2006 at the age of 45, he had not been employed since February 2005.

He lived with his mother after his divorce in 1993. He continued living in his mother's house after she passed away, and with no income, he had been living in the house with no heat, no water and no electricity since August of 2005.

He relied on one of his sons for occasional transportation, but usually walked to the store or to get water, and he lived on the outskirts of town. He cooked one meal a day on an open pit in the yard. Lyle had received food stamps, but could not read the letter when it arrived telling him he needed to re-certify, so his food stamps ended.

Lyle reported low back pain and being in special education for his disabilities. He did not know how to read but had received a high school diploma. He felt that he had just been pushed through school.

The Torrington office was concerned about Lyle's well-being, and after the psychologist conducted his evaluation in April, he expressed his own concern as well.

After Lyle signed a release of information, the Division got the Department of Family Services and Developmental Disabilities involved. Lyle was approved for the Disability Determination Waiver, and he began to receive services from Abilities Unlimited in Lingle. One of his caseworkers helped Lyle relocate to a low-income apartment in town. The Department of Family Services, Abilities Unlimited and others helped with furnishings, kitchen needs, etc. Everything Lyle had—clothing, sheets, towels—all

needed to be washed or replaced.

After Lyle had received day rehabilitation and in-home services from Abilities Unlimited for approximately two months, he gained weight, began to take pride in his appearance, began to take an interest in activities and gained energy. He participated in cognitive retraining, and training in budgeting, cooking and cleaning skills.

Lyle did not have a work history that would have been expected for someone his age. He had been a stay-at-home parent when his three sons were growing up, and he had primarily worked as a stocker at a couple of grocery stores after his divorce.

The Vocational Rehabilitation program provided a work experience preparing food for a small restaurant. When the restaurant closed, Lyle decided he did not want to do this type of work. With the assistance of a job developer, the Division was able to identify an appropriate vocational goal for Lyle.

Vocational Rehabilitation was able to locate an employer that allowed Lyle and another client to job share an auto-detailing position. Lyle discovered that he enjoys this type of work, and has been able to increase his hours from part-time to full-time.

Lyle no longer receives services from the Disability Determination Waiver or Abilities Unlimited, as he is now able to support himself.



meetings are being held to provide recommendations and other assistance as program development moves forward.

8. Wyoming brain injury support group facilitators are now being paid a \$120 per month stipend to offset their costs for time, planning, materials, phone calls etc. This stipend has resulted in increased longevity of facilitator involvement in the groups, and many group leaders are choosing to use the money to support activities, materials, speakers, food or other things that directly benefit group members.

9. A use-ability review of the developing website was completed by the Health Resource Services Administration, and a detailed plan for revision was compiled. The changes identified will enable users from a wide range of educational, cognitive and professional backgrounds to more easily locate items of interest.

10. The Brain Injury Association of Wyoming's newsletter has been revised for size, content and printing specifications. Publication on newsprint, in full color, in a larger font and page size, will improve readability for brain injury survivors, and will allow twice as many newsletters to be printed for the same cost. This will enable the association to expand distribution, and assist with some of the goals of the educational network.

11. The Brain Injury Association of Wyoming has committed some of its undesignated funds to the development of the BRAIN Foundation to support Project B.R.A.I.N. after the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's funding has been depleted. A specialist in foundation development has been contracted with, and the initial meeting on this part of the project is planned for November 2008.

The mission of the Brain Injury Association of Wyoming is to create a better future through brain injury prevention, research, education and advocacy.

### **Wyoming Relay Service**

The Telecommunications Relay Service, pursuant to Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act, is designed to provide universal telephone service for all Americans, including people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and/or speech-impaired.

Wyoming law provides authorization for the Telecommunications Relay Service and an Equipment Distribution Program funded by a telephone line surcharge. The surcharge remained at six cents per access line. Wyoming's Relay Service program applied for and was granted recertification by the Federal Communication Commission through July 25, 2013. The fastest growing Wyoming Relay service continues to be CapTel™.

CapTel™ is an enhanced voice carry over service that allows individuals with hearing loss to view word-for-word captions of their telephone conversations on a specialized telephone. The average number of CapTel™ minutes of service each month increased from 5,193 in state fiscal year 2007 to 5,679 in state fiscal year 2008.

Web CapTel™ became available in 2008. With Web CapTel™, users no longer have to use a special telephone in order to access Captioned Telephone service. Users can now access it from any computer that has Internet access (for captions), along with any standard, amplified, cordless or mobile phone (for voice). There are no long distance charges associated with making a Web CapTel™ call and the font size and color, as well as the background color, can be changed to make reading the captions easier.

Hamilton Telecommunications was selected as Wyoming's Telecommunications Relay Service provider as the result of a competitive bidding process in 2004, and continues to provide Relay Services to the citizens of Wyoming.

In addition to Wyoming, Hamilton Telecommunications, based in Aurora, Nebraska, currently provides relay services to Arizona, District of Columbia, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nebraska, Pennsylvania (CapTel only), Rhode Island, Saipan, Virgin Island, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The Equipment Distribution Program offers a variety of different types of specialized telephone equipment to meet the needs of individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech-impaired. The equipment offered includes but is not limited to text telephones (TTY), amplified telephones, Voice Carry Over devices, in-line amplifiers, a captioned telephone, Hearing Carry Over



## Steven Transition Client, Thermopolis

Steven is an affable young man who, in the past, spent many days worried about how his life may take shape following graduation from high school. Steven's story involves a long history of difficulty at school and in multiple living situations. Steven was first referred to Vocational Rehabilitation by a mental health professional who was concerned about Steven's career path. Steven decided to apply for services after meeting with the counselor, understanding that the Vocational Rehabilitation program could help him stabilize long term employment as he transitioned from high school.

Steven worked together with a job coach through his school and learned how to identify and clean dinosaur bones for preservation and display. Steven and his employer discovered that Steven enjoys working with the public and that he is an excellent contributor to the children's activities which are offered by the Wyoming Dinosaur Center in Thermopolis. Steven is now employed full-time, year round and is enjoying his career as a Lab Technician and Children's Tour Educator. Steven is able to see that he has accomplished many positive objectives and he continues to benefit from recognizing his successes as they relate to his job and his life.

Steven has developed many positive relationships through his school, through his work with Vocational Rehabilitation, and through his employment. Each person who has had the pleasure of assisting Steven with his goals knows that Steven's situation has required team-work and perseverance. Many thanks and heartfelt appreciation go out to the Hot Springs County School District Staff including Job Coach



Kathy King and Special Education Teacher Ashley Anderson for their effort and positive vision in arranging the work site; the many hours of job coaching have certainly paid off.

Recognition is made of the thoughtful and supportive efforts made by the staff at the Wyoming Dinosaur Center including the Preparation Lab Manager Bill Wahl and the Business Manager Angie Guyon. Vocational Rehabilitation services have contributed to Steven's success by planning for and transitioning to regular employment, while counseling has assisted Steven with seeing his goals as possible, worthwhile and achievable.

Above all, recognition is made of Steven's efforts. Steven has worked together with a team of people to learn how to manage the many aspects of employment, resulting in his successfully maintaining a full-time career.

Congratulations are sent to Steven and all the people who have worked together to make his transition a success.

devices, out-going amplified telephones for weak speech, devices with large displays/Braille/voice output for individuals with vision impairments and signaling devices. The equipment most requested and distributed is a cordless amplified telephone.

Wyoming Relay ran television advertisements, radio advertisements, newspaper advertisements and billboard advertising to educate the public about relay so they do not hang up when they get relay calls and also about 711 so the public is aware of how easy it is to make a relay call.

Wyoming Relay also ran television and radio advertisements to educate citizens who have recently lost their hearing about CapTel™. Wyoming Relay had booths at health fairs around the state. Finally, Wyoming Relay worked with the Wyoming Department of Education to provide information about relay statewide to students, their parents and service providers. Wyoming Relay collaborated with Montana Relay to run a joint newspaper advertisement in the Billings Gazette and to proportionately share the cost.

# Resources

## Wyoming Economic Benefit

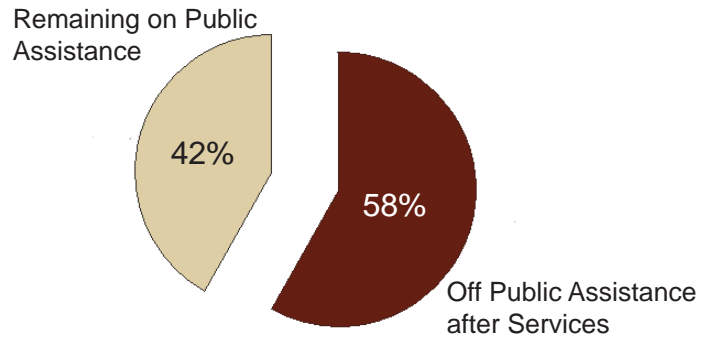
In 2008, Wyoming's Department of Workforce Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation rehabilitated 749 individuals with disabilities, resulting in estimated annualized earnings of \$14,059,000.

In addition, the annualized savings to taxpayers as a result of reduced public assistance payments to rehabilitated individuals is estimated to be \$1,424,000.

Prior to receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services, many people with disabilities rely on public assistance. With the help of Vocational Rehabilitation, these individuals can become employed and substantially reduce their dependence on public assistance.

## Public Assistance Costs Decrease

	Public Assistance Recipients	Public Assistance Costs
Before Services	334	\$2,991,000
After Services	189	\$1,567,000
Savings in Public Assistance		\$1,424,000



## Characteristics of Individuals Served

The following information describes characteristics of the 4,167 individuals who were served by the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation program during the state fiscal year 2008:

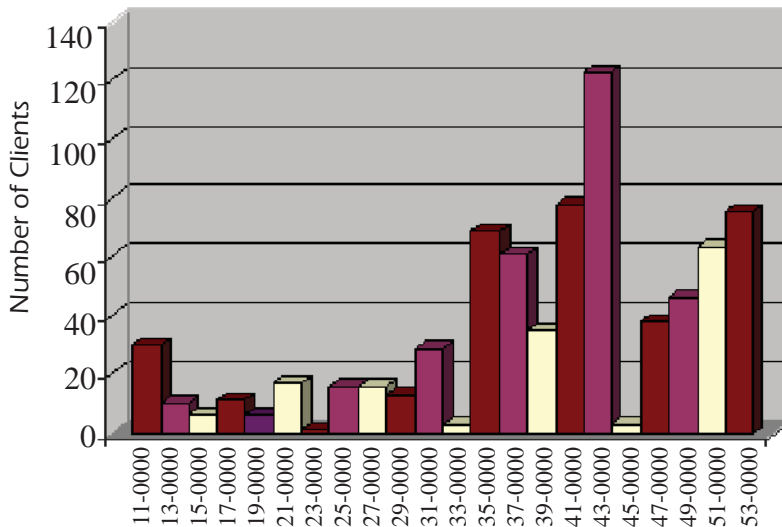
Major Disabling Condition	Percentage	Race	Percentage	Gender	Percentage
Orthopedic	27.7	White	93.7	Male	51.5
Psychiatric	34.9	American Indian	3.0	Female	48.5
Developmental Disabilities	18.1	Black	2.3		
Hearing	4.4	Asian	0.3		
Visual	2.6	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2		
Other Conditions	12.3	Multi-race	0.5		
		Hispanic	7.6		

## Occupations of 791 Rehabilitated Individuals

Based on data from the 2000 Census, over 46,000 Wyoming residents between the ages of 21 and 64 have a disability; nearly 40 percent of these individuals are unemployed. The following chart illustrates the placement occupations for the 749 individuals employed during state fiscal year 2008.

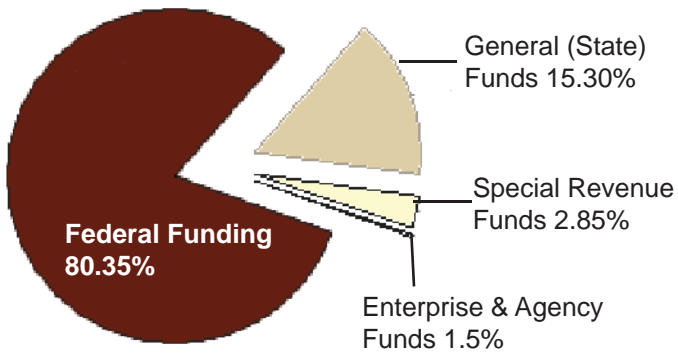
SOC Number	Occupation	Number of Clients
11-0000	Management	30
13-0000	Business & Financial	10
15-0000	Computer & Mathematical	6
17-0000	Architecture & Engineering	11
19-0000	Life, Physical & Social Science	6
21-0000	Community & Social Services	17
23-0000	Legal	1
25-0000	Education, Training & Library	16
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	16
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	13
31-0000	Healthcare Support	29
33-0000	Protective Service	3
35-0000	Food Preparation & Serving Related	69
37-0000	Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	61
39-0000	Personal Care & Service	35
41-0000	Sales & Related	78
43-0000	Office & Administrative Support	123
45-0000	Farming, Fishing & Forestry	3
47-0000	Construction & Extraction	38
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance & Repair	46
51-0000	Production	63
53-0000	Transportation & Material Moving	75
Total		749

## Standard Occupational Classification Major Groups

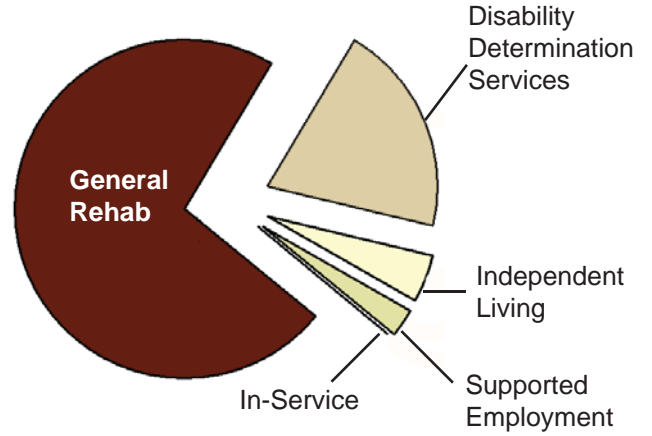




### Expenditures by Funding Source



### Expenditures by Federal Funding



Program Name	Federal Funds	General Funds	Special Rev. Funds	Enterprise Funds (WC)	Agency Funds (BEP & WBLN)	Total Expenditures	% of Grand Total Expenditures
General Rehab with Other Match	\$8,509,973	\$1,870,875	\$0	\$60,664	\$116,509	\$10,558,121	71.77%
Disability Determ. Services	2,352,533	0	0	0	0	2,352,533	15.99%
Telecom. Relay Svc	0	0	419,212	0	0	419,212	2.85%
IL - Part B	307,316	33,900	0	0	0	341,216	2.32%
Supported Employment	302,226	0	0	0	0	302,226	2.05%
Administration	0	341,253	0	0	0	341,253	2.32%
IL - Chapter 2	222,705	2,395	0	0	0	225,100	1.53%
Social Security Reimbursement	110,479	0	0	0	0	110,479	0.75%
Business Enterprise	0	0	0	0	44,052	44,052	0.30%
In-Service	15,853	1,761	0	0	0	17,614	0.12%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11,821,085</b>	<b>2,250,284</b>	<b>419,212</b>	<b>60,664</b>	<b>160,561</b>	<b>14,711,806</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>% of Grand Total Exp.</b>	<b>80.35%</b>	<b>15.30%</b>	<b>2.85%</b>	<b>0.41%</b>	<b>1.09%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

WC: Worker's Compensation Funds  
 BEP: Business Enterprise Program Funds  
 WBLN: WY Business Leadership Network Funds

## Program Standards

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has established Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Wyoming's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) exceeded all seven indicators in state fiscal year 2008.

**Evaluation Standard 1 - Employment Outcomes.** DVR must assist any eligible individual to obtain, maintain or regain high quality employment.

State Fiscal Year 2008	RSA Standard	WY DVR Result
Performance Indicator 1.1 - The number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome in the current year must equal or exceed the number from the previous year.	741	749
Performance Indicator 1.2 - The percentage of individuals who exited the VR Program after receiving services who achieved an employment outcome.	55.8%	65.5%
Performance Indicator 1.3 - The percentage of individuals who achieved an employment outcome and are earning at least the minimum wage.	72.6%	97.8%
Performance Indicator 1.4 - Of those earning at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.	62.4%	83.6%
Performance Indicator 1.5 - The average hourly earnings of individuals earning at least the minimum wage, as a ratio to the average hourly earnings for all individuals in Wyoming who are employed.	52%	60%
Performance Indicator 1.6 - Of those earning at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage whose own income is their largest source of support when they exited the VR Program, and the percentage whose own income was their largest source of support at the time they applied for VR services	53.0%	63.8%

**Evaluation Standard 2 - DVR must ensure that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services**

State Fiscal Year 2008	RSA Standard	WY DVR Result
Performance Indicator 1.2 - The service rate for individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minorities with disabilities	80%	86%

### Colby Client, Evanston

Colby Wagner came in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation almost three years ago when he was a senior at Evanston High School.

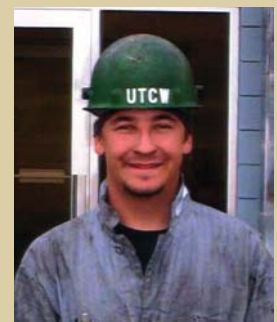
Colby is currently employed in a high demand occupation and can take his skills with him almost anywhere to find employment. He is a certified welder currently employed at Union Tank Car Company in Evanston, Wyoming.

While in high school, Colby enjoyed welding and his strengths entailed completing hands on activities. He decided to use his abilities to learn vocational skills necessary to pursue a career that he truly enjoys.

He completed the welding certification program

at Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs.

While in school, Colby developed strong personal advocacy skills. He understood the hard work involved to achieve his occupational goal. Colby accessed all of the academic accommodations afforded to him. Colby continues to fine tune his welding skills and contributes to his employer success in providing quality service.



# Social Security Disability Determination Services

Disability Determination Services makes decision of disability and blindness for both Title II and Title XVI of the Social Security Act on behalf of the Social Security Administration.

Following preliminary claim preparation, the Disability Determination Services completes the development and adjudication of the medical, psychological and vocational factors of eligibility. Two levels of appeal concerning denied claims are adjudicated in the agency. The Disability Determination Services also provides a Certified Hearing Officer to adjudicate appeals when benefits are

terminated related to continuing claim review and update showing cause of end of awarded benefit.

The Disability Determination Services is 100 percent federally funded. The federal fiscal year budget was \$2.52 million. Under the annual budget, the federal government pays the state of Wyoming for administrative costs.

The Disability Determination Services served approximately 3,900 Wyoming claimants during federal fiscal year 2008. The initial allowance rate was 48.3 percent, which was higher than the national average. The Presumptive Disability

## Michael Client, Rock Springs

Dr. Michael J. McInnis moved from Wisconsin to Rock Springs in the fall of 1978. Fresh out of graduate school, the ink had barely dried on his medical doctor license. Dr. McInnis hung out his shingle and became a household name, a cornerstone of the community and a much respected and loved family physician with a promising career ahead of him.

Twenty years later, in 1999, Michael's promising career had vanished. He was addicted to multiple drugs, including prescription medications and meth. He was charged, and pleaded guilty, to the felony offense of abuse of controlled substances. As a convicted felon, he would never work as a doctor again. In November 2000, to avoid going to prison, he relinquished his license and privileges to never practice medicine again.

Though he had side-stepped prison, this was a life sentence for Michael. Being a doctor was much more than a career - his entire identity was melted in to being "The Doctor".

In 2004, while on Intensive Supervised Probation, Michael relapsed into his addictions. He spent the next two years floundering in an Inpatient Treatment Center. He had lost his will to heal and maintain sobriety. While in treatment, he had to earn the privilege to work at any job.

In April 2008, at 58 years of age, he found the courage to walk into the Rock Springs Vocational Rehabilitation office. He didn't know what, if anything, Vocational Rehabilitation could do for him.

During the discovery process, Michael said he was especially interested in geology and had recently taken classes. Of course, Wyoming is known for its oil and gas industry, but could he transition from a lifetime career "white-collar" mindset, to a "blue-collar", rough and tumble oil field hand?

Great Divide Consulting is a local business and contracts to oil/gas companies as Mudloggers. The owner, Penn Selman, remembered Michael as his family doctor. He was excited for the opportunity to work with Michael and train him as a mudlogger.

Michael began working with Great Divide Consulting as a mudlogger in May 2008. Within his first ninety days, he had worked his way up from entry level mudlogging, to the lead supervisor on site, in charge of training new hires. The job was an excellent employer/employee fit and he absolutely loved the work.

Vocational Rehabilitation services, to support Michael in his vocational rehabilitation, included reliable transportation to travel to and from the oil field locations. He also needed the specialized and expensive fire retardant clothing, gloves and boots for Wyoming's harsh weather and more important; as safety protection from the daily potential of oil/gas fires.

On Michael's case file closure form, he expressed that he feels he has a new lease on life and a second chance. He pole vaulted from a monthly gross income of \$1200 to well over \$100,000 a year.



Decision on Title XVI cases was 37.6 percent, which was higher than the national average.

The Wyoming Disability Determination Services implemented the Quick Disability Determination process earlier this year. This process is an initial determination level process used to identify and accelerate the adjudication of the claims of persons who have a “high degree of probability” of being disabled, where there was an expectation that the claimant’s allegations will be easily and quickly verified.

Under the Quick Disability Determination process, a predictive model analyzes specific elements of data within the electronic claims file to identify claims where there is a high potential that the claimant is disabled and where evidence of the claimant’s allegations can be quickly and easily obtained. The Wyoming Disability Determination Services implemented Outbound Fax in which requests are sent from the computer system using outbound fax directly to the vendor’s fax machine. Vendors are asked to return their response using a fax server number and the bar-code sheet as the first page, along with the vendor’s bill, and records/reports.

The following Disability Examiners are mem-

bers of the National Association of Disability Examiners: Gabriel Barajas, Jeff Graham, Judy Lebsack, Ree Lindgren, Jan Minear, Karyn Speight and William Walters. The National Association of Disability Examiners is committed to furthering the art and science of disability evaluation, enhancing public awareness about disability evaluation and furthering the professional recognition for disability evaluation practitioners. The Wyoming Disability Determination Services continues to implement specific protocols for Military Casualty cases, terminal illness cases and low birth weight cases. When a claim is received by from the Social Security Administration, it is reviewed and expedited according to these initiatives and protocols.

Online services include:

- Apply for benefits
- Begin or continue the Adult Disability and Work History Report;
- Continue the Appeal Disability Report;
- Apply for extra help with your Medicare prescription drug costs;
- Check the status of your online application;
- Find out what benefits you can apply for

For more information, visit [http://www.social security.gov/online services/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online-services/).

## Adam Client, Kemmerer

Adam came to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Diamondville/Kemmerer area after a difficult life growing up in Jackson.

Adam is a Recycle Sorter. Adam was hired by the Lincoln County Landfill to work through and sort items improperly placed in the two recycling trailers. This was the first large effort in the County to recycle. Previously the only means of recycling was if people drove to the Landfill and made sure items were placed in designated areas. Even with the recycling bins being brought into town and even though the landfill folks stressed the importance of throwing only items as listed on the bins into them, Adam has had to continually organize the items to keep the right item in the right bin for proper recycling.

Adam had tried other vocations, but because of the obstacles brought on by his disabilities, none had worked out. Adam has a great desire to work and

with the help of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and an excellent Job Coach who was determined to find just the right vocation for Adam, he has found satisfaction in his vocation and the great

service he is able to contribute to the community.

He said, “It’s a fun thing to do. I like making our community a better place to live.” He especially likes the pay and says it is a “real achievement for me to do this job.”



# State Rehabilitation Council

## Members

The following were members of the State Rehabilitation Council as of July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008:

- Shannon Bodin – Chairperson  
Executive Committee, Casper
- Joe Thomas – Chairperson Elect  
Executive Committee, Reliance
- Lee Beidleman – Vice Chairperson  
Client Assistance Program  
Executive Committee, Cheyenne
- Marion Cotterman  
Communications Committee, Wheatland
- Dorothy Cronin  
State Independent Living Council  
Review Committee, Casper
- Terri Dawson  
Parent Information Network  
Communications Committee, Buffalo
- Jim McIntosh, Administrator (non-voting)  
Department of Workforce Services  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Executive Committee, Cheyenne
- Laura McKinney  
Community Rehabilitation Program  
Review Committee, Cheyenne
- Ray Metcalf  
Communications Committee, Riverton
- Kristi Mogen  
Review Committee, Douglas
- Lisa Osvold, Deputy Director  
Department of Workforce Services  
State Workforce Investment Board  
Communications Committee, Cheyenne
- Mark Pixley  
Review Committee, Sheridan
- Bob Rowan  
Native American Rehab. (121 Project)  
Review Committee, Lander
- Debbie Terech  
Executive Committee, Evanston
- Becky Taggart  
Communications Committee, Lyman
- Donna Thompson  
Department of Education (IDEA)

Communications Committee, Riverton

- Diether van Houten, Counselor  
Review Committee, Sheridan

## 2008 Annual Report

The Wyoming State Rehabilitation Council's Mission is to review, analyze and advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the delivery of effective rehabilitation services which lead to employment for individuals with disabilities, and in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, advance the use of resources necessary to promote the independence of Wyoming's citizens with disabilities.

The responsibilities of the State Rehabilitation Council are defined in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. By this Act, the Council is authorized to review, analyze and advise the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on the performance of the Vocational Rehabilitation program. In partnership with the Division, the Council develops and reviews state goals and priorities, evaluates the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, assists in the preparation of the Unified State Plan and reviews customer satisfaction.

Members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor, and appointments are based on personal qualifications and the needs of the Council. Members are a representation of persons with disabilities, disability advocacy organizations, current and former consumers of vocational rehabilitation services, medical professions, state educational agencies and representatives of business, industry and labor.

The Council meets on a quarterly basis, and its meeting locations and times are published prior to each meeting in the statewide Casper Star-Tribune newspaper. Future meeting times and locations, as well as the minutes from past meetings are posted at the following website: [http://wyomingworkforce.org/aboutus/partners\\_assoc\\_src.aspx](http://wyomingworkforce.org/aboutus/partners_assoc_src.aspx). Information may also be obtained by calling the current Council Chairperson, Joe Thomas at 307-382-5666.

The Council does provide accommodations to attend meetings or information sessions. Accom-

modations may be arranged in advance by calling 307-777-7389. The Council also provides a booth at the annual MEGA Conference.

The Council is dedicated to ensuring that Wyoming residents with disabilities receive effective services by conducting and reviewing a needs assessment survey; reviewing programs and policies being implemented; evaluating the Council's Client Satisfaction Surveys and contacting those surveyed who indicate a desire to discuss concerns regarding their individual Vocational Rehabilitation experience with a Council representative and by working in cooperation with such groups as the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Wyoming Statewide Independent Living Council, Parent Training and Information Center, Client Assistance Program, Brain Injury Association, the Wyoming Department of Education, Business Leadership Network and other agencies to implement a proactive approach for the betterment of persons with disabilities.

The State Rehabilitation Council and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are continually assessing and enhancing their relationship in an effort to push for improvements that the state's citizens with disabilities deserve. The Council continues to forge bonds with partners and service providers across the state in an effort to guarantee quality and dignified services for citizens with disabilities.

The Council is currently composed of three Committees, each with the functions described below.

#### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee works toward the coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the Division and the Council. Members of the committee discuss new nominations, policies and solutions to improve the communication between the Division and the Council.

The goal of this committee is to facilitate a positive partnership between the Division and the Council. This working relationship is crucial in providing stronger and more effective services.

#### **Communications Committee**

The Communications Committee has the responsibilities of coordinating and communicating with other councils and human resource entities, performing and coordinating public relations and maintaining the Employer Recognition Program.

Staying informed of the activities of other organizations concerned with the disabled population provides powerful networking tools and helps to avoid duplication of efforts.

Promoting the awareness and function of Vocational Rehabilitation creates connections between consumers and the employers who can benefit from hiring them. The Communications Committee makes employment information available to employers, consumers and parents by participating in the annual MEGA Conference, as well as other conferences and opportunities to increase the Council's and the Division's visibility.

In conjunction with the quarterly meetings, this committee also facilitates an information session that is open to anyone interested in gaining information about available resources or having concerns addressed.

The importance of the employers' efforts in utilizing people of differing abilities cannot be overlooked. This committee collaborates with the Business Leadership Network to recognize employers around the state who support employment of people with disabilities. Without employers' willingness to recognize people's talents, many Vocational Rehabilitation efforts would be without consequence and a willing, qualified workforce would go untapped. Recent Employer Award recipients include Dr. James Thies, DVM of Ark Animal Hospital, Casper; Valley Floral, Saratoga; Tepee Spa, Thermopolis; Knebel Body and Paint, Buffalo; and McDonald's, Cody.

#### **Review Committee**

The Review Committee has the yearly responsibility to review the Division's section of the State's Unified Plan to identify any areas that may need further attention. Other responsibilities are to make sure client satisfaction survey results are accounted for from the Division. This is a very important role of the Council, and the Review Committee assesses client concerns regarding the service delivery system.

Those interested in becoming a member of the Council can obtain an application form by calling (307) 777-7389 or contact Joe Thomas, Chairperson at P.O. Box 38, Reliance, WY 82943 or by calling (307) 382-5666 or emailing Joethomas383@yahoo.com.



# Wyoming Business Leadership Network

Established in 1997, the Wyoming Business Leadership Network has chapters in Cheyenne (1997), Evanston (2000), Bridger Valley (2002), Lander-Riverton (2004), Rock Springs (2005) and Sheridan/Bufalo (2008). Each community Business Leadership Network provides a variety of services that benefit their respective community as described in the following summary:

## Evanston and Bridger Valley

### Annual Activities:

- Awards program recognizing outstanding employees with disabilities, and businesses and organizations which excel in outreach efforts to our disability community. This event is held each October in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month.
- The National Disability Employment Awareness Month also gives the Business Leadership Network an opportunity to partner with the two local newspapers in Uinta County in the publication of a special newspaper insert which focuses on the successful employment of people with disabilities and the many businesses that realize the potential and the benefits of hiring an individual with a disability. This newspaper insert is distributed throughout Uinta County; and is also shared through the year with attendees of events and prospective new business partners.
- March is recognized as National Developmental Disability Awareness Month. The Network coordinates an annual Celebration of People of ALL Abilities with a luncheon, entertainment, giveaways and proclamation signing by the Mayor of each community.
- The Discovery Career and Lifestyles Expo's scheduled for each spring. This is an opportunity for area businesses and organizations to interact with job seekers with disabilities explore career opportunities and introduce their business/product.
- National Disability Mentoring Day is held in partnership with the Network's Awards events each year. The Network Director coordinates this initiative with the MentorABILITY Director each year, in both Evanston and



### Bridger Valley.

### Monthly Activities:

- 'FlexAbility E-newsletter that is sent electronically to the Network database and all area Chamber of Commerce business members. The newsletter works toward educating readers on various subjects, such as interviewing job seekers with a disability, reasonable accommodations, tax breaks which benefit the employer, reasons why hiring a person with a disability is smart business, Americans with Disabilities Act regulations and much more.
- The Network's Advisory Committees meet monthly in each respective community.
- Personal employer visits, which result in the development of strong partners.
- Service provider meetings bring together area providers, the Network and employers who shares hiring needs, strategies, etc.
- Business leadership roundtables are organized in an effort to bring together providers, job seekers with disabilities and business owners. Business policies, hiring procedures, position openings and other topics of interest are discussed.
- Resume development opportunities are given to Vocational Rehabilitation clients who require assistance in the creation of a resume/profile.
- Month-end reporting is shared with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation personnel and the Business Leadership Network team. This report outlines the benchmarks obtained

by the Network and keeps staff abreast of all activities.

- Job announcements are compiled and shared with Vocational Rehabilitation counselors as they are available.
- Network participation with community/employer based organizations, such as Chamber of Commerce.

Activities Upon Request or Opportunity:

- Presentations for employers/staff regarding a variety of topics, such as
- Disability Awareness
- Mental Health in the Workplace
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Interviewing Techniques
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission presentations
- Americans with Disabilities Act Workshops
- Resume Writing Workshops for Job Seekers
- Trainings as needed by the employer
- Special gatherings of people of ALL abilities such as Open House each March in celebration of all our citizens; Luncheon/awards presentation, October 2007 in celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month and National Disability Mentoring Day with Mr. Chad Hymas; whom the Wall Street Journal has designated as one of the top ten inspiration speakers in the world. Over 200 in attendance; and Proclamation signings with local mayors in which Vocational Rehabilitation clients and staff are encouraged to attend.
- Disability Friendly Business Campaign (second state in the nation to kick off this initiative!) was created to acknowledge those businesses and organizations that have instituted and promoted best practices in the employment, independence and service to persons with disabilities. As part of this program, those receiving the recognition are awarded with a Disability Friendly Business seal. The seal, displayed at the entrance of the facility, serves as a symbol to patrons of the businesses commitment to quality service towards hiring, accommodating and serving individuals with disabilities.

- The DisAbility Friendly Business committee was proud to recognize Jiffy Lube as a dis-Ability friendly business. To date, 34 area businesses and organizations have received this recognition.

Serving Our Citizens with Disabilities:

- Evanston Vocational Rehabilitation counselors have reported 42 successful Network affiliated closures between October, 2007 and September, 2008.
- Almost 40 employers participated in the annual Discovery Career and Lifestyles EXPO during April 2008.
- Over 200 job seekers (youth & adults) with disabilities attended EXPO 2008.
- 62 media recognitions/publications during this past fiscal year, (this does include chamber newsletters and hundreds of radio announcements) The Network believes that reaching out to the general public by means of the media is an effective disability awareness tool.
- 20+ member Advisory Committee which includes Evanston & Bridger Valley (65 percent employer-led)
- 73 Ability Depot job announcements distributed to DVR counselors and appropriate agencies.
- 19 various presentations and events developed during the fiscal year toward the education and support of area businesses in the hiring and maintaining employment for our citizens with disabilities.

The Evanston and Bridger Valley Business Leadership Networks can be contacted by writing Debbie Terech, Director, C/O Evanston City Hall, 1200 Main Street, Evanston, WY 82930 or by calling (307) 783-6302 or emailing [ebln@vcn.com](mailto:ebln@vcn.com) or visiting [www.yourbln.com](http://www.yourbln.com).

## **Rock Springs**

Annual Activities

- Mayor's Leadership Awards are held each October during National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The Network and the cities of Rock Springs and Green River collaborate to recognize area employers and employees who improve the workforce

by helping to develop a diverse employee population and customer base that includes people with disabilities. In 2008, the Awards banquet received 31 nominations for its awards. The banquet was attended by a record 280 people for the third annual event.

- Mentoring Day is held each fall where approximately 70 students in special services are paired with a person in the business community in a workplace setting of the student's choice. Businesses from both Rock Springs and Green River participate.
- Five-Minute Speed Mock Interviews are held in March every year. Students at the Rock Springs High School in Special Services are invited to interview with a variety of employers.
- Rock'n River Chefs Challenge is in May every year. This is an event to bring Rock Springs and Green River communities together to celebrate fine cuisine, healthy competition and people with disabilities as a vital part of our workforce. Amateur and professional chefs compete in food categories for top honors. The public is invited to sample the menu selections. People with disabilities are celebrated for their value and contribution to our workforce. The 2008 Chefs Challenge brought 850 guests to the event.

#### Monthly Activities

- The Network's E-News is sent each month to over 400 businesses and professionals in the Sweetwater County area. Articles that benefit employers and promote hiring people with disabilities appear in each issue. Upcoming training and events are promoted. Links to internet sites that would be of interest to HR professionals are listed.
- Steering Committee Meetings - The Network's steering committee is an employer led volunteer group of 22 members who assist in promoting the mission and give advice on every day matters. Most steering committee members participate in other Network activities. During the 2007/2008 year, committee member Benjamin Bell, Manager at Wells Fargo Bank, has taught a weekly banking class to special services students

at the Rock Springs High School. Members will also participate in workshops and major events, doing a variety of tasks from setting up, tearing down and seating guests, handing out programs, general preparation and ticket and corporate table sales.

- Business Biographies are completed each month with a variety of businesses to learn about their services, goods, and employment opportunities. Thirty Business Biographies were completed during the 2007/2008 year.
- MentorABILITY World of Work Seminars and Worksite Visits are scheduled every month at the Rock Springs High School for students in Special Services. Some months students are invited to visit a local business to learn about their production, employment needs, experience and education requirements, and salary and work environment. During the 2007/2008 year students were presented these fun topics and activities: When to Disclose, Job Corps as a Voc Tech School, Interview Prep, Oil and Gas Production, Occupations in the Military, People in Your Workforce Arena, Speed Mock Interviews, Mentoring Day, Mayor's Awards attendance, Chefs Challenge participation, Rock Springs Coca Cola Bottling Co. visit, Department of Workforce Services visit and Black Butte Coal Co. visit with Chamber of Commerce members.
- Job Bulletins are sent to area workforce staff including service providers, counseling professionals, college placement personnel and the Department of Workforce Services. The Network Director sends information about current job openings from area employers. This information is collected while making employer visits throughout the month. In the 2007/2008 year, over 455 job openings were sent to our community partners to help assist people with disabilities in finding employment.
- Monthly Community Participation - the Network Director participates on these community committees: Rock Springs Chamber Education Committee, Mayor's Committee on Disability Awareness, 4-H Development



Committee, Urban Renewal Agency-Economic Restructuring Committee, and YWCA Childcare Committee.

Other Activities throughout the Year

- Employer Education Seminars are held throughout the year on a variety of topics. During the past year, employer seminars were presented on these topics: Beyond Blue- Depression in the workplace, Equal Employment Opportunity, All Ways Welcome Disability Diversity Training and Disability Experience.
- Resume and Interview Preparation for Vocational Rehabilitation Clientele
- Interest Testing for Vocational Rehabilitation Clientele
- Job Referral for people with disabilities

The Rock Springs Business Leadership Network can be contacted by writing Beth Whitman, Director, at P. O. Box 1243 Rock Springs, WY 82902 or by calling (307) 362-3339 or emailing Rs-bln@vcn.com.

### **Sheridan/Buffalo BLN**

The Sheridan and Buffalo Business Leadership Network is an employer-led coalition of businesses, government and community organizations

dedicated to improving employment opportunities that benefit businesses and people with disabilities. The Network provides information, support and training for individual businesses in employing people with disabilities. The Network focuses on low-cost, high-impact solutions to help businesses attract and retain new employees and customers with disabilities.

One goal of the Network is to increase the public's awareness and understanding of people who have disabilities so these citizens will have increased access to employment, education, housing and social opportunities. Attitudinal barriers, fears and negative attitudes can be replaced with awareness and understanding.

In 1994, the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities' sub-committee conceived the idea of a Business Leadership Network as a means to engage employers in a focused effort to market the benefits of hiring qualified individuals with disabilities.

The Sheridan and Buffalo Business Leadership Networks can be contacted by writing Elizabeth Craft, Director at 533 Kailua Place, Sheridan, WY 82801 or by calling 307-752-2603 or emailing sb-bln@vcn.com.

## **Byron** Client, Rawlins

Byron is diagnosed with borderline intellectual functioning, learning disabilities and generalized anxiety disorder. Byron had a great deal of anxiety about earning a paycheck and keeping his social security benefits.

Vocational Rehabilitation provided counseling and guidance, referrals to community agencies, job development, job coaching and previous work experience through Versatile Services. Facilitation of communication with Centrum, helped alleviate Byron's anxieties about his social security benefits. Coordination of the Ticket to Work program also helped Byron feel that he could work and keep his benefits.

Byron began his first community integrated employment at City Market in April of 2008. Beth O'Grady, of Versatile Services, provided job coaching and transportation coordination for Byron. Byron

states he likes his job, and his co-workers.

City Market has been flexible with Byron's work hours and bus schedule. They have been patient

with Byron while he learned his job duties. City Market was also accepting of Byron having a job coach. Byron is interacting more with his co-workers, and community members who frequent City Market. Byron is independent in sending in his paystubs to social security. Byron's overall independence has increased and he is empowered to be a productive member of the Rawlins community.





# Contacts

Wyoming Offices for the Department of Workforce Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation:

## Central Office

122 West 25th Street  
1100 Herschler Building, 1st Floor East  
Cheyenne, WY 82002 (307) 777-7386

## Casper District Office - 01

851 Werner Court, Suite 120  
Casper, WY 82601 (307) 261-2172  
Area Served: Natrona County

## Cheyenne District Office - 02

1510 East Pershing Boulevard  
Cheyenne, WY 82002 (307) 777-7364  
Area Served: Laramie County

## Cody District Office - 11

1026 Blackburn, #3  
Cody, WY 82414  
527-7174 \*1-877-473-7207  
Area Served: Park & Big Horn Counties & Yellowstone National Park

## Douglas District Office - 13

126 North 3rd Street  
Douglas, WY 82633  
(307) 358-4688 \*1-866-217-1401  
Area Served: Converse & Niobrara Counties

## Evanston District Office - 19

350 City View Drive, #205  
Evanston, WY 82930  
(307) 789-2766 \*1-877-473-7208  
Area Served: Uinta County & WY State Hospital

## Gillette District Office - 17

1901 Energy Court, #140  
Gillette, WY 82718  
(307) 682-2672 \*1-877-474-4086  
Area Served: Campbell, Weston & Crook

## Jackson District Office - 22

155 West Gill, P. O. Box 2873  
Jackson, WY 83001  
(307) 733-3742 \*1-866-293-3742  
Area Served: Teton County

## Kemmerer District Office - 12

P. O. Box 87 (mailing address)  
Kemmerer, WY 83101  
20 Adaville Road  
Diamondville, WY 83116 (physical address)  
(307) 877-9334 \*1-866-367-6143  
Area Served: Lincoln & Sublette Counties

## Lander District Office - 10

259 Main Street  
Lander, WY 82520 (307) 332-4465  
Area Served: Southern Fremont County

## Laramie District Office - 05

710 Garfield, #110  
Laramie, WY 82070 (307) 745-3160  
Area Served: Albany County

## Rawlins District Office - 06

215 West Buffalo, #312, Carbon Building  
Rawlins, WY 82301  
(307) 324-2238 \*1-877-473-7209  
Area Served: Carbon County, State Penitentiary, Wamsutter, Medicine Bow, Hanna & Elk Mountain

## Riverton District Office - 09

609 East Madison, #3  
Riverton, WY 82501  
(307) 856-2393 \*1-866-335-3140  
Area Served: Northern Fremont County

## Rock Springs District Office - 04

2451 Foothill Boulevard, Suite 100  
Rock Springs, WY 82901  
(307) 362-2770 \*1-866-858-4125  
Area Served: Sweetwater County

**Sheridan District Office - 03**

61 South Gould  
Sheridan, WY 82301  
(307) 674-7529 \*1-866-423-5989  
Area Served: Johnson & Sheridan Counties and  
Wyoming Girls School

**Torrington District Office - 07**

1618 East 'M' Street  
Torrington, WY 82240  
(307) 532-4431 \*1-877-474-7493  
Area Served: Goshen & Platte Counties

**Worland District Office - 20**

1200 Culbertson, Suite F  
Worland, WY 82401  
(307) 347-3396 \*1-866-448-4703  
Area Served: Washakie & Hot Springs Counties  
and Wyoming Boys School

**Disability Determination Services**

821 West Pershing Boulevard  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
(307) 777-7341 1-800-972-2372

\* Toll Free numbers restricted to use by in-state  
Wyoming callers.

**WY Services for Independent Living**

1156 South 2nd Street  
Lander, Wyoming 82520  
(307) 332-4889  
[www.wyomingsilc.com](http://www.wyomingsilc.com)

**WY Independent Living Rehabilitation, Inc.**

305 West 1st Street  
Casper, Wyoming 82601  
(307) 266-6956  
[www.wilr.org](http://www.wilr.org)

**Telecommunications Relay Service**

- Wyoming Relay Numbers
- All Call Types 7-1-1 OR Dial:
- TTY (Text Telephone), 1-800-877-9965
- Voice, 1-800-877-9975
- Voice Carry Over, 1-877-877-1474
- To reach CapTel User, 1-877-243-2823
- Speech to Speech, 1-877-787-0503
- Spanish Language Service, (Servicio en Español), 1-800-829-2783
- Wyoming Relay State Office, 1-800-452-1408
- To Obtain Specialized Equipment, 1-800-452-1408
- 24 Hour Customer Service Center, 1-888-694-4450
- Customer Service Email, [wyrelay@hamiltonrelay.com](mailto:wyrelay@hamiltonrelay.com)





**Wyoming Department of Workforce Services**  
**Joan K. Evans, Director**

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