



## 2019 Annual Report

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## Message from the SRC Chair

Honorable Doug Burgum  
Governor of North Dakota  
600 E Boulevard Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Governor Burgum:

The ND State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is proud to present the 2019 Annual State Report for the Vocational Rehabilitation Division. The report highlights the activities of the SRC and the ND Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the provision of quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities throughout North Dakota. The report fulfills the requirements of 34 CFR Part 361.17(h)(5).

We look forward to working with the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the coming year to advocate for and assist North Dakotans with disabilities to obtain competitive integrated employment.

Sincerely,

Trevor Vannett  
ND SRC Chair

# Vision, Purpose and Guiding Principles of DVR

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## Vision

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North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is the leader in disability-related solutions.

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## Purpose

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We assist individuals with disabilities to be successfully employed.

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## Guiding Principles

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- ▼ Serving our consumers is the primary focus of everything we do.
- ▼ Collaborative partnerships with employers are essential to our success.
- ▼ All people have value regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender, or disability.
- ▼ Good communication is essential to delivering quality rehabilitation services.
- ▼ Quality outcomes are a result of the commitment of consumers and qualified staff working together towards mutually agreed upon goals.
- ▼ Change is inevitable and provides opportunities for innovation and creativity.
- ▼ Effective partnerships are critical in achieving results for consumers.
- ▼ Informed choice is central to sound decision-making and allows decisions to be based on all relevant information, options, and consequences.
- ▼ When all things are equal, legal, and based on good rehabilitation counseling, decisions will be made in favor of the consumer.

# Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Services

## EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES

Vocational Rehabilitation services include:

- ▼ **Professional Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling & Guidance** – evaluations of strengths and how an individual’s disability may affect their ability to work, a comprehensive assessment of their rehabilitation needs, planning and implementing strategies to overcome barriers and helping the individual adjust to and live with a disability.
- ▼ **Employment** – identification of an employment goal that is consistent with the individual strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, priorities, concerns, interests and informed choice.
- ▼ **Accommodations** – adaptive aids, assistive technology, accessibility and work site evaluations to assist in achieving individual employment goals.
- ▼ **Training** – tailored to meet individual rehabilitation needs and attain individual employment goals. This may include on-the-job training, internships, job mentoring, job coaching and/or academic training.
- ▼ **Job Placement** – develop résumé writing skills and interview strategies, job referral, placement, and follow-up services.

**Through a “dual client” approach, the division also assists business owners and employers through a variety of business and disability-related services, including:**

- ▲ Staff Retention
- ▲ Accessibility and ADA Consultation
- ▲ Recruitment Source
- ▲ Financial Incentives
- ▲ Disability Consultation
- ▲ On-the-Job Training/Job Coach Services
- ▲ On-Site Consultation and Recommendations

These services are available to a legally operated and registered North Dakota business, non-profit organization, or government agency. There are no costs associated with services except for those accommodations or modifications chosen as a result of DVR recommendations.

## PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES

Vocational Rehabilitation services include:

- ▼ **Pre-Employment Transition Services** – services provided to students with disabilities ages 14-21 and includes self-advocacy training, workplace readiness training, work experience, counseling in post-secondary opportunities, and job exploration.

**Accomplishments include:**

- ▲ Established contracts with 15 school districts throughout the state to provide pre-employment transition services to transition age youth with disabilities
- ▲ Served 2,219 students with disabilities through contracts and VR counselor services

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

To assist high school students with disabilities to identify and work towards a career goal that meets their unique interests and abilities, VR provides pre-employment transition services and makes a difference in the lives of North Dakotans like Elizabeth Romanick.



Elizabeth is attending Minot State University with vocational counseling and guidance, financial help and other support from VR and MSU's Advancing Students Toward Education and Employment Program. With VR's support, Elizabeth has explored possible careers and work experiences at Texas Roadhouse, the Bismarck Larks, with other employers, and through MSU. This has helped Elizabeth develop skills such as public speaking and identify her career path, which includes event planning, marketing and disability advocacy. With her determination and positive attitude, watch for Elizabeth to continue to make a difference in our state.



# State Rehabilitation Council Overview

## FFY 2019

The purpose of the North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is to advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) on issues concerning policy and program, delivery of services, and methods for reaching potential consumers.

## The Council

- ▼ Informs and advises DVR on the effects its programs may be having on North Dakota communities and consumers
- ▼ Facilitates public input into the Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan
- ▼ Advocates for consumer rights and services
- ▼ Communicates to public and community leaders the purpose and need for vocational rehabilitation

The council members are selected to serve on the SRC by the Governor of North Dakota. They are selected to serve based on their interest, knowledge, and understanding of the needs of individuals with disabilities. Members are advocates for equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in their communities and throughout North Dakota.

The Council must have at least 17 members representing:

- ▲ 4 Business, Industry & Labor Sectors
- ▲ 1 Statewide Independent Living Council
- ▲ 1 Parent Training & Information Center
- ▲ 1 Client Assistance Program
- ▲ 1 Disability Advocacy Group Advocate
- ▲ 1 Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider
- ▲ 1 State Workforce Investment Board
- ▲ 1 Current or Former VR Applicant or Recipient
- ▲ 1 American Indian VR Program
- ▲ 1 Department of Public Instruction
- ▲ 1 Developmental Disabilities Division Director
- ▲ 1 ND Association of Community Providers (NDACP) Executive Director
- ▲ 1 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- ▲ 1 Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Director

## SRC Committees

- ▼ Planning/Evaluation Committee
- ▼ Resource Committee
- ▼ Membership/Public Relations Committee
- ▼ Employment Committee

## SRC Recommendations

- ▼ SRC reviewed and approved DVR policy.
- ▼ A committee reviewed and selected the 2019 Statewide DVR Employer of the Year. Joseph Hall presented the awards at the Vocational Rehabilitation Annual Training.

### SRC MEMBERSHIP AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

▲ TINA BAY  
Developmental Disabilities Division  
Bismarck, ND

▲ SHANNON COOK  
South Heart, ND

▲ JOSEPH HALL  
Job Service ND  
Bismarck, ND

▲ UMA HOFFMANN  
ND Workforce Development Council  
Grand Forks, ND

▲ BRUCE KLOOTWYK  
Bismarck, ND

▲ TERESA LARSEN  
Client Assistance Program  
Bismarck, ND

▲ MARSHALL LONGIE  
Spirit Lake Vocational Rehabilitation  
Fort Totten, ND

▲ MATTHEW MCCLEARY  
Federation of Families  
Bismarck, ND

▲ BRUCE MURRY  
ND Association of Community Providers  
Bismarck, ND

▲ TERRY PETERSON  
Rehab Services, Inc.  
Velva, ND

▲ GILLIAN PLENTY CHIEF  
Good Road Recovery Center  
Bismarck, ND

▲ RENEE SPEIDEL-WETZSTEON  
Federation of Families  
Bismarck, ND

▲ JASON SUTHEIMER  
Job Service ND  
Bismarck, ND

▲ GERRY TEEVENS  
Department of Public Instruction  
Bismarck, ND

▲ ROBYN THROLSON  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Bismarck, ND

▲ TREVOR VANNETT  
Statewide Independent Living  
Council  
Bismarck, ND

▲ JODI WEBB  
Pathfinder, Parent Training and  
Information  
Minot, ND



## 2019 Award Recipients

### Two North Dakota businesses receive statewide awards for supporting the employment of people with disabilities

#### *Cash Wise of Minot and Bismarck Larks receive statewide awards*

As part of its National Disability Employment Awareness Month observance, the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) recognized two businesses for supporting an inclusive workforce by hiring, training and inspiring people with disabilities to excel in the workforce.

The agency and State Rehabilitation Council presented the 2019 North Dakota State DVR Employer of the Year award to **Cash Wise Foods of Minot** and the You Make A Difference Award to the **Bismarck Larks**. Company representatives accepted the awards at a recognition luncheon hosted at the division's annual training conference in Bismarck.

State Rehabilitation Council members and the division selected Cash Wise of Minot from among five nominees for the Employer of the Year award. The award honors a North Dakota employer for their efforts to support and inspire individuals with disabilities to achieve employment goals and to reach their full potential in their community.

Cash Wise was selected because they regularly work with the division and local disability service providers to hire, train and support individuals with disabilities so they can be successful at work. If the store doesn't have a perfect job match for an individual's skills, they let them meet with different departments to find the best fit and identify specific job duties individuals can perform. Cash Wise also provides positive and constructive feedback and opportunities to increase individuals' skills. In addition, the store is accessible to employees and customers with disabilities, featuring accessible restrooms and wide aisles free of barriers restricting movement.

"We are honored to receive the employer of the year award," said Tanya Andre, Cash Wise Foods' Senior HR Generalist. "We work closely with each employee to ensure they become successful, independent and a valuable team member of the Cash Wise family. We are so happy with the experience we have had with DVR and their partners and look forward to working with them in the future."

These other nominees received honorable mention: Valley News Live, **Fargo**; Culver's of **Williston**; the Social Security Administration, **Bismarck**; and TownePlace Suites, **Dickinson**. All have established ongoing partnerships with the division and its regional offices and support the employment of people with disabilities.

The statewide You Make a Difference Award honors a business for consistently recognizing individuals' unique abilities, providing work experience opportunities for students with disabilities, and actively supporting, developing and inspiring students to achieve goals in a competitive and integrated employment setting.

The Bismarck Larks have collaborated with HIT and DVR to hire transition-age students and other individuals with disabilities who may have little to no work experience. The Larks organization matches employees' interests and skills with positions to find a good fit, encourages employees to explore different roles while having fun, and works around students' and families' summer schedules.

Bismarck Larks General Manager John Bollinger said: "While we are beyond honored to accept this award, the true praise and recognition goes to our amazing employees with disabilities who provided exceptional service to our fans and helped further the Larks mission of using fun to make a difference in people's lives."

Acting DVR Division Director Robyn Throlson said, "Our agency is pleased to recognize this year's business award recipients who are willing to work alongside the division and our agency partners to give individuals opportunities to apply, be interviewed and be hired for job openings based on their unique strengths and abilities."

She said employers can meet their workforce needs by looking beyond a disability to an individual's unique abilities, and the division can help them reach their employee recruitment and retention goals.

"Employees who receive vocational rehabilitation support often become long-term employees who are promoted within their respective workplaces," said Throlson.

Rehabilitation counseling and consultation is available without charge to qualifying individuals and businesses, nonprofits and government agencies. Services for individuals with disabilities can include assistance with diagnosis and evaluation, vocational counseling and training to identify and reach employment goals, adaptive equipment and restorative services, vocational training and education, job placement and follow-up and other services.

# FFY 2019 at a Glance

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Expenditures	\$13.6 Million
Individuals Employed	579
Average weekly earnings before rehabilitation	\$161.24
Average weekly earnings after rehabilitation	\$443.78
Individuals receiving training and other services	3721
Percent of individuals served who have a significant disability	93%

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

DVR uses ROI to show how clients benefit economically from VR services as well as how their increased income positively impacts the economy.

- ▼ For every dollar spent by DVR, clients earn \$7.76.
- ▼ For every dollar spent by DVR, the clients pay back \$1.55 in taxes.

## Making a Difference – A Client Success Story



Injuries – one while lifting a heavy patio door at work in 2008 and the other from a rear-end collision in a blinding snowstorm in 2012 – changed Troy Gangl’s life dramatically. He underwent multiple surgeries, including spinal fusion, had to learn to live with chronic pain, and lost his job at a window manufacturing plant where he had worked for the previous 15 years.

He was out of work for about a year, which was an emotionally tough time, he said, but Troy didn’t lose his motivation. He earned his GED with honors, and was wondering what to do next, when someone suggested he call Vocational Rehabilitation (VR).

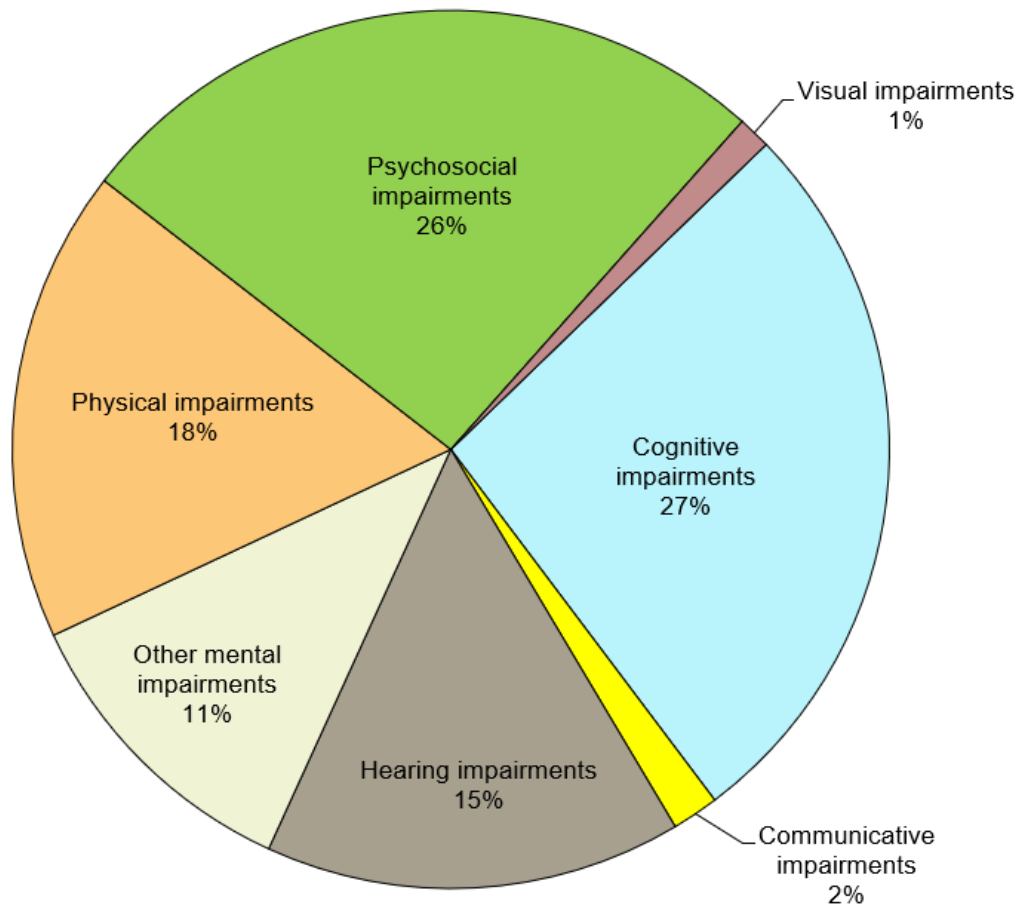
Troy made that call and received assessment services, vocational counseling and job search support from VR.

“The assessments helped me find out more about myself, my abilities and what interested me. For example, I like to interact with people.”

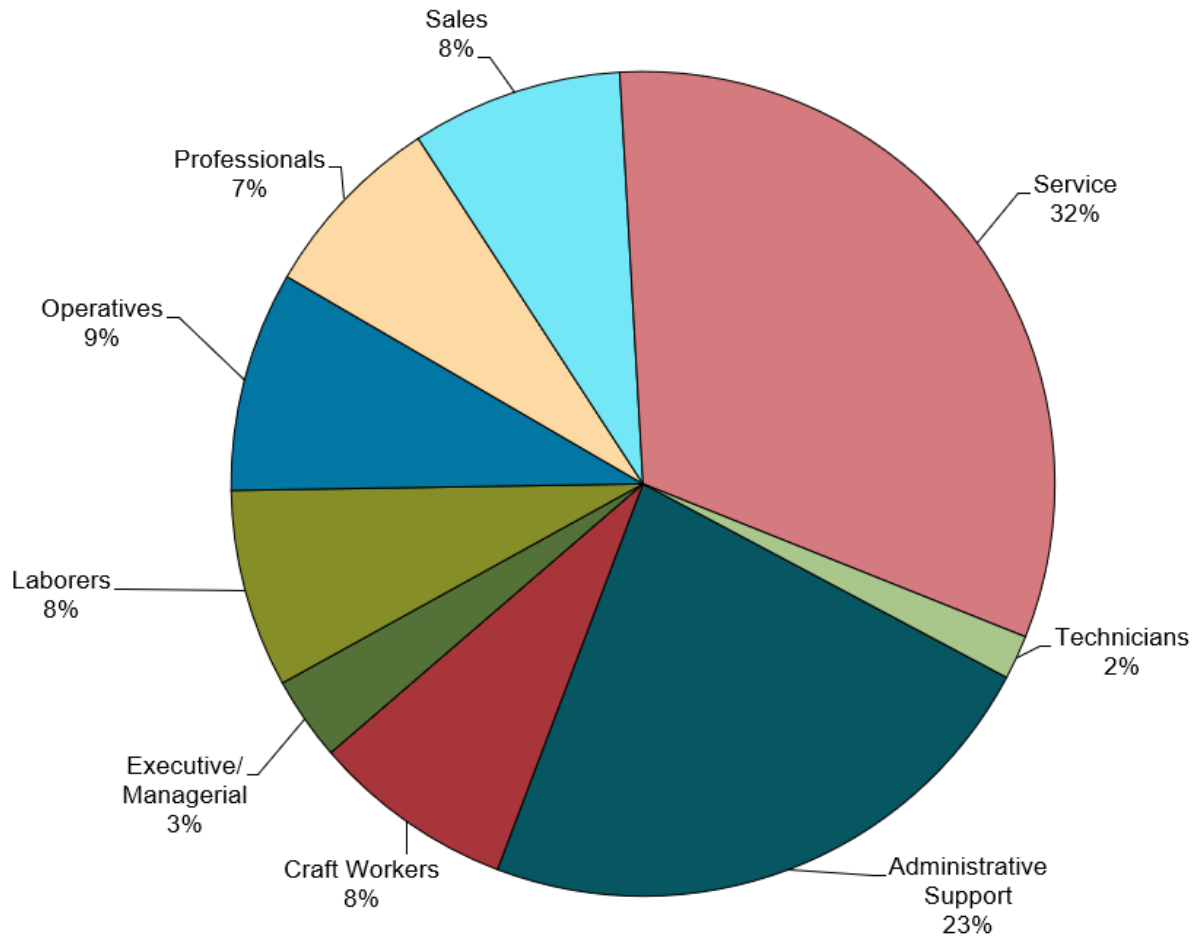
Troy had never had a resume. The VR team helped him create a resume and find job openings that fit his interests and abilities, which led to a sales position. From that position he had the confidence to apply for a site manager position with Goldmark property management – a position he has held for five years.

“I love what I do.... There are jobs out there for everyone. You have to find that match between your interests and abilities, and VR helps you do that,” Troy said.

# Primary Impairments of Individuals Achieving Employment



# Occupational Categories of Individuals Achieving Employment



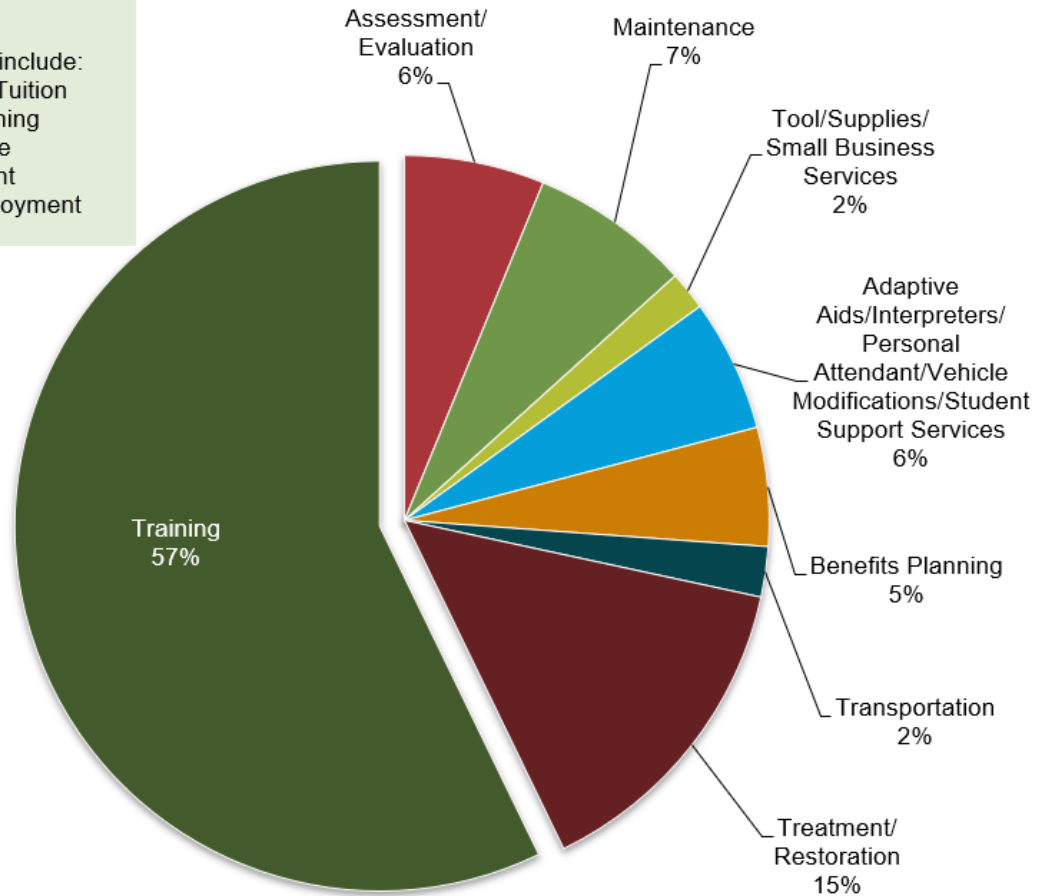


# Case Service Expenditures

57% of NDVR's Case Service Expenditures was for training individuals with disabilities.

Training Services include:

- Postsecondary Tuition
- On the Job Training
- Work Experience
- Job Development
- Supported Employment



**To learn more about the North Dakota State  
Rehabilitation Council and the North Dakota Division  
of Vocational Rehabilitation,**

**visit [www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr)**

DVR is a partner in



1000 East Divide Avenue | Bismarck, ND 58501  
Phone (701) 328-8950 | Toll Free 1-800-755-2745  
Fax (701) 328-1884 | ND Relay 800-366-6888