**Weekly Focus**

**September 21, 2012**

**Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director**

The mission of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

Ohio DisAbility Jobs Summit: Connecting and Building Partnerships

RSC hosted the first ever Ohio *DisAbility Jobs Summit* on Monday and Tuesday, September 17-18. With more than 700 people in attendance, the Columbus Convention Center was filled with people looking to learn, connect and build partnerships. I would like to thank those RSC employees who devoted many hours to plan all of the details that made this conference run smoothly. To Anessa Locke-Hines, Project Manager and Chris Glover, Conference Chair, Conference Committee members and all of those involved who put together a program that was diverse and informative designed to educate consumers, employers, service providers and RSC professionals I say, “Well done!”

**Director’s Panel Discussion**

We were fortunate to have had nine of Governor Kasich’s Cabinet members participate in a panel discussion to open the *DisAbility Jobs Summit*. The landscape is changing on how Ohio delivers services and the Directors who participated were able to provide their perspective to transformation coming to workforce development and innovations in service delivery to unemployed and underemployed Ohioans with disabilities.

The Directors who participated were: Robert Blair, Department of Administrative Services; Steve Buehrer, Bureau of Workers’ Compensation; Orman Hall, Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services; Bonnie Kantor-Burman, Department of Aging; John Martin, Department of Developmental Disabilities; Kevin Miller, Rehabilitation Services Commission; Colonel Tom Moe, Department of Veterans Services; Jim Petro, Board of Regents; and Tracy Plouck, Department of Mental Health.

Picture Caption:

Left to right: *Directors John Martin, Orman Hall, Bonnie Kantor-Burman and Steve Buehrer*

**Governor Kasich Stresses His Commitment to Employment**

Governor John R. Kasich addressed attendees at the 2012 Ohio *DisAbility Jobs Summit* to tell the audience that their efforts will determine the success of the state's recent push to give more people with disabilities a chance to work.

Through his mid-biennium budget review legislation and an accompanying executive order, Governor Kasich launched the Employment First initiative with the intent being employment in the community to be the preferred option for people with disabilities.

"We can't let them live in the shadows. I don't want to answer for the fact that I knew someone who could be lifted and I didn't do it," Kasich said. "We have a tremendous opportunity to change the culture. Kevin has brought a sea of change to an Agency that needed it."

The Governor urged people out in the field to contact his office if they don't see the new policy reaching their level and he also called on more businesses to step up and offer work opportunities.

Picture Caption:

*Governor John R. Kasich*

**Luncheon Keynote: Beth Butler and Kathy West-Evans**

What is better than someone telling you how to change culture and get people in Vocational Rehabilitation hired? Learning from those who have successfully done it and continue to help shape a new way of doing things and that is exactly the message that was delivered by the luncheon speakers.

Beth Butler, Manager of Leaves and Accommodations with Lowe’s Companies, Inc. and Kathy West-Evans, Director of Business Relations Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) shared their personal testimonies related to their own employment. They explained how the National Employment Team (NET) can be used to leverage NET/VR partners to promote inclusive hiring in private sector companies.

Picture Captions:

*Beth Butler*

*Kathy West-Evans*

**Workshops Provide Critical Information to Attendees**

Training sessions were focused on providing information to those attending. Sessions were provided that served to strengthen understanding of Ohio’s workforce development, economic development, labor market trends and addressing today’s business partners. Sessions catered to those interested in tracks associated with employment seekers, service providers, employers and leadership.

Picture Caption:

Above, left to right: *Paula Taliaferro, Shirin Boose and Siggy Letheby were three of the many speakers at the Jobs Summit.*

Employment Seekers

Employment seekers and consumers got to choose from a variety of sessions including Mock Interview Labs, Resume Writing Labs and What Employers Look for when Hiring. The session, Empowerment through Self-Advocacy, was one of the most attended and well-liked of all the sessions provided. Employment seekers also learned how to dress for success and learned the proper email etiquette in regard to social media and their job search.

Service Providers

Service Providers had a wide variety of session choices. Sessions about hearing loss and how it affects job performance in the workplace, benefits planning, issues veterans face when returning from combat, older workers and employment, people with brain injuries and their return to work and life in the community and adult ADHD were just a few of the many topics offered.

Employers

Employers also had a variety of informative session choices. The Ohio Business Leadership Network Allstars explained how to make your company more disability friendly. Project SEARCH explained how collaboration works in the workplace. OhioMeansJobs described what Ohio has to offer. Employers also learned about LEAN process, how the ADA works in the workplace and how technology is creating new employment options.

Leadership

Informational sessions included Ohio’s Employment First Initiative and the findings of Ohio’s Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

I would like to thank all the businesses and vendors who helped make the *DisAbility Jobs Summit* a success!

Ohio Business Leadership Network

Cardinal Health

Cincinnati Children’s Hospital

Columbus Chamber of Commerce

CSX Transportation

OhioHealth

Ohio Industry Liaison Group

Time Warner Cable

TJX Corporation

United Collection Bureau, Inc.

Walgreens Perrysbury Distribution Center

Wilson Resources, Inc.

Other employers

Bittersweet Farms

Dress for Success

Fifth Quadrant Analytics

IDEAL Group, Inc.

WrightChoice

Vendors

ARC Industries

Capabilities, Inc.

CareStar, Inc.

Cleveland Sight Center

Columbus Speech & Hearing

Community Fund Management Foundation

COVA

Deaf Initiatives

DLA Land and Maritime

DODD

Freedom Scientific, LSG

Functional Training Services – Sponsored a break

Goodwill Columbus

Hearts of Hope Institute

LEAP

M.C. Mobility Systems, Inc.

NeuroRestorative

OCALI

ODD Council

Ohio Rehabilitation Association

Personnel Plus

Picket Fence Dreams

Relay/Captel

RSC – Division of Disability

RSC – Office of Communications & Governor’s Council

Social Security Administration

The Hadley School for the Blind

The Visual-Tech Connection

Universal Low Vision Aids, Inc.

Vocational Guidance Services

WrightChoice, Inc.

**Combined Charitable Campaign**

 **Current Goal**

**Donations $45,459.56 $68,978.00**

Pledge Cards 186 247

For more information or questions on stories in this publication please call Shirley Marchi, Community Relations Liaison, at 614. 438.1477.

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**RSC’s Facebook website:**

[**https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Rehabilitation-Services-Commission/155300754532533?sk=wall**](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Rehabilitation-Services-Commission/155300754532533?sk=wall)

**RSC’s YouTube website:**

[**https://www.youtube.com/user/OhioRSCTV**](https://www.youtube.com/user/OhioRSCTV)

**RSC’s Twitter website:**

[**https://twitter.com/#!/OHRSC/**](https://twitter.com/#!/OHRSC/)