

PENNSYLVANIA REHABILITATION COUNCIL (PaRC)

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WEEKLY UPDATE: March 18, 2020

If you no longer wish to receive this update, please contact Jill Kovalcik Weaver at jill.weaver@ucpcentralpa.org to have your name removed.

NOTE: This update is for informational purposes only. The PaRC and Support Staff are not responsible for the accuracy of this information. Some of the information found in this update you may have already received from another source. The PaRC or the Support Staff do not use this update as a vehicle to express their views and positions. As of **March 18, 2020**, all links have been verified. Please credit the PaRC Support Project for any information forwarded to others. Thank You.

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

The PaRC 2019 Annual Report can be found on our webpage or by clicking on the following link

<http://parac.org/reports/2019AnnualReport.pdf>

Find Your Local CAC Meeting Dates: Please go to our website www.parac.org and click on the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) link to find dates, locations, times, etc. for information on the nearest CAC.

***** PaRC Calendar Year 2020 –Please Mark your Calendars *****

FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

PaRC Full Council meetings will be held at the **Harrisburg Hilton** from 9:30 AM until 3:30 PM (unless otherwise noted). We will also have parking passes for those who park in the Strawberry Square Parking Garage. Please plan to stay for the entire meeting.

**May 13, 2020
August 5, 2020
November 18, 2020**

The agenda will be posted on the PaRC website.

http://parac.org/council_mtgs.html

PaRC Member Committee Conference Calls – Please Mark your Calendars

CareerLink/WIOA

Next Call: To be Determined

Executive Committee Conference Call

Next Call: To be Determined

Legislative and Public Awareness Conference Call

Next Call: To be Determined

OVR Policy and State Plan Committee / Customer Satisfaction Conference Call

Next Call: Friday, March 27, 2020 at 9:30 AM

Social Media/Outreach Committee Conference Call

Next Call: To be Determined

Transition & Education

Next Call: Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 2:00 PM

Ad Hoc Nomination

Next Call: Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 1:00 PM

Ad Hoc Celebration Rehab Act/ADA

Next Call: Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 3:00 PM

The PaRC Social Media and Outreach Committee in partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) produced 6 videos, 5 of which are OVR individual and business success stories, as well as a PaRC Recruitment video. We want to thank both the individuals and companies that participated in making these videos and OVR for supporting the project. The PaRC is pleased to present the following 6 videos. Please feel free to share.

[PaRC Recruitment](#)

[PaRC Dream Partnership](#)

[PaRC Herr Foods Inc.](#)

[PaRC Aha Moment](#)

[PaRC Keystone Blind Association](#)

[PaRC Assistive Technology](#)

PaRC COUNCIL OPENINGS: The PaRC is looking for a candidate to fill the veteran with a disability opening. The openings for Deaf and Hard of Hearing and General Advocacy are pending as candidates have been sent forward for the Governor's approval. If interested, please go to our website (www.parac.org) and fill out an application.

1.) For information on the Coronavirus go to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/>

**2.) From Governor Tom Wolf Newsroom
Wolf Administration Provides Guidance to Commonwealth Employees on Travel and Large Gatherings**

March 11, 2020

In consultation with the Department of Health, Governor Tom Wolf today provided [direction on travel](#) and [large gatherings for commonwealth agencies](#) and employees under the governor's jurisdiction in response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Pennsylvania.

"We are taking this action in the best interest of all commonwealth employees as we continue to respond swiftly and appropriately to the outbreak of COVID-19," said Gov. Wolf. "Many state employees are working on the front lines with federal and local partners to coordinate efforts. I thank you for your commitment." To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/wolf-administration-provides-guidance-to-commonwealth-employees-on-travel-and-large-gatherings/>

3.) From Disability Scoop

Vans Introducing 'Sensory Inclusive' Shoes For Individuals With ASD
by Shaun Heasley | March 16, 2020

An iconic shoe brand is rolling out a whole new collection specifically designed to meet the needs of people with autism.

Vans said this month that it is launching an "Autism Awareness Collection" that features "sensory inclusive footwear designs."

The shoes that are part of the new offering are described as ultra-comfortable with "sensory-inclusive elements including a calming color palette and design features that focus on the senses." To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/16/vans-introducing-sensory-inclusive-shoes-for-individuals-with-asd/27980/>

Feds Weigh In On Special Ed, Medicaid Concerns Over Coronavirus
by Michelle Diamant | March 13, 2020

As coronavirus spreads across the U.S., federal officials are clarifying how schools and state Medicaid agencies should address the needs of those with disabilities.

The U.S. Department of Education and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services each issued question-and-answer documents Thursday detailing how to continue serving students with disabilities and those receiving home- and community-based services, respectively. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/13/feds-weigh-in-special-ed-medicaid-coronavirus/27969/>

Police Offer Stickers For Homes To Alert First Responders About Disabilities

by Mara H. Gottfried, Pioneer Press/TNS | March 13, 2020

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The St. Paul Police Department announced this month that people can get stickers for their homes or vehicles to tell first responders that someone inside may be deaf or hard of hearing, have autism, dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.

“In an emergency, every second counts and the quicker that officers can identify any barrier to communication is better for everyone involved,” said Sgt. Mike Ernster, a St. Paul police spokesman. “The officer could adjust their approach to the situation based on this information.” To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/13/police-offer-stickers-alert-first-responders-disabilities/27974/>

4.) From The New York Times

She Went Blind. Then She Danced.

“We’re alive! As long as we’re alive, we have to keep moving.”

By [Frank Bruni](#)

Opinion Columnist

March 14, 2020

There are different responses to unexpected hardship, and when Marion Sheppard began to go blind, she cycled through many of them.

She pitied herself and cried long and hard, because this wasn’t right — this wasn’t fair. Her hearing had been severely impaired since early childhood and she’d endured schoolyard teasing about that, so hadn’t she paid her dues? Done her time? To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/14/opinion/sunday/blind-dance.html>

5.) From PA Labor & Industry, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

Act 26 Of 2016 Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act SFY 19-20 Q2 report

The SFY 19-20 Q2 report required by the Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act (Act 26 of 2016) is now available. A copy of the report is attached and can also be found on OVR's website, in the [Act 26 Information](#) tile.

6.) From the U.S. Department of Education Releases Webinar, Fact Sheet for Protecting Students' Civil Rights During COVID-19 Response

MARCH 17, 2020

Contact: Press Office, (202) 401-1576, press@ed.gov

WASHINGTON — The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education released today a webinar on ensuring web accessibility for students with disabilities for schools utilizing online learning during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. In addition, OCR published a fact sheet for education leaders on how to protect students' civil rights as school leaders take steps to keep students safe and secure. These resources will assist education leaders in making distance learning accessible to students with disabilities and in preventing discrimination during this Administration-wide response effort.

As more schools across the nation shift to distance learning, OCR's webinar reminds decisionmakers of their responsibility in making distance learning accessible to students with disabilities, unless equally effective alternate access is provided. Online learning tools must be accessible to students with disabilities, and they must be compatible with the various forms of assistive technology that students might use to help them learn. The webinar advises school leaders to routinely test their online activities to ensure accessibility. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-webinar-fact-sheet-protecting-students-civil-rights-during-covid-19-response>

7.) From Disability Scoop Coronavirus Brings Added Worries For People With Disabilities

by Blythe Bernhard | March 17, 2020

The coronavirus pandemic has created unique concerns for caregivers and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Individuals with disabilities likely have the same risk factors as the general population — those who are older or have compromised immune systems are most vulnerable to the virus. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/17/coronavirus-brings-added-worries-disabilities/27989/>

Living Under Quarantine: Parents Unite In Face Of Challenges

March 17, 2020

Hundreds of students with disabilities from a single school remain quarantined in their homes after a special education classroom aide was diagnosed with coronavirus. To read entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/17/coronavirus-brings-added-worries-disabilities/27989/>

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