

PENNSYLVANIA REHABILITATION COUNCIL (PaRC)

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WEEKLY UPDATE August 7, 2020

If you no longer wish to receive this update, please contact Katie Haley at mary.haley@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 **August 7, 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, agendas and minutes, etc. for information on your 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.

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: To be Determined

Social Media/Outreach Committee Conference Call

Next Call: Wednesday August 12, 2020 at 10:00 AM

Transition & Education

Next Call: Friday October 9, 2020 at 2:00 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 Aha Moment](#)

[PaRC Dream Partnership](#)

[PaRC Herr Foods Inc.](#)

[PaRC Keystone Blind Association](#)

[PaRC Assistive Technology](#)

PaRC COUNCIL OPENINGS: The PaRC is looking for candidates to fill new openings on the council. If interested, please go to our website (www.parac.org) and fill out an application.

1.) Forwarded from Linda Williams

Innovative Training: Supporting Employment for People with Intellectual Disabilities

INVITATION TO APPLY— STATE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Innovative Training: Supporting Employment for People with Intellectual Disabilities is a 5-year Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) funded project designed to improve employment

outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) through training of vocational rehabilitation (VR) personnel, including staff who work for state VR agencies, other public systems, and service providers. Led by the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, this project will offer training opportunities including topical modules, a mini-course, an academic rehabilitation counseling course, and a state learning collaborative.

THE STATE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

The State Learning Collaborative (SLC) offers a customized approach to training for VR agencies and their partners that is designed to enhance the knowledge and strengthen partnerships that are key to the employment success for individuals with ID. The project will support two state learning collaboratives annually. ICI is now inviting applications for these two SLCs. Each participating VR agency and their partners will be asked to identify specific goals for participation in the SLC.

For each participating state, the SLC will include:

The equivalent of two full days of training customized to the needs of the state

A six-month, state specific, Community of Practice focused on the state's specific goals

All training in 2020 will be conducted remotely in a format to be agreed upon by ICI and the VR agency and its partners.

ELIGIBILITY

The state VR agency must be the applicant and each SLC team must include at a minimum the state's intellectual and developmental disability agency as a partner. Additional partners may also be included based on the state's specific goals for improving employment services and outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The focus of this effort is intended to have impact on a statewide level. If a Tribal VR agency is the applicant, the focus of the SLC will be on the region covered

APPLICATION

States must complete the online application by August 31.

KEY APPLICATION DATES

July 29

[Online application available here](#)

August 12

Informational webinar (3-4 ET) hosted by ICI. Overview of the project and opportunity for questions and answers. [Pre-register here](#)

August 31

Application deadline

September 22

Agencies notified on the status of their application

FOR MORE INFORMATION

David Hoff, Project Director

David.hoff@umb.edu

Innovative Training: Supporting Employment for People with Intellectual Disabilities is a project of ExploreVR at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston. ExploreVR offers VR agencies easy and convenient access to a range of VR research, related data, training and tools for planning, evaluation, and decision-making. Funding for this project is provided by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, under CFDA 84.263C.

2.) In First, Hotel Embraces Universal Design by Stephen T. Watson, The Buffalo News/TNS | July 31, 2020

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Thermostats at lower points on the walls of the rooms. Bathrooms with roll-in showers and knee clearance under the sink.

And access from the parking lot into and around the hotel without needing to go up or down any steps.

These and other features are meant to make the new Hampton Inn Buffalo-Amherst as welcoming as possible to all guests of all abilities. To read more, go to:

<https://www.disabilitycoop.com/2020/07/31/in-first-hotel-embraces-universal-design/28695/>

3.) COVID-19 losses and uncertainty have led to a mental health crisis. Here is how to help.

Aug. 2, 2020, 11:33 AM EDT

By Suzan Song, director, division of child, adolescent & family psychiatry, George Washington University Medical Center

As a psychiatrist, my most common patients during the pandemic have been working mothers trying to manage a full-time job at home while also being primarily responsible for children at home.

Most report feeling irritable with low energy, difficulty focusing, uncontrollable emotions, guilt over perceived privilege, loss of interest in past hobbies, general lack of motivation and thoughts about death and the meaning of life. To continue reading, go to: <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/covid-19-losses-uncertainty-have-led-mental-health-crisis-here-ncna1235547>

4.) Job Security Was Already Precarious For Individuals With Disabilities. Then COVID Hit.

By Monica Torres

Updated July 28, 2020

Before the coronavirus pandemic, Evelyn Ramundo was a secretary at a group home in New Jersey that is run by a nonprofit focused on housing and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Ramundo said she loved her job, where she is worked for 14 years: "I'm very close with the co-workers." But then coronavirus hit the United States. Ramundo said she has been unable to go back to work since about February, and not knowing when she will be able to return and not getting to help people in the group home is frustrating. "I miss everybody," she said.

"I want to go back to work and make money and not be around the house as much." To read more, go to :

<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/job-security-individuals-disabilities-coronavirus | 5f060ae4c5b6480493ca63d9>

5.) Forwarded from Linda Williams

Dear Colleagues,

A Notice of Final Priorities and a Notice Inviting Applications for a Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center—Quality Management (VRTAC-QM,CFDA 84.264J); and a Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center—Quality Employment (VRTAC-QE, CFDA 84.264K) officially published in the Federal Register on August 3, 2020. The Notice of Final Priority can be accessed here:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2020-16685>. The Notice Inviting

Applications can be accessed here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2020-16686>. **The closing date is September 2, 2020 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.**

Application packages for each CFDA are available on Grants.gov. Pre-application PowerPoint presentations will be made available on the RSA's National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM). A pre-application teleconference meeting will be scheduled shortly, and information will be posted on the NCRTM.

We intend for the VRTAC-QM and VRTAC-QE to increase the number and quality of employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities through training and technical assistance to State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency personnel. We expect the VRTAC-QM to enable State VR agency personnel to manage available resources better and improve service delivery, and the VRTAC-QE to support State VR agency personnel to implement innovative and effective employment strategies and supporting practices.

- Point of contact CFDA 84.264J: Douglas Zhu, U.S. Department of Education, email: 84.264J@ed.gov
- Point of contact CFDA 84.264K: Felipe Lulli, U.S. Department of Education, email: 84.264K@ed.gov

The information described above is available on the NCRTM at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/RSAGrantInfo.aspx>. Updates will be made to the page this evening to add the PowerPoint Presentations. Information about these competitions is also posted on <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/rsa/new-rsa-grants.html>.

6.) Forwarded From Linda Williams

Dear Colleagues,

Today marks the release of the final set of webinars for the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Technical Assistance and Demonstration Project Virtual Series: Results and Reflections. In this virtual series of webinars, RSA-funded technical assistance centers and demonstration projects feature the results of their projects, reflect on lessons learned, and share ideas for the future. All webinars are available to

access any time at the following link: <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/RSAVirtualSeries.aspx>. All webinars are captioned and include a transcript.

Please contact New Editions Consulting, Inc., contractor to the NCRTM, at NCRTM@neweditions.net and Kristen Rhinehart-Fernandez, RSA Project Manager for the NCRTM) at Kristen.Rhinehart@ed.gov if you have questions.

VIEW VIRTUAL SERIES HERE

7.) After Battling Decades Of Discrimination, A Disabled Actress Fights For Future Talent

Aug 4, 2020

Allison Norlian Contributor Forbes Women

2019 was Eileen Grubba's year.

New Amsterdam on NBC. Watchmen on HBO. Swat on CBS. All Rise on CBS— all popular television shows where Grubba was hired to play a role. She was busy. The work was good. And Grubba was happy.

But moments like these were a long time coming for the actress who had fought disability discrimination for decades. To read more, go to: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/allisonnorlian/2020/08/04/after-battling-decades-of-discrimination-a-disabled-actress-fights-for-future-talent/#40af126e5a39>

8.) Penn Live | How the ADA Helped Make the Hershey Company Stronger

JUL 29, 2020

Penn Live, The Patriot News PA Media Group By Alicia Petross

Thirty years ago, this month, the Americans with Disabilities Act became law across the United States, laying a much-needed foundation for people with disabilities to receive the accessibility and accommodations they need to successfully live and work. While there is always room to improve the ADA as we look toward the next 30 years, one of the real achievements of it – signed into law by President George HW Bush on July 26, 1990 – has been to open doors in corporate America. To read more, go to:

<https://www.nod.org/penn-live-how-the-ada-helped-make-the-hershey-company-stronger/>

9.) Forwarded from Linda Williams

Dear Colleagues,

A Notice of Final Priorities and a Notice Inviting Applications for the Independent Living for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB) Training and Technical Assistance Center (CFDA 84.177Z) have been approved by the Department of Education and sent to the Federal Register for publication. We intend for the OIB-TAC to provide training and technical assistance to designated State agencies (DSAs)—the State agencies that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind—that receive grant funding under the OIB program and to other service providers that receive OIB program funding from DSAs to provide services to consumers. The training and technical assistance are designed to improve the operation and performance of programs and services for older individuals who are blind resulting in their enhanced independence and self-sufficiency.

We are sharing this information with you now to allow sufficient time to prepare an application. We do not have a timeframe for publication in the Federal Register. **Please note: the application due date will be confirmed on the date of publication in the Federal Register. An application package will be posted in Grants.Gov when the Notices are officially published in the Federal Register.**

- Point of contact: Mary Williams, U.S. Department of Education, email: mary.williams@ed.gov

The information described above and attachments will soon be available on RSA's National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM):

<https://ncrtm.ed.gov/RSAGrantInfo.aspx>

10.) Lawsuit Demands Sign Language at White House Virus Briefings

By Aimee Ortiz

Aug. 4, 2020

The National Association of the Deaf and five deaf Americans have sued the White House, arguing that the lack of a sign language interpreter at President Trump's coronavirus briefings violates the

First Amendment. The association is seeking to force Mr. Trump and other White House officials to use American Sign Language, or A.S.L., interpreters during “television broadcasts of their coronavirus press conferences and briefings to make them accessible to deaf and hard-of-hearing people.” To continue reading, go to:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/us/politics/asl-interpreter-lawsuit-coronavirus-trump.html>

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