Although the global COVID-19 pandemic was the focus of much of the past year, 2020 was significant to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS or VR) for a very different reason. This year, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the public VR program! Since 1920, this program has remained true to its founding premise that Americans with disabilities who want to work can work when they have access to the services and supports that enable them to do so.

Over the years, the program has reinvented itself to meet the ever-changing needs and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities who are pursuing goals for employment and more independent living, and this year was no exception! In response to the pandemic, all VR employees began working remotely and we modified policy to continue to support clients virtually on their path to employment and increased independence.

I am happy to say that almost 30,000 North Carolinians with disabilities received services through DVRS over the past fiscal year and more than 3,800 successfully achieved their goals for competitive integrated employment.

With 100 years of experience, VR is prepared to help North Carolinians with disabilities who want to work go to work, no matter what the changing world may bring.
Demographic Snapshot of Individuals Receiving Services

Individuals receiving VR services: 30,182

VR Cases by Region:
- Western: 8,235
- Central: 12,998
- Eastern: 8,949

VR Cases by Age and Reported Gender:
- Under Age 25: 12,477
- Age 25-54: 13,060
- Age 55 or older: 4,645

VR Cases by Race and Ethnicity (not mutually exclusive):
- White: 15,919
- Black: 13,593
- Hispanic: 1,913
- Asian: 284
- Native American: 431
- Pacific Islander: 33
Barriers to Employment for Individuals Receiving Services

Primary Impairment

- Sensory/Communicative: 1,333
- Physical: 6,779
- Cognitive: 9,809
- Psychosocial: 12,261

Impact of disability

- Not Severe: 8%
- Severe: 53%
- Most Severe: 39%

Other Reported Barriers to Employment

- Long-term Unemployed: 17,815
- Secondary Disability: 16,682
- Low Income: 15,568
- Basic Skills Deficient/Low Literacy: 9,317
- Ex-Offender: 3,702
- English Language Learner: 3,549
- Single Parent: 1,689
- Homeless: 1,289
- Perceived Cultural Barriers: 969
- Foster Care Youth: 935
Community-Based Employment Services

- 2,273 individuals received **Supported Employment Services**
- 62 individuals received **Brain Injury Support Services**
- 151 individuals participated in **Project Search**
- 2,862 individuals received **Work Adjustment Trainings**
- 373 individuals participated in **paid, community-based internships**
- 240 individuals participated in **Individual Placement and Support Program (IPS)**

Youth and Student Services

**Transition Services**
- 12,474 individuals received services
- 1,388 cases closed successfully

**Pre-Employment Transition Services**
- 4,121 students received services

**Post-Secondary Training Services**
- 7,653 individuals received services
**Independent Living Services**

+2,224 Total individuals served under Plan for Independent Living (IL)

1,497 individuals determined eligible for IL services

877 individuals achieved their IL goals

353 individuals received Personal Assistance services

**Rehabilitation Engineering Services**

$13,705 Average vehicle modification cost

45 vehicle modifications completed

$9,583 Average barrier removal cost

28 barrier removal completed

**Assistive Technology Services**

2,607 individuals received training on assistive technology (AT) devices

769 individuals received short-term device loans

$85,075 savings on purchase of AT for North Carolinians with disabilities

**Making Play Accessible**

During 2019-2020, the NC Assistive Technology Program (NCATP) hosted interns from several universities in the state. Just before the holidays in 2019, Sarah Gachuz, interning at the Raleigh NCATP Center, discovered 22 Hess toy helicopters donated by the National Guard. Knowing that children with limited motor function would have a tough time playing with the motorized toys, Gachuz worked with Raleigh staff to switch-adapt the toys so they could be distributed by the AT Reuse program to children with disabilities during the holiday season.

*Intern Sarah Gachuz with Speech Language Pathologist Amy Philips holding switch-adapted toy*
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Overall Satisfaction with VR Services

- FFY 2019: 87.2%
- FFY 2020: 86.5%

Overall Satisfaction with VR Staff

- Respectfulness: 95.6%
- Responsiveness: 84.9%
- Providing Info & Referrals: 82.1%
- Availability: 88.6%
- Providing Career Guidance: 81.9%
- Identifying Service Needs: 87.6%
- Addressing Service Needs: 86.6%

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