



Annual Report

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity
Act Program Year 2020
(July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)

State Rehabilitation
Council of Kansas

Table of Contents

DCF Mission Statement	pg. 3
Kansas Rehabilitations Services mission and principles	pg. 3
Kansas State Rehabilitation Council Members	pg. 4
Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Highlights	pg. 5
RS Program overview and outcomes	pg. 7
Regional Information and Success Stories	
East	pg. 12
Kansas City	pg. 14
West	pg. 15
Wichita	pg. 17

Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF)

Mission: To protect children, promote healthy families and encourage personal responsibility.

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS)

Mission: Working in partnership with Kansans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independence and self-reliance.

Principles: The following core principles will be infused into all VR operations:

- Competitive, integrated employment is a key component to reaching self-reliance, independence, inclusion, economic equality, and integration into society for people with disabilities.
- All people with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, are presumed to be capable of engaging in gainful employment.
- KRS, its consumers, providers and partners will be accountable for the achievement of employment and the effective use of resources.
- KRS expects and encourages meaningful involvement of people with disabilities, public/private partners, employers and other stakeholders in KRS programs, services and activities.
- KRS promotes the use of evidence-based practices in VR service delivery to empower Kansans with disabilities to maximize employment and economic self-reliance.
- KRS emphasizes employer engagement activities that market the skills and abilities of qualified workers with disabilities have to contribute to the success of Kansas business and industry.

Unless otherwise noted, information in this report is based on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program Year 2020 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021).

State Rehabilitation Council of Kansas Members PY 2020

Tom Anderson	Overland Park
Mike Burgess	Topeka
Daniel Decker	Topeka
Tami Allen	Garden City
Carrie Greenwood	Topeka
Sarah Cowan	Mayetta
Julie King	Wichita
Stacie Martin	Topeka

Annual highlights

Review of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) operations

At each quarterly meeting, one of the RS Regional Program Administrators for VR presents information about their operations. Among the topics are staffing, outcomes, challenges, business development in the region, unemployment, size of communities, and success stories. These presentations give Council members a better feel for how VR services are carried out at the local level. These presentations are also an opportunity for questions-and-answers about regional operations.

Data report

RS provides a quarterly performance data report that hones in on key areas of interest to the Council members. This report includes: number of persons served, number of persons employed, average hourly wage, average hours worked per week, highest full-time hourly wage, percent of persons employed who report their own income as their primary source of support, number of transition youth served and employed, number of counselors, and average caseload size. The report also includes performance on timeliness of eligibility determination and development of Individual Plans for Employment. Finally, the report includes the number of persons rehabilitated by type of disability.

The regional presentations, data report and reports from administrative staff on key initiatives give Council members the opportunity to stay informed about RS operations, and to evaluate/guide the agency's performance.

Youth with disabilities

The Council maintains a strong focus on how to empower youth with disabilities to pursue post-secondary education, achieve employment and become self-reliant. Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are discussed at each meeting. The Pre-ETS program offers job exploration, counseling on post-secondary education, self-advocacy training and other services to help young adults prepare for employment and self-reliance, rather than dependency on public benefits.

A major area of emphasis is the provision of paid work-based experiences through which youth can learn the basic skills necessary to succeed in the workplace and experience the benefits of earned income. To carry out this component, RS has established innovative partnerships with most KANSASWORKS one-stop workforce centers as well as some Centers for Independent Living (CILs). These partnerships leverage the expertise of the workforce centers and CILs to provide work readiness training and develop opportunities for paid work experiences. The services are funded through RS service provider agreements. KRS is building service provider capacity to ensure statewide access for paid work-based learning experiences. Research published in the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation shows that youth employment is a strong predictor of successful employment as adults, and therefore an important milestone toward self-reliance.

In addition, RS has established a partnership with the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy. “Empower Me” workshops are conducted statewide to help high school students plan for post-secondary education and employment. During the workshops, students participate in activities focused on job exploration, resume building, work readiness training, self-advocacy skill building, mock interviews and post-secondary educational options. An important aspect of each virtual event is a panel presentation by people with disabilities who discuss their life and employment experiences. *The number of workshops that were completed this program year were impacted due to the pandemic. We have adapted to a virtual event instead of in person to be able to continue to conduct the workshops.*

KRS and KYEA partnered to present two Empower Me Workshops in PY 2020, with a total of 41 student participants. According to students, the workshops are a valuable experience, and they live up to the “empower me” goal. Here are a few statements from students who attended the KYEA Workshop: “Seeing and hearing what others had to say about having a disability made me feel more comfortable with myself”. Another, “I’m coming out of my shell and getting more comfortable with talking and asking questions. I will be better talking to employees and not so hidden” Lastly “After attending the Empower Me Workshop I felt hopeful about my future.”

Coordination with other disability organizations

One major purpose of the Council is to facilitate coordination among disability and service provider organizations. The Department of Education, the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, the client assistance program, the Parent Training and Information Center, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Kansas Advisory Committee for the Blind and Visually Impaired each have designated times on the agenda to present about their organizations. Other members representing service providers, VR consumers, advocacy organizations, business/industry and the workforce development board all have opportunities to share information, announce opportunities for collaboration, or raise issues for further consideration.

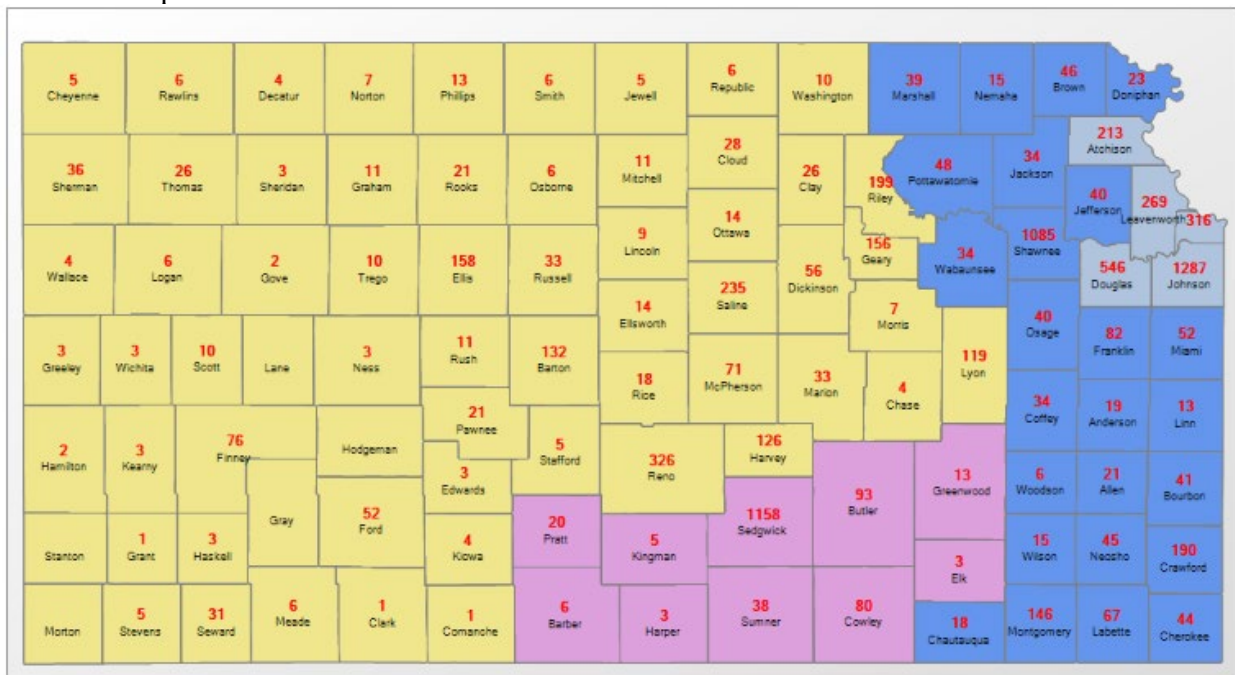
RS Program Overview and Outcomes

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR)

VR provides services for Kansans with disabilities to obtain, maintain or regain employment in the competitive and integrated workplace.

- To be eligible for services, a person must have a physical or mental disability which results in a substantial impediment to employment, and he or she must require VR services in order to get a job.
- Services are provided by qualified VR counselors stationed in DCF offices and in partnership with private contractors and service providers.
- Services are individualized according to each person's rehabilitation needs and employment objective. Services may include vocational assessment, counseling and guidance, job-related training, job coaching, supported employment, assistive technology, physical/mental restoration services, transition services for youth, and job placement.
- Basic VR funds are 78.7% federal, authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

In PY 2020, VR provided services for 8,453 Kansans with disabilities who were at various stages in their preparation for employment. As the map below illustrates, the VR program has statewide impact.

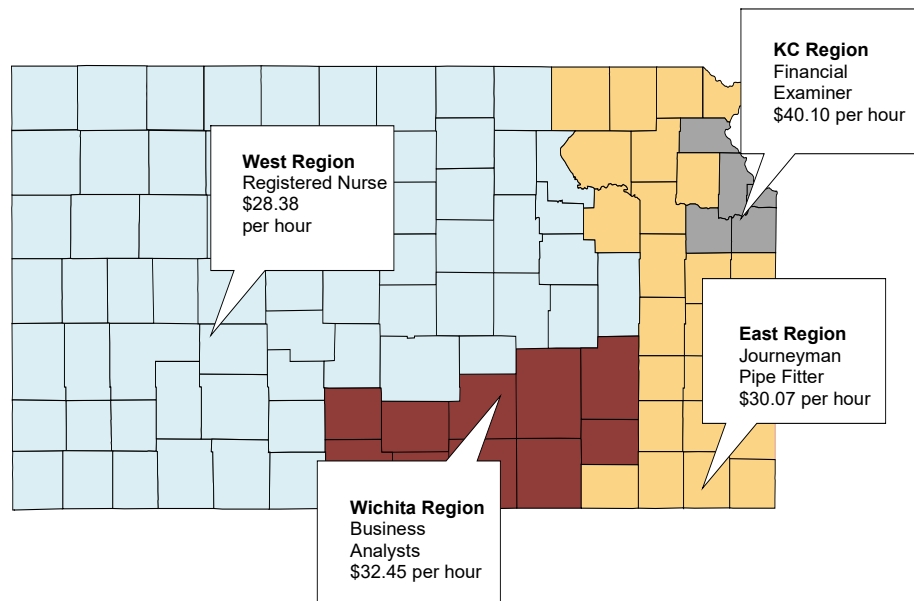


TOTAL NUMBER SERVED: 8,453

A total of 933 persons achieved competitive integrated employment in PY 2020. Their average earnings were \$11.69 per hour, and they worked an average of 28 hours per week. A total of 80% of persons successfully employed reported *their own income* as their primary source of support at VR case closure, representing a significant milestone toward self-sufficiency. Subsequently of those achieving employment, 26% were youth with disabilities who therefore began a lifelong path focused on self-sufficiency rather than reliance on public benefits.

VR staff statewide are working hard to facilitate timely access to services. And this work is paying off. PY 2020 the average timeframe from application to IPE totaled 70 days compared to the 150 days permitted by federal regulations.

Dispelling common misperceptions about the employment potential of people with disabilities, the following are examples of high wage employment outcomes achieved by individuals working at least 40 hours per week. (Full-time employment of at least 40 hours per week — PY 2020)



<u>Disabilities of Persons Rehabilitated</u>	<u>PY 2020</u> <u>July 1 2020-June 30, 2021</u>
Mental Illness	683
Orthopedic/Neurological Impairments	84
Other Cognitive Impairments	320
Learning Disabilities	64
Intellectual Disabilities	104
Other Physical Impairments	50
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	58
Blindness and Other Visual Impairments	28
General Physical Debilitation	26
Other	47
TOTAL	1,464
TBI as the cause of disability	22
Autism Spectrum as the cause of the disability	115

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

The VR program is required to set aside 15% of its annual federal grant to provide Pre-ETS services students with disabilities. The purpose of Pre-ETS reflects one of the major goals of RS—to empower youth with disabilities to achieve their highest employment potential. Authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Pre-ETS include job exploration, counseling on post-secondary education options, self-advocacy training, workplace readiness training and work-based learning experience. Research published in the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation shows participating in such services is a strong predictor of successful employment as adults, and therefore an important milestone toward self-reliance.

RS Pre-ETS staff provide some services directly to students and RS has contracted with local workforce centers and Centers for Independent Living to provide services as well.

The age requirement to meet criteria to participate in Pre-ETS changed to age 14 on July 1, 2021.

To be eligible for Pre-ETS several criteria must be met, including:

- The student has a disability and is 14-21 years of age.
- The student is in a secondary, post-secondary, or other recognized education program.

The Pre-ETS program served 1,416 students with disabilities during PY 2020.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

VR also includes a specialized program for persons who are legally blind. BEP offers them the opportunity to manage food service and vending operations in public/government facilities, including state office buildings, the State Capitol, military food service operations, highway rest areas and two private entities. BEP uses funds generated by its operations, rather than state general funds, to match federal VR dollars.

BEP has 10 blind managers operating 92 sites across the state, including vending machines, snack bars, micro markets and cafes/cafeterias. BEP also has contracts to operate dining halls on two military bases, Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth. The median annual earnings of BEP blind managers is \$13,144.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Under the WIOA, VR is a partner in the state's workforce development system, along with adult basic education, labor exchange services, and workforce centers. As partners, these programs develop goals, strategies and performance measures to address the needs of Kansas employers and job seekers. A combined state plan is updated every two years and submitted to the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education.

WIOA also incorporates significant changes to the VR program through amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. Pre-ETS, described previously, was established.

In addition, VR must provide Career Counseling, Information and Referral Services for the 3,000 Kansans with disabilities employed at subminimum wage in sheltered workshops. The goal is to provide information about competitive integrated employment options and the services available to help them secure such jobs in the integrated labor market.

Disability Determination Services (DDS)

DDS makes medical disability determinations for the U.S. Social Security Administration on most Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) claims filed or reviewed in Kansas. DDS is responsible only for the medical adjudication, and the Social Security Administration determines whether to award benefits. DDS also works with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the KanCare Clearinghouse to assess medical documentation for Kansans who apply for medical assistance on the basis of disability. DDS is virtually 100% federally funded in that it receives only about \$100,000 in SGF.

In SFY 2021, 24,847 Kansans filed disability claims (all types). The Kansas DDS was responsible for processing 14,711 of those claims. The Kansas DDS is recognized nationally as one of the best for quality determinations. For SFY 2021 the Kansas DDS average claim processing time for combined SSI and SSDI claims is 105 days with an accuracy rate of 97%.

Independent Living (IL)

RS administers the independent living program, which includes grants to a network for Centers for Independent Living (CILs). CILs provide information/referral, peer counseling, independent living skills training, advocacy and deinstitutionalization services for people with disabilities.

In addition, RS oversees grants with community-based organizations to carry out the independent living program for older (age 55+) individuals who are blind. Services include independent living skills training, assistive technology and orientation/mobility training. Services are intended to help persons served live in their own homes and communities rather than more costly institutional settings.

RS is also required to provide support for the Statewide Independent Living Council, in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act and implementing regulations.

Centers for Independent Living provided services to 8,821 Kansans with disabilities in all 105 counties.

Kansas Commission For The Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH)

KCDHH is established in KSA 75-5391 and is overseen by a board of commissioners appointed by the Governor. KCDHH offers advocacy, technical assistance, information/referral, sign language interpreter registration and coordination of interpreting services.

- KCDHH staff receive between 500 and 800 contacts every month (mostly phone calls or email messages) involving many issues on services or specific resources for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH).
- KCDHH maintains a registration list of 403 sign language interpreters in Kansas. KCDHH hopes to expand this registration list to include communication access services, including captioning (CART) and support providers for persons who are deaf-blind (SSP).
- KCDHH provides an annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day at the Capitol event every March attracting 250 to 300 visitors, including state legislators.
- KCDHH is continuing to monitor implementation of the Language Assessment Program for persons who are D/HH.

Regional Information

The East Region consists of 25 Counties which are divided into a North and South Region. The East Region has Program Administrator, two RS Managers, and one Pre-ETS Manager. The management team has approximately an average of one-year tenure. There are 17 VR counselors with an average tenure of 5 years. The East Region has two program specialists new to their roles with less than a year experience. The region has 6 support staff with a tenure of 2.5 years, and 4 Pre-ETS Transition specialists with 1.5 tenure average. The region has 33 filled position and 8 vacancies.

Response to COVID: The East Region has spent the past 16 months teleworking in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The exception to that has been our Human Service Assistants who were given permission in June 2020 to return to the office to work on a full-time basis. Other staff are allowed to go into the office on an as needed basis to print/scan items, file, or do what other administrative tasks were necessary. However, they are limited in the amount of time they can spend there and must always notify their manager or PA of their intent to be in the office. Staff continue to primarily keep their clients engaged through monthly phone contact; however, many utilize Microsoft Teams for face-to-face meetings and have participated in meetings with schools and other agencies through invites from Zoom. VR staff also have the capability to fax and scan from their laptops at home when necessary.

Success Stories

Eddie W. is a 55-year-old man who was in a car accident in 1990 that severed part of his spinal column and ultimately left him without the use of his legs. When he applied for VR services in January 2018, he opened his case to maintain the job he has held since August 1983 at Evans Motors in Pittsburg, Kansas where he works as a Sales Manager. The VRC who initially worked with him referred him for an Assistive Technology Assessment immediately after he was found eligible for services. This evaluation recommended



shower modifications, an adjustable bed, and repairs to his power wheelchair. Also, while working with VR, his modified van that he had been driving for 10+ years began experiencing mechanical failure and the cost of the repairs outweighed what the vehicle was worth. Eddie was able to purchase a 2020 Toyota Sienna Van which VR paid for the modifications on. VR also assisted Eddie with the modifications that he needed to his shower to allow more easy access for him to take care of his activities of daily living and an adjustable bed that helped reduce bed sores and other issues he was experiencing. VR also assisted with keeping his power chair

running with the purchase of batteries, a new cushion and replacing the tires. Eddie states, “I can’t say enough good things about working with VR. Everyone has gone above and beyond in helping me maintain my job.”

K.W. applied for VR assistance in August 2018. K.W. has a vision loss in her left eye and she experiences anxiety as a result of some past trauma.

VR sent K.W. to Whiteline Truck Driving School to achieve her Class “A” Commercial Driver’s license. On 10/09/2020, K.W. received certification from White Line that she completed all the requirements specified by White Line CDL Training to prepare for the Class “A” Commercial Driver’s License Evaluation.

After undergoing training at Whiteline, the instructors felt K.W.’s vision issue prevented her from having the depth perception required to drive a tractor trailer & instructors were concerned about her safety behind the wheel of an articulated large vehicle. K.W. did pass the licensing exam for her Class B license at Whiteline. She completed her vision waiver paperwork & DOT medical certificate.



Katrina says she felt she could go to Swift Trucking & learn how to drive their trucks; however, she encountered the same difficulty. So, K.W. decided to focus on her Class B license.

Services received to lead to a successful employment outcome: CDL training through Whiteline, clothing for work, vehicle repair & towing, tires for vehicle, transportation, eyeglasses, microwave for her trucking job & maintenance (food while in training the first few weeks).

K.W. was on SSDI and she did speak with the benefits specialist about her earnings & how they would be affected. K.W. receives health insurance through Panther.

K.W. is employed through Panther Logistics (see picture of her truck). She started this job on 12/18/2020.

K.W. is happy with her job as she loves being out on the open road as it helps tremendously with her anxiety she says. Client’s 90 days was March 18, 2021. Counselor: Angela Roberson

Emily is in her last year of the 18-21 Program, Next Step Academy. I have been working with Emily since November of 2017. Emily attended the Kansas Youth Empower Me Workshop Academy in April of this year. Emily said that working with Pre-ETS has really increased her self-advocacy skills as well as her confidence. She said that she never realized that someone with a disability could actually get a job that they want just by understanding what their needs are and working hard. She said she never would have had the confidence to speak with her mom about wanting to work with her at Advent Health Medical Center in Ottawa where she is a Registered Nurse. She said she is going to be starting a part time job in the dietary department at the medical center in the near future and is looking forward to making her own money and learning job skills that she will be able use in the future.



Pre-ETS Specialist Jennifer DeShazer.

The Kansas City Region consists of 5 Counties. The Region is supervised by one Program Administrator, two Program Managers, and two Pre-ETS managers. The management staff have average of 3 years tenure. We have 18 VR counselors with a tenure of an average of 4 years, 5 Pre-ETS staff with tenure average of 2 years, 7 Support Staff with average of 6 years of tenure, and 1 vocational evaluator with 33 years of experience. Kansas City currently have 34 positions and 6 number of vacancies.

Response to COVID: We have learned other ways to complete initial interviews. We have learned new ways to help someone become eligible more quickly. Many counselors are using Google Voice to help eliminate phone tag.

Success Stories

“Len has been working with me since 2018 towards his educational goal of becoming a substance abuse counselor, and recently graduated from the addictions counseling certificate program at KCKCC in May 2021. He completed his application for licensure and started his job as a full-time counselor at the location in Kansas City where he did his internship as a student earlier this week. The staff who he had trained with there were thrilled to have him back, he is getting good client feedback about his performance, and is really enjoying it so far. He’s making \$22/hour and received a sign on bonus as well. His goal is to work for a while to gain some practical experience, and then return to school to pursue his graduate degree to maximize his employment. His long-term goal is to complete his credential in gambling counseling, and to move into a leadership position with a non-profit organization. He has told me multiple times he could not have achieved this goal without being a participant in the VR program and is extremely grateful for the financial and emotional support he was provided.”

Isaiah is a high school senior who has been with Pre-ETS for just a little over a year. It is amazing to see the progress this young man has made in his life. Pre-ETS is a recent addition to his story, but he has moved from some rather severe behavioral issues to being one of the most polite high school students I have ever met. During the past year Isaiah has faced the upheaval surrounding COVID-19, as well as the transition from one specialist to an interim to a different specialist. In the past, due to his ASD, Isaiah would not have handled any of those changes well but his ability to keep rolling right along speaks volumes.

Isaiah has participated for several years in football and wrestling and is an extremely bright student. Upon graduation from high school, Isaiah is planning to attend either KU or K-State and pursue a degree in architecture. He is very motivated and his excitement about what the future holds is infectious. It will be a great privilege to celebrate his transition to the next phase of his life and see how Pre-ETS can continue to walk beside him.

Addison was a Project Search student who came to VR with a goal of finding a part time job where she could work with older adults in a relatively quiet environment. Joblink was able to help her find and maintain a position as a part time dietary aide in a local nursing home. Initially the job coach was not allowed in the building, so they did remote coaching by having Addison call the job coach on the phone to walk her through her tasks; the job coach noted Addison has done a great job learning on her own. The client received excellent reviews on her stabilization evaluation and her job coaching notes indicate continued positive progress. The head chef and Addison's small team of coworkers consistently gave good feedback about her positive attitude and strong work ethic!



The West Region consists of 65 Counties which are divided into a North and South Region. The west region has a Program Administrator, two VR managers, one Pre-ETS manager, 17 VR counselors, 7 Pre-ETS transition specialists, two vocational rehabilitation evaluators and five support staff. The average tenure for the management staff is an average of 2.5 years, the VR counselors have approximately 8 years tenure, the support have almost an average of 9 years, and Pre-ETS staff have a little over an average of 1 year. The West Region has a total of 35 filled positions and 8 vacancies.

Response to COVID: We have continued to work through the obstacles to serve our clients through the pandemic. Our staff have gotten better at TEAMS, ZOOM, and other remote work technology. The staff have adapted to less face to face contact and are still getting successful closures. We have continued to see a decrease in our caseload size. We continue to do outreach and build community ties to help us educate individuals about our services to try to increase the number of individuals seeking our services.

Success Stories

Kaitlyn represents determination and resiliency while being in the Vocational Rehabilitation Services program. Kaitlyn started with VRS in 2014, to get assistance with finding employment that closely matched her interest, skills, capabilities and abilities. Her Job Placement Services Provider worked eagerly to help Kaitlyn find the perfect job that would address her limitations and would be something she would truly enjoy.

Kaitlyn attended every interview offered whether in person or over phone and submitted tons of applications and resumes. She continued to be an active participant in the program. Kaitlyn's independency and strength continued to be the driving force while completing her bachelor's degree and later finding a job as a QA and User Tester that she truly enjoys.

Her position allows her to work from home and have a flexible schedule. Kaitlyn uses her advanced technology skills and education to excel at her new job. She states, "I don't have to worry about extra expenses such as transportation, since it's a remote position." Kaitlyn is hoping she will be able to maintain her position for a very long time and looks forward to moving up in the company if the opportunity presents itself.



Mason began working with Pre-ETS in September 2018 and graduated high school May 2019. He started at Barton Community College August 2019 and recently completed his automotive technician certificate. He had earned the Barton Elite Scholarship, which paid for his books and tuition, and a scholarship from Central Kansas Upward Bound that helped pay for his room and board. Mason is nothing if not determined and took on the task of applying for additional aid in order to pay the balance. He has a strong desire to be self-sufficient, live independently, work, and be productive. To that end, Mason has also participated in VR services and still has access to those resources.

Mason has been a great contributor to the West Region's Transition Talks virtual meetings, attending nearly all presentations and participating in a panel of post-secondary students answering questions for younger students. Recently, Mason bought his own car without help from his parents or having to get a loan and that is something he is really proud of. Mason's most recent success was in being hired at Barton Community College in the maintenance department after applying and interviewing for at least ten jobs. He said things are going well at BCC and he already got a raise to \$14.50 per hour.



Challenges Mason said he faced in his job search included businesses that want experience but don't hire someone so they can get experience and accepting a job that isn't in his chosen job/career field. When asked what he learned from Pre-ETS that helped him the most? Learning to speak up for himself about what he needs and wants, and mock interviews. "It [Pre-ETS] helped me be able to express myself better and speak up for myself. Before I kept it all inside me. Now I'm able to tell what I struggle with and can ask for what help I need." Mason also said he learned he can be open and comfortable with Pre-ETS and that we have helped him be that way with other people.

Charles Bortz is a client of VR, When he was at the point of job search, Identifications Inc. (which embroiders/silk screens t-shirts and produces awards/trophies in Great Bend) was seeking help. They approached Frankie Pelster of the Rosewood Employment Network. Frankie had 2 VR clients that may have worked but thought that Charles would be a better fit since he had previously worked at an upholstery business. Since Identifications had never hired a VR client before, Frankie presented the option of a Community Based Job Tryout. Charles turned out to be a good fit and he was hired. This was shortly before the holidays, but Identifications made certain to include him in their Christmas Party. Charles began his job cleaning the silk screening screens and office equipment. He made a company fan look brand new. As time progressed, Identifications expanded his job duties, having him actually silk screening orders for t-shirts and embroidering hats. They have been thrilled with his performance and feels he's an asset to the company. – Don Crouse, VR counselor

The Wichita Region consists of 10 Counties. The Region is supervised by one Program Administrator, two Program Managers, and two Pre-ETS managers. The average tenure of the management team for Wichita region is 5 years. We have 13 VR counselors with an average tenure of 5 years. We have 5 support positions with average tenure of 1.5 years. Pre-ETS has 5 transition specialists with 1-year tenure. Wichita currently have 28 filled positions and we have 10 vacancies.

The Wichita Region has continued to use Zoom, TEAMS or whatever platform we can access that works best for our clients during these unforeseen circumstances with the pandemic. If they want to meet face-to-face, we accommodate them. The goal is to meet the client in whatever way works for them and is most comfortable for them. We have ensured staff have the equipment they need to accomplish this. A shout out to the IT staff in the Wichita Region for getting us whatever we need, teaching us how to use it, and being available to address any issues that arise quickly.

Success Stories

Julia applied to VR in April of 2019. At that time she had never worked. She graduated from high school in May of 2015 and spent those in between years at home with her mom and dad. Julia came to VR with the hopes of moving towards gaining independence.

Julia participated in a CBWA and some Job Prep services to help her gain confidence, and experience, and learn more about job types that are a good match for her. After this she participated in and successfully completed the Greater Expectations program. This program was significant in helping her gain confidence with learning job tasks, relating to customers, coworkers and people in authority. She also learned how to work through feeling overwhelmed by learning techniques that work for her, like taking a few minutes away and to call her mom.

Julia worked with Rosheila Thompkins with Back on Track, for job search and job coaching. She started a job at Dillon's as a courtesy clerk on 6/2/2021. Her job tasks included bagging groceries, collecting carts and customer service.



When asked about what employment and the services that she has received from VR she stated: "I appreciate Ro, my job coach. I appreciate I was given a chance and I'm still supported by everyone around me. Having something to do. And my parents appreciate all the help I've been given and support from Ro and you Jill. Without you I couldn't have made it this far and for that my parents appreciate so much because they want me to excel also and have a bright and happy future learning how to take care of myself and work " Jill Hayslip, Voc Rehab Counselor

Kennedy Ruzicka is a student who has been involved with Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) since April of 2019 and is currently enrolled full time at Emporia State University. Kennedy has expressed struggles while working with Pre-ETS in the past due to her disabilities such as time management and work/school balance.

Despite the struggles, Kennedy has always demonstrated an eager desire to succeed and meet her goals. Working with Pre-ETS, Kennedy has been able to work on skills and coping mechanisms to assist her in focusing, time management and work/school balance to achieve her short-term goal of maintaining good grades and focusing on school this year before looking for a part time job as her grades struggled in the past while working and going to school. Kennedy's long-term goal is to become an elementary art therapist or educator. Kennedy is maintaining all A's in her four courses so far and has also identified a big success for her is eating in the café every day this year! This has been an issue previously due to time management and social anxieties. Kennedy plans to continue working with Pre-ETS to assist her in gaining more knowledge and skills that

will benefit her through post-secondary education and employment. – Pre-ETS Transition Specialist - Ashley Merz

My client moved from Hutchinson to Wichita. While in Hutchinson he was in a recovery program. When he moved to Wichita, he obtained his own job at NORC, call center. He was living at Oxford house at closure. He did well on the job, and I did follow along counseling with him giving him support and encouragement so he could maintain his job. He needed to continue his mental health services, so I encouraged him to apply for Medicaid and to connect with a mental health provider in Wichita however he decided to continue with these services out of Hutch as he was familiar with them. At closure he reported that he had the opportunity to become a Team Lead at his job. This would also include health benefits and be a full-time job. He also was the president of his Oxford house and was helping others with recovery. He was provided a bicycle to assist with getting around the community and bus pass in addition to the counseling and support. This man was stable in his recovery program and he is helping others to stay sober. CL continues to do well in his employment. Throughout the VR process I continued to keep him engaged, so he could remain successful with his employment goals and life goals. His last email said he wants to extend his appreciation and thanks to me for my continued help in reaching out to him. He always thanked me for the continued help I provided. Rosalind Neloms, VRC.



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<http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/RS/Pages/Employment-Services.aspx>