

2006
ANNUAL
REPORT



GREETINGS FROM THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

December 2006

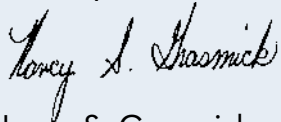
Dear Maryland Citizens:

The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) brings employment and independence to thousands of individuals with significant disabilities who live in Maryland. This year's annual report for federal fiscal year 2006 shows you how DORS touches lives while remaining accountable to the goals set out in its strategic plan.

Maryland citizens served by DORS this year include high school students, experienced workers and others with physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities who are determined to live a life of productivity and independence.

DORS is a unique agency that helps individuals with disabilities take their place in the workforce and in the community. We take pride in the achievements and remarkable outcomes from this past year.

Sincerely,



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

"A lot of people think of the Maryland State Department of Education as just PreK-12," Dr. Grasmick (r) told state and local dignitaries who gathered at the farm of Joseph McGrath (l) of Fruitland this past summer to learn more about vocational rehabilitation. "DORS is another important dimension to the services that we bring to Maryland citizens," she said.



DORS helped Mr. McGrath return to work on his family's century-old farm after an illness and subsequent leg amputation. He is shown here explaining a more accessible seeding method to Dr. Grasmick.

On the Cover:

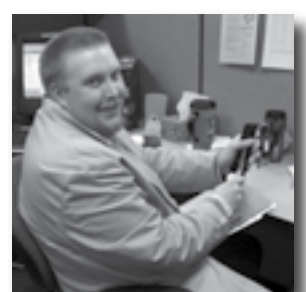
Top Photo: Kelly Barrett with DORS counselor Adrienne Thomas

Middle Photo: Disability Examiner Gloria Ajukwu

Bottom Photo: WTC students Paul Nelson and Andrea Capron

WHAT CAN DORS DO FOR MARYLAND BUSINESSES?

- Match qualified applicants with job openings
- Funding for on-the-job training
- No-cost worksite consultation
- Identify and obtain technologies to increase workplace productivity and success
- Provide services for workplace disability issues
- Ongoing employment consultation



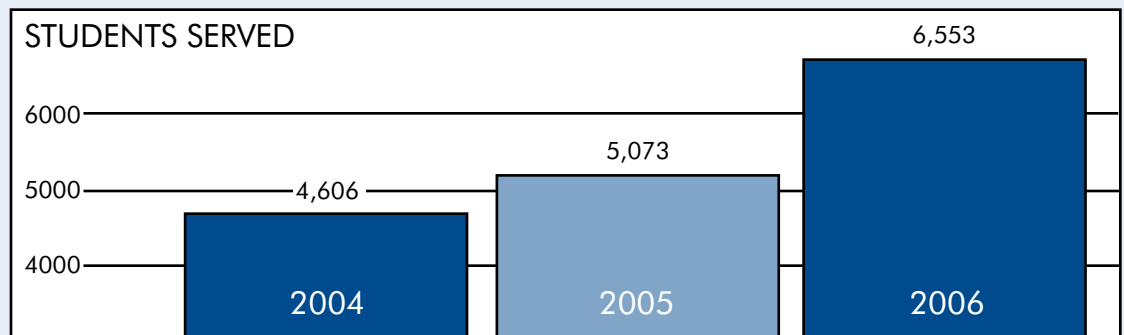
GOAL 1

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WILL BE PREPARED FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The MSDE Intra-agency Cooperative Transition Planning Agreement for Secondary Students with Disabilities was signed, paving the way for more streamlined alliances between DORS and local education agencies.
- In four school systems, the local cooperative agreement also includes provisions for students to obtain evaluation and assistive technology (AT) equipment/devices (funded by DORS) during their last year of school, with the school providing training on the AT equipment that the student can then keep after high school to use in college and in employment.
- DORS funds and works in partnerships and projects that help transitioning youth make decisions about the future. These include the Maryland High School/High Tech Program, Youth Empowerment Alliance, Pathway to College Success and the Youth Transition Demonstration project. DORS also supports an annual transition conference and the Youth Leadership Forum.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR CAREERS AND/OR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION



DORS helped Ben Cumbo (r) of Forestville make the transition from high school to college. "Ben is more than ready to take on college life," says Shayna Street, his Lanham-based DORS counselor (l) who helped him prepare for the move from Bishop McNamara High School to St. Mary's College. "He has a wide range of interests and a family who wants him to succeed on his own terms."

HIGH SCHOOL/HIGH TECH HELPS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES EXPLORE CAREERS IN MATH, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING.

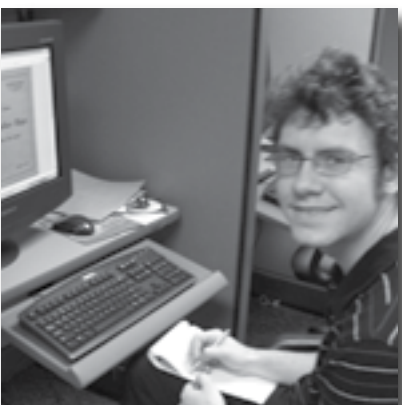
Seventy-one students took part in five different High School/High Tech programs in various Maryland communities, providing youths with the experiences that have been shown to best prepare them for a successful future.



Though she may not plan to be a chain saw operator, learning to operate one will give Nikki Singh, a student who is blind, confidence to take on a variety of challenges. Nikki was a participant in the National Federation of the Blind's Youth Leadership Blowout.



CVS Pharmacy in Oakland gave Daniel Flynn a behind-the-counter perspective of their retail drug sales operation. CVS participates in the Garrett County Public Schools High School/High Tech Collaborative Transition Program and provided this job shadowing opportunity.



Daniel Cates, a Montgomery County public high school student and a participant in University of Maryland's High School/High Tech program, spent four weeks in a summer internship at the National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). He updated electronic maps and cataloged documents.

THE WORKFORCE & TECHNOLOGY CENTER WELCOMES TRANSITIONING STUDENTS AS THEY PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE.

Employee Development Services, a new WTC program for transitioning youth, provides simulated job experiences and activities that reinforce good work behaviors, the “soft skills” that businesses seek in entry level workers.



Brent Phipps on the job at PEP Boys



Raymond Smith at the WTC security desk



Heather Musser in WTC's Medical Department with supervisor Lula Guthrie

When Brent Phipps mother, Laurie, watched her son graduate from the Workforce & Technology Center's automotive mechanic training program, she thought back to the days when not many people (except his parents) had much hope for Brent and his future. At birth, Brent weighed just a pound and some ounces. Throughout his childhood, he had to overcome many of the problems that follow pre-term babies.

But Brent, always a curious child, blossomed with early childhood intervention programs and some years of mainstreaming. As he grew older, he nurtured his mechanical inclinations by taking things apart—on the family's boat and around the house—then putting them together again. At 15, he landed a summer job at a local small engine repair shop.

Brent decided to enroll in DORS Workforce & Technology Center's auto mechanic training program. He lived in the WTC dormitories during the 40-week course. WTC staff also helped him prepare for job searching and interviews. Not long after graduation, he landed his first full-time job at PEP Boys as a mechanic assistant.

As for Laurie Phipps, she simply wants people to see Brent as a perfect example of how early intervention and vocational rehabilitation programs can make a difference in a life.

GOAL 2

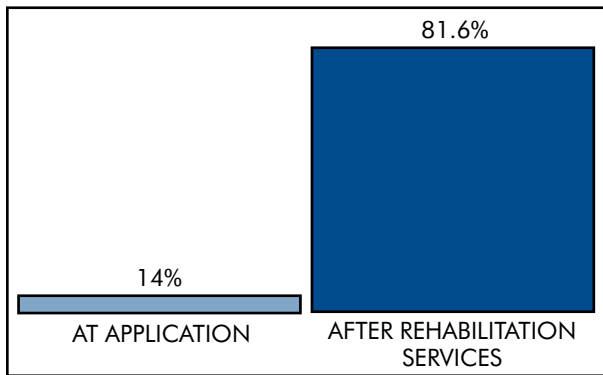
DORS WILL PROMOTE THE EMPLOYMENT AND INDEPENDENT LIVING OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

THE OFFICE OF FIELD SERVICES (OFS) HIGHLIGHTS

- 3,082 people became successfully employed after taking part in DORS programs and services. Another 1,157 are working and receiving follow-along services.
- 113 individuals reached their independent living goals.
- DORS met federal performance standards for employment outcomes, minority access to services and number of consumers who achieve competitive employment.

THE OFFICE OF BLINDNESS & VISION SERVICES (OBVS) HIGHLIGHTS

- 180 people who are blind or have vision loss became successfully employed, a 32% increase over last year, when the office was established. Another 67 OBVS consumers are working and receiving follow-along services.
- The average hourly wage for OBVS consumers is \$13.66.
- More than \$2.9 million in case service dollars supported plans for employment for persons who are blind or have severe vision loss. This is a 61% increase over the prior year.



PERCENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH WAGES AS THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF SUPPORT

Charlie Harris is back on the air at Cumberland's WCBC-AM radio after receiving services from DORS Office for Blindness & Vision Services (OBVS).

For a year and a half, he was out of work and struggled with the health issues that led to his vision loss. Meanwhile, a local low-vision specialist referred Charlie to DORS, with the idea that there may be a way to restore his functional vision and get him back into the studio.



A DORS Rehabilitation Technology Services (RTS) team, led by Taylor McConaughay, visited the job site along with Cumberland DORS OBVS counselor Scott Liller and supervisor Debbi Williamson. Working with WCBC-AM's management, they identified solutions that included a hand-held magnifying device, ZoomText software and a closed circuit television (CCTV).

These days, Charlie's voice once again keeps Cumberland in the know.

THE WORKFORCE & TECHNOLOGY CENTER (WTC)

HIGHLIGHTS

- 745 individuals went to work after taking part in WTC programs, an increase of 6½% over the previous fiscal year.
- WTC received a full three-year CARF accreditation for career assessment, career technology education and comprehensive outpatient services. The Center received numerous exemplary citations. There were no deficiency recommendations, an outcome only achieved by 3% of programs reviewed internationally.
- WTC exceeded its goals in serving transitioning youth (117%), serving consumers with blindness or low vision (132%) and in the provision of assistive technology services (104%).

Friends of the Workforce & Technology Center gave their annual awards to three WTC alumni who overcame challenges to achieve success.



The William W. Lamprell Alumni of the Year

As a teen, Lakeithia Wimberly dropped out of school due to her progressive vision loss. After earning her GED and immersing herself in computer use, she took part in the Governor's QUEST program, which offers paid internships in state agencies.

Today, she has a permanent position as an office secretary for the Maryland Department of Disabilities.

Photo: Lakeithia Wimberly (l) and Betsy Sims, WTC Career Assessment Services Supervisor



Edward Spath Academic Achievement Award

Elmuttasim Fadl came to the United States from his native Sudan four years ago, seeking treatment for Retinitis Pigmentosa, which caused total blindness. Since then, he studied English and later moved on to college courses. When retested in 2005, he scored at the college level for listening comprehension and was rated as competent in English skills.

He now works as an instructor in the DORS Office for Blindness & Vision Services.

Photo: Elmuttasim Fadl (3rd from r), his WTC instructor Jane Owens (3rd from l) and the Edward Spath family



Mark L. Stancil Technology Award

In 1981, Susan Yim was working as a research assistant at Duke University when her life was changed by a stroke. Over the years, she has returned to WTC as needed as advancements in assistive technology have given her more and more independence.

Ms. Yim has been working since 1992 for the U.S. Army as a research molecular biologist, working from home via her adapted computer and a modem. She has since earned her master's degree in Molecular Biology, and used her speech synthesizer to deliver her dissertation.

Photo: Susan Yim (r) with Carol Wheatley (l), WTC Worksite Accommodations Program Supervisor

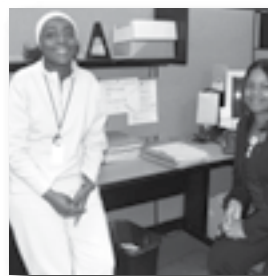
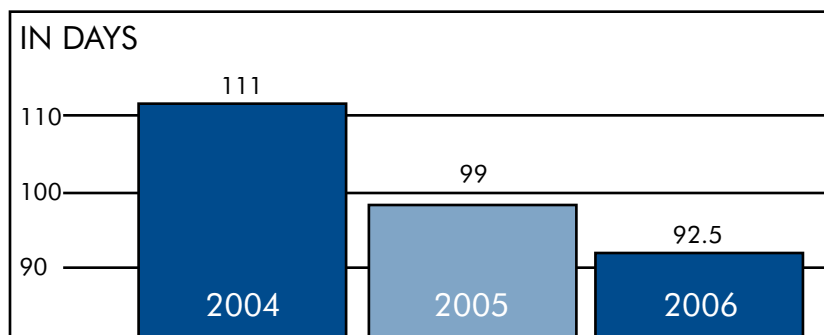
GOAL 3

THE DISABILITY DETERMINATION PROGRAM WILL MAKE TIMELY, ACCURATE DECISIONS ON DISABILITY CLAIMS.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Disability Determination Services (DDS) cleared 59,836 claims for federal disability benefits, exceeding federal performance standards.
- The DDS developed, provided training for and participated in the Maryland Pre-Release Prisoner and the National Homeless Projects.
- After extensive outreach and training by the DDS, virtually all consultative examination physicians submit their reports electronically, resulting in faster decisions on disability claims.

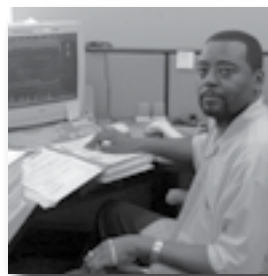
AVERAGE DISABILITY INSURANCE CLAIM PROCESSING TIME



Navonne Scott & Nickole Manuel, Consultative Examination Scheduling Unit



Drs. Irving Kramer and Sami Brahim



Howard Blowe, Case Control Unit

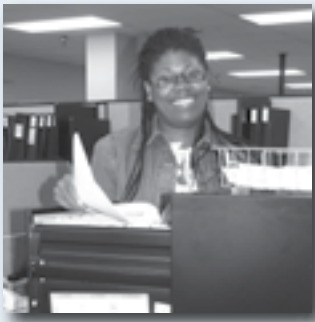
Maryland citizens who apply for Social Security disability benefits can expect faster and better customer service now that the DDS has completed a conversion to an electronic case processing system. The system replaces traditional paper folders and medical records.

At a time when security is important to all, electronic case processing allows the DDS to track case records and provide strict controls on accessibility of confidential records. Electronic case processing also allows doctors and hospitals to send records to the DDS using secure processes with turnaround times much faster than traditional paper records.

Throughout the changeover, the Social Security Administration worked closely with the DDS to assess and validate this new way of conducting business.

THE DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES

WORKS FOR QUALITY DECISION MAKING



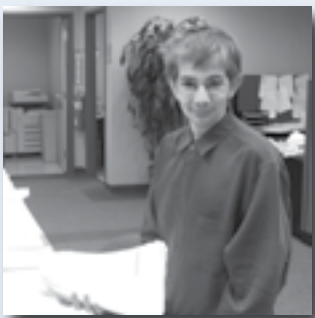
DDS examiners like Christie Jennings take part in a six-month training program to prepare them to make accurate decisions on claims while maintaining effective customer service.



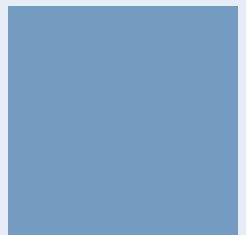
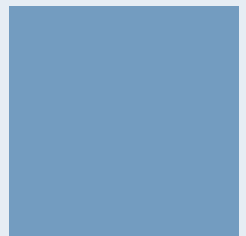
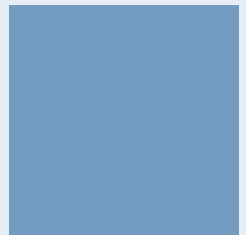
The DDS depends on a unique blend of teamwork among claims examiners, physicians and support staff in order to meet its goals. Helen Mark (l) and Stella Stankowski (r) are part of the operations support staff.



Dr. Mark Paris has provided psychological examinations for the DDS for years. To ensure accurate decision making, the DDS purchases consultative examinations from 500+ physicians and psychologists across the state.



For more than five years, the DDS has provided on-the-job internships and work experiences for Baltimore County Public School students with disabilities, including Ricky Triplett.



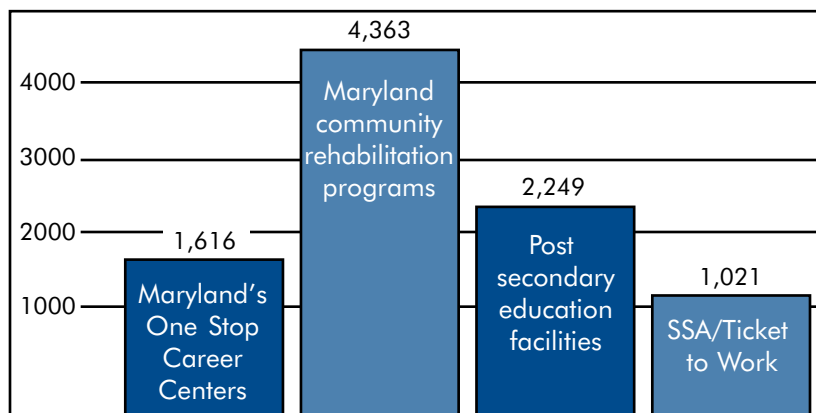
GOAL 4

DORS WILL PARTNER WITH PUBLIC AGENCIES, PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYERS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS TO SUPPORT ITS MISSION.

HIGHLIGHTS

- DORS teams with other state agencies and community programs to educate the public about the Employed Individuals with Disabilities Program, a work incentive available to Marylanders with disabilities to maintain medical insurance coverage while working.
- 1,291 Social Security disability benefit recipients went to work.
- DORS has recently co-located a field office in the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation's One-Stop Career Center in Glen Burnie.

INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL



Volunteer members of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC) contribute scores of hours while working with DORS to bring the most effective programs and services to Maryland citizens with disabilities. Front row, seated (l to r): Tim Daly, Larry Abramson (Chairperson), Beth Lash, John Brennan, Kali Mallik, Robert Burns, Andrea Buonincontro (Vice-chairperson). Standing (l to r) Robert Seurkamp, Josie Thomas, Tom Barkley, Terri Massie-Burrell, Jerry Pantaleo, Al Sonnenstrahl, Niles Ellingson, Michael Shaw, Charles Crawford, Jim Reissig and Carol Lewis.

MARYLAND AGENCIES BRING JOBS (AND HOPE) TO PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC MENTAL ILLNESS.

The Maryland Rehabilitation Association presented its annual Distinguished Service Award to Steve Reeder (c) Vocational Services Coordinator, Mental Hygiene Administration, and Christine Johnson (r), DORS Community Rehabilitation Programs staff specialist, for making Maryland's evidence-based supported employment a national model of success. Anastasia Edmonston (l), MRA President, presented the award.



DORS and the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, Mental Health Administration, have collaborated to implement a rehabilitation model that combines employment services and recovery for individuals with chronic mental illness. The approach is called "evidence-based supported employment" since its effectiveness has been well-documented in studies.

Mental health teams and vocational rehabilitation specialists begin to help individuals find and keep a job as soon as they express an interest in doing so. With an integrated team approach and timely, ongoing supports, many individuals have worked their way toward a new-found independence.

Nineteen Maryland mental health programs participate in this practice model. Five are currently participating in training.

PROGRAMS

1. Jobs Unlimited
2. PDG Rehabilitation Services
3. Omni House, Inc.
4. STEP of Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Inc.
5. The Mental Health Center of Western Maryland, Inc.
6. STEP of Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Inc.
7. Mosaic Community Services, Inc
8. Arundel Lodge, Inc.
9. Family Services Agency, Inc. [Montgomery House]
10. Pathways, Inc.
11. Pathways, Inc.
12. Humanim, Inc.
13. Rock Creek Foundation
14. Alliance, Inc., Harford County Division
15. Turning Point, Inc.
16. St. Luke's House, Inc.
17. Upper Bay Counseling and Support Services, Inc.
18. Way Station, Inc.
19. Chesapeake Connections, North Baltimore Center

CORE SERVICE/COUNTY

- Montgomery County
- Anne Arundel County
- Anne Arundel County
- Baltimore City
- Washington County
- Carroll County
- Baltimore County
- Anne Arundel County
- Montgomery County
- St. Mary's County
- Charles County
- Howard County
- Montgomery County
- Harford County
- Washington County
- Montgomery County
- Cecil County
- Frederick County
- Baltimore City

GOAL 5

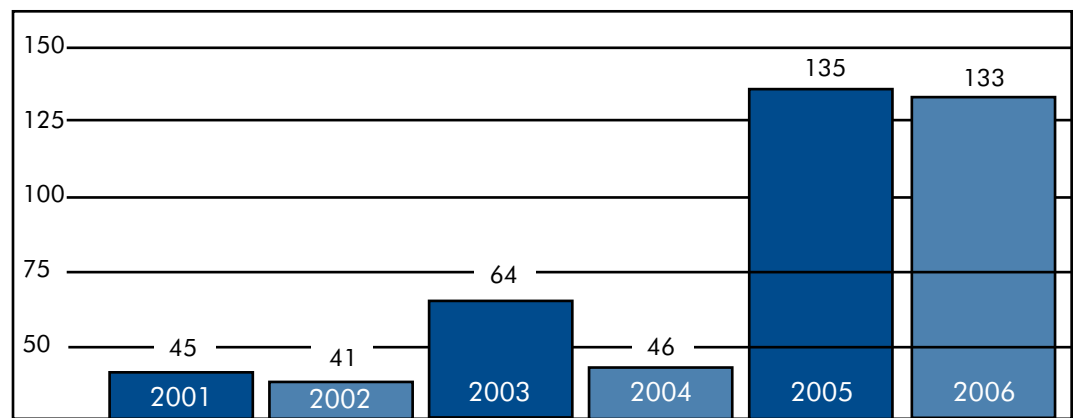
DORS WILL FOSTER A SKILLED WORKFORCE THAT REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF MARYLAND'S COMMUNITIES AND THE PEOPLE WE SERVE.

HIGHLIGHTS

- DORS Mentoring Program brought together 10 staff members with 10 staff mentors to get an in-depth understanding of areas such as administration, legislation, strategic planning and field office supervision.
- DORS provided quarterly training designed to enhance knowledge in direct services to high school students and individuals who are blind or deaf.
- 12 DORS staff members are obtaining tuition reimbursement as they work on Masters degrees. An additional 11 are enrolled in George Washington University's grant-funded online Masters degree program in Rehabilitation.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS



Rita Chapman, DORS Mt. Royal, received a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Baltimore. Rita recently became a DORS counselor after working in the Mt. Royal office as a secretary for seven years. Dina Wiley, Disability Determination Services, received an M.S. in Human Services Administration from the University of Baltimore. Debbie Smith received a B.A. in Human Services Administration from the University of Baltimore. Barbara Toon, WTC Pre-Vocational Services, received a B.S. in applied psychology from Coppin State University.



DDS training staff Mary Anne Eckhardt (l) and Jennifer Locke make sure employees stay current in caseload management, medical knowledge and the use of electronic processes.



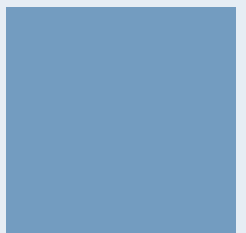
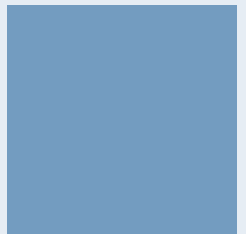
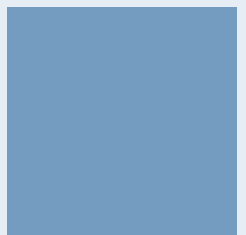
DORS A.C.T.I.O.N. Committee works year round to provide activities centered on employee recognition, wellness and teamwork.



Winnifred Butler, DORS Oxon Hill, celebrated 40 years of service to DORS. She is pictured here with Bob Burns, DORS Director and Dr. Skipp Sanders, Deputy State Superintendent of Schools.



Each of the nine DDS employees honored at this year's service awards had 25 or more years of service.



WHO WE SERVE

GENDER

Male	13,251	53%
Female	11,636	47%

RACE

White	12,154	47%
African American	11,936	46%
Other	1,314	6%
Not Identified	225	1%

AGE AT REFERRAL

Younger than 20	5,502	22%
20 to 21	1,837	7%
22 to 34	5,244	21%
35 to 44	5,382	22%
45 to 64	6,668	27%
65 and older	255	1%

YEARS OF EDUCATION AT APPLICATION

1 - 8	947	4%
9 - 11	6,371	26%
12	9,395	38%
13 - 15	4,476	18%
16 or more	1,849	7%
Special Education	1,778	7%
Not Identified	72	<1%

REFERRAL SOURCES

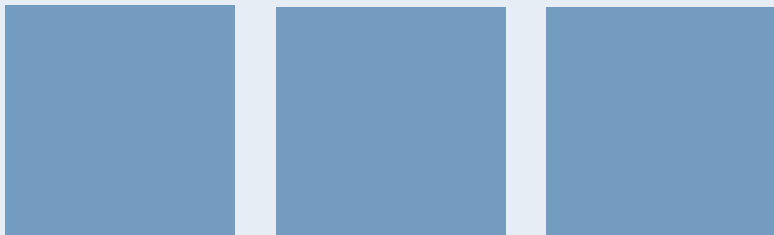
Individual Self-referral	7,631	31%
Educational Institutions	4,941	20%
Community Rehabilitation Programs	3,323	13%
Physicians, Other Medical Personnel	2,075	9%
Federal/State Public Assistance	1,309	5%
One-Stop Centers	791	3%
Other Sources, Unknown	4,819	19%

PERSONS REHABILITATED BY PRIMARY DISABILITY

PRIMARY DISABILITY	NUMBER REHABILITATED
Psychiatric Disability	1,054
Cognitive Disability	890
Orthopedic	308
Deaf & Hard of Hearing	275
Other Physical Disabilities	333
Blind & Visual Impairments	180
Communication Disabilities	24
Respiratory Impairments	18

PERSONS REHABILITATED BY OCCUPATION AT CLOSURE

OCCUPATION	NUMBER REHABILITATED
Service	1,291
Clerical, Sales	750
Professional, Technical, Managerial	483
Production, Construction, Operating, Materials Handling	413
Homemaker	100
Farming, Fishery & Forestry	36
Unpaid Family Worker	6
Vending Operator/Worker	3



*Average hourly wage
at case record closure:
\$10.20*

ALL AROUND MARYLAND, DORS WORKS FOR SUCCESS

LOCAL UNIT

PERSONS SERVED IN THE PUBLIC REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Total State	24,888
Allegany	666
Anne Arundel	1,471
Baltimore City	5,507
Baltimore	3,600
Calvert	338
Caroline	177
Carroll	889
Cecil	555
Charles	480
Dorchester	219
Frederick	1,088
Garrett	176
Harford	613
Howard	814
Kent	60
Montgomery	2,363
Prince George's	2,852
Queen Anne's	81
St. Mary's	558
Somerset	106
Talbot	170
Washington	948
Wicomico	769
Worcester	167
Unknown, Out-of-State	221



Anne Arundel County



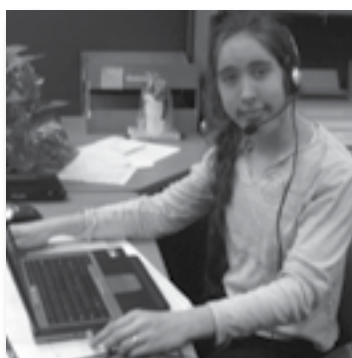
Montgomery County



Prince George's County



Baltimore City



Howard County



St. Mary's County

BUDGET

SOURCE OF FUNDS

STATE FUNDS

State Matching Funds	\$11,683,956
State Non-Matching funds	1,183,879
TOTAL	\$12,867,835

FEDERAL FUNDS

Federal Matching Funds	
Basic Program	\$38,910,546
State Independent Living Services	307,167
Independent Living (Older Blind)	641,624
Training	233,506
SUB-TOTAL	\$40,092,843

FEDERAL NON-MATCHING FUNDS

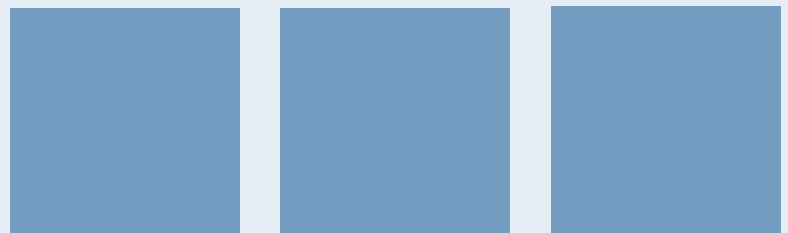
Supported Employment	
State Grants	\$650,000
Client Assistance Program	206,775
Adult Basic Education	57,249
System change	465,530
Social Security Administration/ DDS	25,435,845
Social Security Reimbursement	2,259,428
High School/High Tech	415,017
Literacy	532,296
SUB-TOTAL	\$30,022,140
TOTAL	\$70,114,983

SPECIAL FUNDS

Business Enterprise Program for the Blind	\$2,984,947
Third Party	184,053
TOTAL	\$3,169,000
TOTAL COMBINED FUNDS AVAILABLE	\$86,151,818

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

VR Client Services Program	\$18,284,639
Disability Determination Services	25,436,390
Workforce & Technology Center	13,023,084
Case Services	21,866,604
Administration	4,387,060
Business Enterprise Program for the Blind	2,539,032
Literacy	228,043
High School/High Tech	386,966
TOTAL FUNDS EXPENDED	\$86,151,818



A MESSAGE FROM THE DORS DIRECTOR

The ability to work and live independently is an important part of everyone's life. During fiscal year 2006, DORS continued to ensure that individuals with disabilities have that same opportunity.

This year, the Office for Field Services and the Office for Blindness & Vision Services expanded work-connected experiences for high school students. The Disability Determination Services launched a fully-electronic case processing system designed to produce quality decisions about disability benefits. The Workforce & Technology Center implemented customized training programs to meet the immediate workforce needs of our business partners as well as our consumers.

At DORS, we design and implement services that yield tangible outcomes. In our FY 2006 Annual Report, you have read about our measurable success and, more importantly, met just a few of the thousands of individuals with disabilities who have reached their employment and independent living goals after taking part in DORS services.

We look forward to continuing our tradition of bringing together individuals with disabilities and Maryland's business community so that each can prosper.



Robert A. Burns
Assistant State Superintendent
in Rehabilitation Services

During the summer of 2006, DORS collaborated with the Baltimore County Workforce Development Center (BCWDC) to provide work experiences to high school students with disabilities.



At the Towson Department of Social Services, Andrew Pace helped accept donations and distribute school supplies to children in need.



Oak Crest residents in Parkville benefited from Philip Christian's hard work in dining services.



Sara Hopkins gained valuable work experience in the administrative office of the Community College of Baltimore County Hunt Valley campus.



Martin J. O'Malley
Governor

Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

Edward L. Root
President
Maryland State Board of Education

Robert A. Burns
Assistant State Superintendent in
Rehabilitation Services

Maryland State Department of Education Division of Rehabilitation Services

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TTY: 410-554-9411
dors@dors.state.md.us

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TTY: 410-554-9195
obvs@dors.state.md.us

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TTY: 410-554-9583

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