

The seal of the U.S. Department of Education is centered in the background. It features a circular design with the words "DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION" at the top and "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" at the bottom, separated by two stars. In the center of the seal is a stylized eagle with its wings spread, perched on a branch of an olive branch and arrows.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2005

REPORT ON FEDERAL ACTIVITIES
UNDER THE *REHABILITATION ACT*

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2005

**REPORT ON FEDERAL ACTIVITIES
UNDER THE *REHABILITATION ACT***

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
Rehabilitation Services Administration

U.S. Department of Education

Arne Duncan
Secretary

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Andrew J. Pepin
Delegated the authority to perform the functions of assistant secretary

Rehabilitation Services Administration

Edward Anthony
Deputy Commissioner

June 2009

This report is in the public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2005, Report on Federal Activities Under the Rehabilitation Act*, Washington, D.C. 2009.

To order copies of this report,

write to: ED Pubs, Education Publications Center, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398;

or **fax** your request to: 301-470-1244;

or **e-mail** your request to: edpubs@inet.ed.gov;

or **call** in your request toll-free: 1-877-433-7827 (1-877-4-ED-PUBS). Those who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a teletypewriter (TTY) should call 1-877-576-7734. If 877 service is not yet available in your area, call 1-800-872-5327 (1-800-USA-LEARN, TTY: 1-800-437-0833).

or **order online** at: <http://www.edpubs.org/webstore/Content/search.asp>.

On request, this document can be made available in accessible formats, such as Braille, large print and computer diskette. For more information, please contact the U.S. Department of Education's Alternative Format Center at 202-260-0852 or 202-260-0818, or send an e-mail to frank.pacheco@ed.gov.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	V
LIST OF TABLES	VI
ABBREVIATIONS	VIII
FOREWORD	XI
THE <i>REHABILITATION ACT</i> : AN OVERVIEW	3
PROGRAMS UNDER THE <i>REHABILITATION ACT</i>	9
Employment Programs.....	11
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.....	11
Supported Employment Services Program.....	28
American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program	30
Demonstration and Training Programs.....	33
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program	36
Projects With Industry.....	38
Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program	44
Independent Living and Community Integration	46
State Independent Living Services Program.....	46
Centers for Independent Living Program	47
Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind	49
Recreational Programs.....	50
Technical Assistance, Training and Support	54
Program Improvement.....	54
Capacity-building for Traditionally Underserved Populations.....	56
Rehabilitation Training.....	57
Evaluation, Research and Information Dissemination	64
Program Evaluation	64
National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials	66
National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.....	67
Advocacy and Enforcement	90
Client Assistance Program	91
Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights.....	92
Employment of People With Disabilities	94
Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board	94
Electronic and Information Technology.....	95
Employment Under Federal Contracts.....	96
Nondiscrimination Under Federal Grants and Programs	96
National Council on Disability	97

APPENDIX A.....	100
APPENDIX B.....	104
APPENDIX C	116

FIGURES

1.	The <i>Rehabilitation Act of 1973</i> , as Amended: Names of Titles	3
2.	Overall Agency Performance for Evaluation Standard 1, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005	21
3.	VR Program Participants: Selected Data on New Applicants and Total Caseload, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005	23
4.	VR Program Participants Achieving Employment, Fiscal Years 1996–2005	23
5.	VR Program Participants Achieving Competitive Employment, Fiscal Years 2002–06	26

TABLES

1.	Evaluation Standard 1 and Performance Indicators: State VR Agency Performance, FY 2005.....	20
2.	Evaluation Standard 2 and Performance Indicators: State VR Agency Performance, FY 2005.....	22
3.	Individuals Obtaining Employment After Exiting Vocational Rehabilitation, Fiscal Years 1995–2004.....	25
4.	American Indian VR Services Grants: Numbers and Funding Amounts, Fiscal Years 1999–2005	30
6.	Demonstration and Training Programs Outcome Data, Fiscal Years 2001–05	34
7.	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program: Number of Continuation and New Grants, Fiscal Years 2000–05.....	37
8.	Projects With Industry Selected Program Outcomes, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005	41
9.	Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program: Selected Outcomes, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005	45
10.	Centers for Independent Living Program: Selected Accomplishments, FY 2005	48
11.	Recreational Programs: Number of Continuation and New Grants, Fiscal Years 2000–05.....	51
12.	Rehabilitation Training Projects: Number of Awards and Funding Amounts, by Type of Project, Fiscal Year 2005	61
13.	Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT) Selected Statistics for June 2004 to June 2005	81
14.	Mary E. Switzer Fellowship Program: Selected Statistics for FY 2005	81
15.	NIDRR Peer-reviewed Publications for Calendar Year 2004, by Selected Program Funding Mechanism	86
16.	NIDRR-funded Centers and Projects: Grant Amounts and Awards, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005	87

B-1. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005	104
B-2. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies— General and Combined, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005	106
B-3. Equal Access to Service (Evaluation Standard 2) of State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired, By Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005	110
B-4. Access to Service (Evaluation Standard 2) of State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies— General and Combined, By Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005	111
C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005	116

ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	FULL TERM
ARRT	Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training
ABA	<i>Architectural Barriers Act</i>
ADA	<i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i>
AHRQ	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
AIVRS	American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services
APAER	annual portfolio assessment expert review
APR	annual performance reporting
AT	assistive technology
BAC	Business Advisory Council
BEP	Business Enterprise Program
CAP	Client Assistance Program
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CFR	<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>
CIL	Center for Independent Living
CRD	Civil Rights Division
CSPD	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
DAISY	Digital Accessible Information System
DBTAC	Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center
<i>DD Act</i>	<i>Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act</i>
DOL	Department of Labor
DRRP	Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
DTBs	digital talking books
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FAPE	free appropriate public education
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FIP	Field-Initiated Projects
FY	fiscal year
GAPS	Grant Administration and Payment System
GPRA	<i>Government Performance and Results Act</i>
GSA	General Services Administration
ICDR	Interagency Committee on Disability Research

ABBREVIATION	FULL TERM
IDEA	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</i>
IDEA	Industrial Design Excellence Awards
IDPF	International Digital Publishing Forum
IHEs	institutions of higher education
IL	Independent Living
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
IRI	Institute on Rehabilitation Issues
IT	information technology
KDU	Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization
LIFE	Lessons in Future Employment
MIS	Management Information System
NAMSFVR	National Alliance for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Vocational Rehabilitation
NCD	National Council on Disability
NCRTM	National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials
NFI	New Freedom Initiative
NIDRR	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
NSF	National Science Foundation
OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OFCCP	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
P&A	protection and advocacy
PAAT	Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology
PAIR	Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights
PART	Program Assessment Rating Tool
PPMD	Program Performance Management Database
PWI	Projects With Industry
RERC	Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center
RRTC	Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration
SBIR	Small Business Innovative Research

ABBREVIATION	FULL TERM
SCI	spinal cord injury
SGA	Substantial Gainful Activity
SHRM	Society for Human Resource Management
SILC	Statewide Independent Living Council
SILS	State Independent Living Services
SRC	State Rehabilitation Council
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TBI	traumatic brain injury
UI	unemployment insurance
VR	vocational rehabilitation
WIA	<i>Workforce Investment Act</i>

FOREWORD

The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended (the *Rehabilitation Act*), provides the legislative basis for programs and activities that assist individuals with disabilities in the pursuit of gainful employment, independence, self-sufficiency and full integration into community life.

This report is intended to provide a description of accomplishments and progress made under the *Rehabilitation Act* during fiscal year 2005 (October 2004 through September 2005). To that end, the report identifies major activities that occurred during that fiscal year, and the status of those activities during that specific time period.

The report provides a description of the activities of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), a component of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), U.S. Department of Education. RSA is the principal agency for carrying out titles I, III, VI and VII, as well as specified portions of Title V of the *Rehabilitation Act*. RSA has responsibility for preparing and submitting this report to the president and congress under Section 13 of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

The *Rehabilitation Act* also authorizes research activities that are administered by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and the work of the National Council on Disability (NCD), and includes a variety of provisions focused on rights, advocacy and protections for individuals with disabilities. A description of those activities also is provided in this report.

Note that all Web addresses consulted or listed within this report were operational as of Feb. 26, 2009, unless otherwise noted.

THE *REHABILITATION ACT*
AN OVERVIEW

THE *REHABILITATION ACT*: AN OVERVIEW

Federal interest and involvement in rehabilitation issues and policy dated initially from the enactment of the *Smith-Fess Act of 1920*. The *Smith-Fess Act* marked the beginning of a federal and state partnership in the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. Although the law was passed shortly after the end of World War I, its provisions were specifically directed at the rehabilitation needs of persons who were industrially disabled rather than those of disabled veterans.

A major event in the history of the federal rehabilitation program was passage of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (the *Rehabilitation Act*). The *Rehabilitation Act*, as amended, provides the legislative basis for programs and activities that assist individuals with disabilities¹ in the pursuit of gainful employment, independence, self-sufficiency and full integration into community life. Under the *Rehabilitation Act*, the following federal agencies and entities are charged with administering a wide variety of programs and activities: the departments of Education, Labor and Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (also known as the United States Access Board) and the National Council on Disability.

The U.S. Department of Education has primary responsibility for administering the *Rehabilitation Act*. The Department's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is the administrative entity responsible for oversight of the programs under the *Rehabilitation Act* that are funded through the Department. Within OSERS, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) share responsibility for carrying out the administration of those programs. RSA is the principal agency for carrying out Titles I, III, VI and VII, as well as specified portions of Title V of the *Rehabilitation Act*. NIDRR is responsible for administering Title II of the *Rehabilitation Act*. (See fig. 1 for title names.)

Figure 1. The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as Amended: Names of Titles

Title	Name
I	Vocational Rehabilitation Services
II	Research and Training
III	Professional Development and Special Projects and Demonstrations
IV	National Council on Disability
V	Rights and Advocacy
VI	Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities
VII	Independent Living Services and Centers for Independent Living

¹ An individual with a disability is defined, for purposes of programs funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*, at Section 7(20) of the *Rehabilitation Act* (see Appendix A – Definition of “Individual With a Disability” as listed in Section 7(20) of the *Rehabilitation Act*, p. 101).

RSA staff, which in fiscal year (FY) 2005 was located in Washington, D.C., and 10 regional offices across the nation, provided technical assistance and leadership to states and other grantees in carrying out the purposes and policy outlined in the *Rehabilitation Act*. [These regional offices were closed on Sept. 30, 2005. RSA currently administers its programs from its headquarters office in Washington, D.C.] RSA administers grant programs that provide direct support for vocational rehabilitation, independent living and individual advocacy and assistance. The agency also supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel trained in providing rehabilitation and other services. RSA also provides training grants to upgrade the skills and credentials of employed personnel.

In addition, RSA conducts model demonstrations and systems change projects to improve services provided under the *Rehabilitation Act* and evaluates programs to assess their effectiveness and identify best practices. Finally, RSA provides consultative and technical assistance services and disseminates information to public and nonprofit private agencies and organizations to facilitate meaningful and effective participation by individuals with disabilities in employment and in the community.

By far, the largest program administered by RSA is the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, also known as the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants Program (both hereinafter referred to as the VR program). This program funds state² VR agencies to provide employment-related services for individuals with disabilities so that they may prepare for and engage in gainful employment that is consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

For more than 85 years, the VR program has helped individuals with physical disabilities³ not injured as a result of military service prepare for and enter into the workforce. Nationwide, the VR program serves more than one million people with disabilities each year. More than 91 percent of the people who use state VR services have significant physical or mental disabilities that seriously limit one or more functional capacities. These individuals often require multiple services over an extended period of time. For them, VR services are indispensable to their becoming employed and reducing their reliance on public support.

Under Title II of the *Rehabilitation Act*, NIDRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research, demonstration projects, training and related activities. NIDRR-funded programs and activities are designed to promote employment, independent living, maintenance of health and function, full inclusion and integration into society and the transfer of rehabilitation technology to individuals with disabilities. The intent is to improve

² The term "state" includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

³ The Civilian *Vocational Rehabilitation Act*, also known as the *Smith-Fess Act*, passed by Congress in 1920, defined vocational rehabilitation (VR) as a program for those with physical disabilities. Mental disabilities were not part of the VR program until 1943.

the economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities and the effectiveness of programs and services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*.

Toward that goal, NIDRR supports rehabilitation research and development, demonstration projects and related activities, including the training of persons who provide rehabilitation services or who conduct rehabilitation research. In addition, NIDRR supports projects to disseminate and promote the use of information concerning developments in rehabilitation procedures, methods and devices. Information is provided to rehabilitation professionals, persons with disabilities and their representatives. NIDRR also supports data analyses on the demographics of disability and provides that information to policymakers, administrators and other relevant groups. Awards are competitive, with applications reviewed by panels of experts, including rehabilitation professionals, rehabilitation researchers and persons with disabilities.

The *Rehabilitation Act* has been a driving force behind major changes that have since affected the lives of millions of individuals with disabilities in this country. With passage of the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA)*, the *Rehabilitation Act* was reauthorized for another five years. Congress has yet to reauthorize *WIA*, including Title IV (the *Rehabilitation Act*). This report, covering FY 2005, describes all of the major programs and activities authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*, and the success of the federal government in carrying out the purposes and policy outlined in the *Rehabilitation Act*.

The president's New Freedom Initiative (NFI) continues to inspire and complement RSA's work which directly advances three of the major goals of the NFI, specifically, increasing employment, expanding access to assistive technology (AT) and improving integration into the community. RSA's work indirectly furthers the fourth goal: improving the education of students with disabilities. RSA has begun close collaboration with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to ensure a smooth, seamless and successful transition of students with disabilities into postsecondary education and employment.

**PROGRAMS UNDER
THE *REHABILITATION ACT***

PROGRAMS UNDER THE *REHABILITATION ACT*

Through partnerships with other federal and nonfederal agencies, RSA directly funds or supports a wide variety of programs, initiatives or activities that are authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*. For the purpose of this report, these programs, initiatives and activities are organized into five major areas: Employment Programs; Independent Living and Community Integration; Technical Assistance, Training and Support; Evaluation, Research and Dissemination; and Advocacy and Enforcement. Within each area, the report provides a description of the discrete program, initiative or activity. Each description includes a budget allocation for FY 2005 and a reporting of major outcomes and accomplishments. Programs, organized by these areas, are:

Employment Programs

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program
- Supported Employment Services Program
- American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program
- Demonstration and Training Program
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program
- Projects With Industry

Independent Living and Community Integration

- Independent Living Services Program
- Centers for Independent Living Program
- Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind
- Recreational Programs

Technical Assistance, Training and Support

- Program Improvement
- Capacity-building for Traditionally Underserved Populations
- Rehabilitation Training Program

Evaluation, Research and Information Dissemination

- Program Evaluation
- Information Clearinghouse
- National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

Advocacy and Enforcement

- Client Assistance Program
- Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights
- Employment of People With Disabilities
- Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board
- Electronic and Information Technology
- Employment Under Federal Contracts
- Nondiscrimination Under Federal Grants and Programs
- National Council on Disability

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) administers seven programs that assist individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes.⁴ Two of these programs, the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program (VR program) and the Supported Employment Services Program, are state formula grant programs. The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Demonstration and Training, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and the Projects With Industry programs are discretionary grant programs that make competitive awards for up to a five-year period. RSA also provides oversight of the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) operated by state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Each of these programs is described below.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program Authorized Under Sections 100–111 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program⁵ assists states in operating a VR program as an integral part of a coordinated, statewide workforce investment system. The program is designed to provide VR services to eligible individuals with disabilities so that they may achieve an employment outcome that is consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$2,603,845,000

The federal government covers 78.7 percent of the program's costs through financial assistance to the states for program services and administration. Federal funds are transferred to the states based on a statutory formula in Section 8 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. The formula takes into consideration a state's population and per capita income. To match the federal funds allotted to the states for the VR program in fiscal year (FY) 2005, states expended \$772,184,949 of their own funds.

Each state designates a state agency to administer the VR program. The *Rehabilitation Act* provides flexibility for a state to have two VR agencies—one for individuals who are blind and one for individuals with other types of disabilities. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands have VR agencies; however, in FY 2005, 24 states also had separate agencies serving blind or visually impaired individuals, for a total of 80 state VR agencies.

⁴ The term employment outcome means (according to the program regulations at 34 CFR 361.5(b)(16)), with respect to an individual, entering or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive employment ... in the integrated labor market; supported employment; or any other type of employment in an integrated setting, including self-employment, telecommuting or business ownership, that is consistent with an individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest and informed choice.

⁵ Also known as the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants Program.

The *Rehabilitation Act* also provides flexibility to the states with respect to the organizational positioning of the VR program within the state structure. The VR program can be located in one of two types of state agencies—one that is primarily concerned with VR or VR and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, or in an agency that is not primarily concerned with VR or VR and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. For the latter, the *Rehabilitation Act* requires the agency to have a designated state VR unit that is primarily concerned with VR or VR and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. Of the 80 VR agencies, 25 are primarily concerned with VR and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. Of these, 10 are consumer-controlled agencies. Of the 55 agencies that are not primarily concerned with VR or VR and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, the VR program is located in 12 education agencies; 14 labor or workforce agencies; and 28 human services or welfare agencies. For American Samoa, Section 101(a)(2)(A)(iii) of the *Rehabilitation Act* identifies the governor's office as the VR agency.

The VR program is committed to providing services to individuals with significant disabilities⁶ and assisting consumers in achieving high-quality employment outcomes. RSA, in its relationships with the states, has continued to emphasize the priorities of high-quality employment outcomes and increased services to individuals with significant disabilities. To this end, in FY 2005, RSA set the following policy priorities and principles for the VR program:

- **To expand meaningful and competitive employment for people with disabilities.** Helping state agencies achieve positive employment outcomes for the people with disabilities they serve requires a robust system of collaboration, monitoring and state improvement plans that address identified needs and goals. This is consistent with the President's New Freedom Initiative (NFI) focused on individual self-reliance and full integration into American society.
- **To improve outreach, communication and visibility.** Constituents around the country can benefit from research results and technical assistance from RSA and its two sister agencies—the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)—that together form

⁶ The program regulations at 34 *CFR* 361.5(b)(31) define an individual with a significant disability as an individual with a disability:

- (i) Who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;
- (ii) Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and
- (iii) Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). The public must have access to the results of monitoring activities and how these drive program improvements. OSERS emphasizes direct, positive and beneficial results for consumers. More effective utilization of printed and electronic publications, Web pages and listserv messages—elements of Knowledge Translation (KT)—will help to inform and engage interested persons. The best outcomes are achieved by improving the lives of individuals with disabilities and special needs.

- **To build partnerships leveraging resources with federal and other government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector.** RSA's programs, grants and conferences produce or highlight helpful technologies, services and resources to people of all abilities. RSA and its partners need to utilize these activities in ways that will attain the greatest possible impact. Improved collaboration and partnerships will generate improved outcomes from overlapping governmental programs. Creative ways to partner with business and nongovernmental organizations also will help to make a greater difference in peoples' lives.
- **To expand access to, utilization and reuse of assistive technology (AT).** Assistive technology levels the playing field for people with disabilities. It can provide access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities and expand employment opportunities for adults with disabilities. One opportunity to greatly expand access to and utilization of AT is through programs that support the reuse of AT devices and durable medical equipment (DME). Across the country, many people have AT or DME that is no longer needed or used, from wheelchairs to special computer keyboards. Other people with disabilities are seeking affordable items to meet their needs. Organizations throughout the country help bring together these individuals in creative ways through device reuse programs that exchange, recycle, repair and redistribute and properly fit AT and DME. Common sense dictates that needs be matched up with available resources. This can be a big boost to the medically uninsured and underserved populations and a big cost savings for government.

Initiatives

Within the context of these policy priorities and principles, RSA undertook a variety of leadership, technical assistance and monitoring initiatives to strengthen the VR program. Examples of key initiatives are in the areas of *transition*, *employer partnerships*, *ticket-to-work*, *state rehabilitation councils* and *monitoring*, as highlighted below.

Transition

- To enhance the delivery of transition services to youths with disabilities, RSA continued to initiate joint activities with OSEP and other transition partners. In particular, RSA and OSEP refined the joint state monitoring review process that began in FY 2002, and in FY 2005 conducted a joint monitoring visit to Louisiana,

which was the last of the five initial joint state monitoring visits. The purpose of the joint monitoring was to examine the nature and scope of collaborative efforts between the VR agencies and the schools in meeting the transition needs of students with disabilities; to determine compliance with the transition-related requirements of the *Rehabilitation Act* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*; and, to collect data on promising transition practices.

- In June 2005, RSA held its first national transition conference, “From Roots to Wings: Guiding Youth with Disabilities to Employment,” convening more than 600 key transition partners. Representatives from education and transition service organizations in 49 states and eight territories shared information about their model programs. Staff from 66 state VR agencies (general, combined, blind)⁷ participated in the conference. While many states conduct statewide transition conferences, the RSA conference brought together VR and education practitioners and policymakers from across the country to network and share effective practices.
- Recommendations resulting from the national conference included: 1) using Web-based resources to disseminate information about effective transition practices; 2) creating a listserv for transition coordinators; 3) increasing the support and use of youth leadership forums; 4) hosting national conferences with an employment focus; 5) identifying transition resources for underserved and rural areas; and 6) developing creative tools and strategies for local and state collaboration.

Employer Partnerships

During FY 2005, RSA followed up on the work of its national employment conference, “Employment & Disability: The VR-Business Partnership,” held in August 2004. The purpose of the conference was to build on productive alliances forged between state VR agency staff and employers to create a broad nationwide network of partnership and collaboration that leverages employer relationships across state and regional boundaries. The ultimate goal of this system is to ensure seamless employer access to qualified employees with disabilities. Working throughout FY 2005, RSA helped state VR agencies build a network of employer development specialists from each of the VR agencies. On June 1, 2005, state VR agencies in RSA's Region IV invited their colleagues in employer development to join them for a one-day meeting on continuing the development of the national VR network. This meeting focused on the nuts and bolts necessary for each state VR agency to prepare itself to receive referrals of employers who want to expand their relationship with VR to another state or region. To this end, the conference focused on specific strategies, techniques and practices for enhancing partnering efforts with employers. To facilitate collaboration, RSA launched "Connecting with Employers: Vocational Rehabilitation Employer and Business Development Network," an online database of VR employment specialists and featured employer partnership practices at: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/vrpractices/index.html>.

⁷ A general VR agency provides VR services to individuals with disabilities, except those who are blind and visually impaired; a combined VR agency provides VR services to individuals with all types of disabilities; and a blind VR agency provides VR services only to individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

Ticket-to-Work Social Security Reimbursement

During 2005, state VR agencies received a total of \$75,635,940 in reimbursements from the Social Security Administration (SSA) for the rehabilitation of 6,095 disabled individuals. In order to receive these reimbursements, it is required that the disabled Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiary or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient who is blind or disabled have earnings from work equal to or greater than Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)⁸ for nine months in a 12-month period.

State Rehabilitation Councils

Another key FY 2005 initiative was training State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs) on how to address the needs identified by representatives of the councils and the state VR agencies of people with disabilities receiving VR services. The training was intended to empower the SRCs so that they may better carry out their consultation responsibilities related to the VR program and advocate for improvements in the VR program, including high-quality employment outcomes for VR participants. The curricula include information on the VR program, the SRC's legal responsibilities and methods for enhancing the partnership between the SRC and the state VR agency. SRC training was conducted for each RSA region during FY 2005.

The success of this training program has led to plans for providing the curricula in a Web-based tutorial format to increase SRC access and use when needed. A more detailed assessment of SRC technical assistance needs will be conducted in FY 2006 to provide the foundation for strengthening this initiative.

Monitoring

RSA continued to conduct on-site monitoring in state VR agencies to ensure accountability in the VR program, to support ongoing efforts to promote continuous quality improvement and to assess the nature and scope of technical assistance needed by state VR agencies. RSA focused its monitoring efforts on the following:

- A service-record review to examine eligibility determinations, timeliness and substantiality of VR services, quality of employment outcomes and the use of the homemaker role as an acceptable outcome. The reviews assessed compliance with legal requirements but also examined agency performance with respect to the quality of rehabilitation practice and service provision. Review questions related to homemaker outcomes probed the circumstances under which the homemaker goal

⁸ The term substantial gainful activity is used to describe a level of work activity and earnings. Work is "substantial" if it involves doing significant physical or mental activities, or a combination of both. "Gainful" work activity is: work performed for pay or profit; work of a nature generally performed for pay or profit; or work intended for profit, whether or not a profit is realized (http://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/handbook/handbook.06/handbook-0603.html).

was identified, both in the original individualized plan for employment (IPE)⁹ and any subsequent amendments, and explored the role of consumer choice in the selection of a homemaker outcome.

- Performance monitoring, including a review of a state VR agency's performance on the evaluation standards and indicators and an analysis of possible factors that may impact their performance.
- Review of a state VR agency's written policies governing the provision of VR services to determine whether agency policies fall within the broad legal parameters for policy development and to determine how the agency is balancing two legal requirements: 1) the obligation to meet the service needs of each individual and 2) the obligation to manage fiscal resources by assuring that service costs are necessary and reasonable.
- The second year of a multiyear review of the use of third-party cooperative arrangements by state VR agencies, including those arrangements created by interagency transfers of funds and use of local funds. For FY 2005, review activities focused on identifying the source of these alternative funds and whether the agency had established mechanisms to address the requirements related to such arrangements.
- Assessment of state VR agency policies, procedures and practices related to homemaker outcomes to determine the use of this outcome, the impact on service provision and the impact on the state VR agency's performance on the standards and indicators related to employment outcomes and wages.
- Fiscal monitoring of agency cost allocation agreements and practices under *Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA)*, matching and earmarking federal funds, financial and statistical reports and closeout grant activities.
- RSA developed additional monitoring instruments to examine such areas as implementation of the state's workforce system, agency policies that affect the individual's progress through the VR program, organizational unit requirements, appropriate use and implementation of the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals (in the event that VR services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals who apply), due process procedures, the composition and functions of the SRC and implementation of a comprehensive system of personnel development.

⁹ An IPE, developed by the individual and the division of vocational rehabilitation (DVR) counselor, is a description of the specific rehabilitation services needed for the individual to achieve an employment outcome. An IPE include the total cost of services and the amount of the financial participation by both the individual and the DVR. All services provided must be needed for the individual to achieve an employment outcome. An IPE must be designed to achieve the specific employment outcome that is selected by the individual and consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice, and the IPE must, to the maximum extent appropriate, result in employment in an integrated setting.

Program Performance

RSA has a long history of ensuring accountability in the administration of the various programs under its jurisdiction, especially the VR program. Since its inception in 1920, the VR program has been one of the few federal grant programs that has had outcome data on which to assess its performance, including its performance in assisting individuals to achieve employment outcomes. Over the years, RSA has used these basic performance data, or some variation, to evaluate the effectiveness of state VR agencies. In FY 2000, RSA developed additional assessment tools in the form of two evaluation standards and performance indicators for each evaluation standard as the criteria by which the effectiveness of the VR program is assessed. The two standards established performance benchmarks for employment outcomes under the VR program and the access of minorities to the services of the state VR agencies.

Evaluation Standard 1 focuses on employment outcomes achieved by individuals with disabilities subsequent to the receipt of services from a state VR agency, with particular emphasis on individuals who achieve competitive employment.¹⁰ The standard has six performance indicators, each with a required minimum performance level to meet the indicator. For any given year, calculations for each performance indicator for agencies that exclusively serve individuals with visual impairments or blindness are based on aggregated data for the current and previous year, i.e., two years of data. For VR agencies serving all disability populations other than those with visual impairments or blindness or all disability populations, the calculations are based on data from the current fiscal year only, due to the larger population.

Three of the six performance indicators have been designated as "primary indicators" since they reflect a key VR program priority of empowering individuals with disabilities, particularly those with significant disabilities, to achieve high-quality employment outcomes. High-quality employment outcomes include employment in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis and for which individuals with disabilities are compensated in terms of the customary wage (but not less than the minimum wage) and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work carried out by individuals who are not disabled.

Listed below are each of the six performance indicators identified in Evaluation Standard 1 as found in the program regulations at 34 *CFR* 361.84, the minimum performance level for each indicator to be successful and the number of state VR agencies that met the minimum level for FY 2005.

¹⁰ *Competitive employment* means work: (i) In the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated work setting; and (ii) For which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled, see 34 *CFR* 361.5(b)(11).

Performance Indicator 1.1

The number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

Minimum Required

Performance Level: Performance in the current period must equal or exceed performance in the previous period.

Fiscal Year 2005

Performance for

Indicator 1.1:

Of the 80 state VR agencies, 51 or 63.8 percent met or exceeded the required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.2

Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage determined to have achieved an employment outcome.

Minimum Required

Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind, the level is 68.9 percent; for other agencies, the level is 55.8 percent.

Fiscal Year 2005

Performance for

Indicator 1.2:

Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind, 13 or 54.2 percent met the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 40 or 71.4 percent met the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.3 (Primary Indicator)

Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage that exit the VR program and enter into competitive, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

Minimum Required

Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind, the level is 35.4 percent; for other agencies, the level is 72.6 percent.

Fiscal Year 2005

Performance for

Indicator 1.3:

Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind, 22 or 91.7 percent met the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 54 met the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.4 (Primary Indicator)

Of all individuals who exit the VR program and enter into competitive, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.

Minimum Required

Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind, the level is 89.0 percent; for other agencies, the level is 62.4 percent.

Fiscal Year 2005

Performance for

Indicator 1.4:

Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind, all 24 met the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 55 or 98.2 percent met the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.5 (Primary Indicator)

The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program and enter into competitive, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed (as derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics report on state average annual pay for the most recent available year, which for FY 2005 would be U.S. Department of Labor 2004 data).

Minimum Required

Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind, the ratio is .59; for other agencies, the level is a ratio of .52.

Fiscal Year 2005

Performance for

Indicator 1.5:

Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind, 22 or 91.7 percent met the minimum required performance level. No state wage data exists for three of the 56 other agencies (Guam, Northern Marianas and American Samoa). Of the remaining 53 agencies, 36 or 67.9 percent met the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.6

Of all individuals who exit the VR program and enter into competitive, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services.

Minimum Required

Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind, the level is an arithmetic difference of 30.4; for other agencies, the level is an arithmetic difference of 53.0.

Fiscal Year 2005

Performance for

Indicator 1.6:

Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind, 17 or 70.8 percent met the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 50 or 89.3 percent met the minimum required performance level.

Table 1 summarizes the FY 2005 performance of the 80 state VR agencies on Evaluation Standard 1. In order for an agency to “pass” Evaluation Standard 1, it must

**Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1 and Performance Indicators:
State^a VR Agency Performance, FY 2005**

Performance Indicators	General and Combined VR Agencies ^b		VR Agencies Serving The Blind ^c	
	Pass ^d	Fail	Pass	Fail
1.1 Number of Employment Outcomes ^e	39	17	12	12
1.2 Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Provision of VR Services	40	16	13	11
1.3 Percentage of Employment Outcomes in Competitive Employment ^f (primary indicator)	54	2	22	2
1.4 Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Significant Disabilities ^g (primary indicator)	55	1	24	0
1.5 Ratio of Competitive Employment Earnings to State Average Weekly Wage (primary indicator)	36 ^h	17 ^h	22	2
1.6 Percentage Difference Earnings as Primary Source of Support at Competitive Employment Outcome Versus at Time of Application ⁱ	50	6	17	7

^a The term “state” includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

^b Agencies serving persons with various disabilities as well as providing specialized services to persons who are blind and visually impaired.

^c Agencies in certain states providing specialized services to blind and visually impaired persons.

^d To pass Evaluation Standard 1, agencies must pass at least four of the six performance indicators and two of the three primary performance indicators.

^e The number of individuals exiting the VR program securing employment during the current performance period compared with the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period.

^f The percentage of individuals exiting the VR program that obtained employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^g See footnote 6 on page 12.

^h Since no state wage data exist for Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa, Indicator 1.5 cannot be computed for these three agencies.

ⁱ Time frame from application for VR services to exiting the VR program with competitive employment.

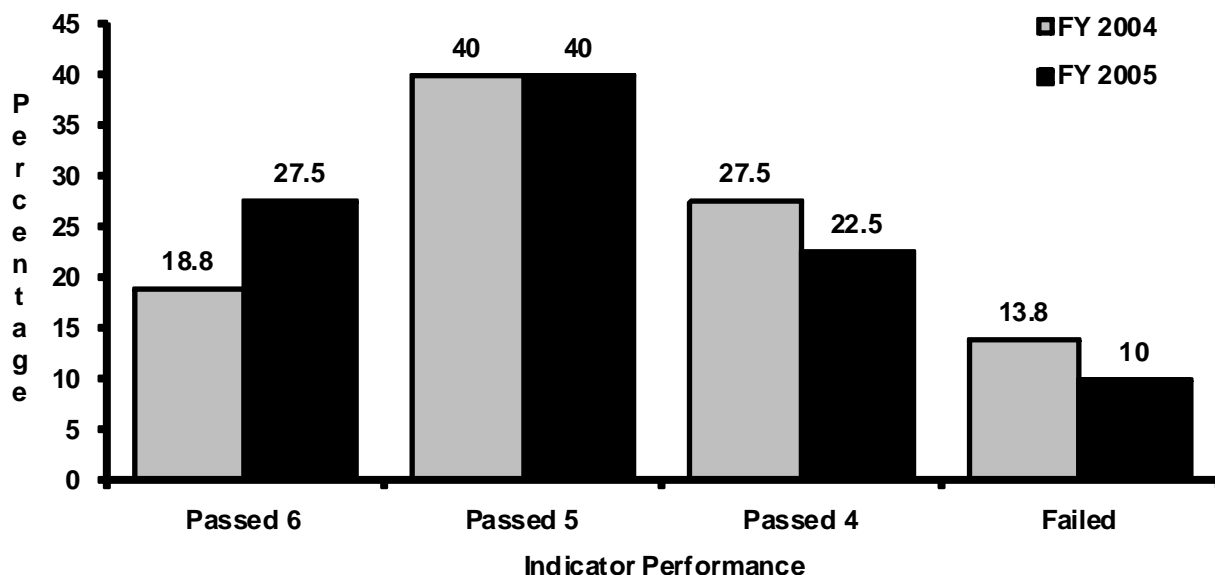
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Washington, D.C.

meet or exceed at least four of the six identified performance indicators, including two of the three primary performance indicators. For FY 2005, of the 80 state VR agencies, 22 indicators. In total, 72 agencies or 90 percent passed Evaluation Standard 1. The eight agencies or 10 percent that failed Evaluation Standard 1 include three agencies that serve only individuals with visual impairments and blindness (Idaho, New York and South Carolina) and five agencies that serve either all disability populations or disability populations other than individuals with visual impairments (Illinois, New York, North Carolina, Virginia and Wisconsin).

Figure 2 compares overall agency performance for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 for Evaluation Standard 1.

As can be seen from figure 2 below, there has been improvement in agency performance on Evaluation Standard 1 between FY 2004 and FY 2005. In FY 2005, 27.5 percent or 22 agencies passed all six of the performance indicators in Evaluation Standard 1, as opposed to 18.8 percent or 15 agencies in FY 2004. Additionally, 10 percent or eight agencies failed Evaluation Standard 1 in FY 2005 compared to 13.8 percent or 11 agencies in FY 2004.

Figure 2. Overall Agency Performance for Evaluation Standard 1, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (Form RSA-911)*. Washington, D.C.

Evaluation Standard 2 focuses on equal access to VR services by individuals from a minority background. For purposes of this standard, the term "individuals from a minority background" means individuals who report their race and ethnicity in any of the following categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, black or African-American; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander or Hispanic or Latino. Standard 2 has only one indicator (34 *CFR* 361.82 and 361.84).

Performance Indicator 2.1

The service rate¹¹ for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from nonminority backgrounds.

Minimum Required Performance Level:

All agencies must attain at least a ratio level of .80. If an agency does not meet the minimum required performance level, or if an agency had fewer than 100 individuals from a minority background exit the VR program during the reporting period, the agency must describe the policies it has adopted or will adopt and the steps it has taken or will take to ensure that individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.

Fiscal Year 2005 Performance for Indicator 2.1:

Of the 80 state VR agencies, 72 agencies either passed Evaluation Standard 2 or had fewer than 100 individuals from a minority background exit the VR program during the reporting period. Of the eight agencies that did not meet the required performance level for Evaluation Standard 2, six (75 percent) were agencies that serve either all disability populations or disability populations other than individuals with visual impairments (Guam, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin) and two (25 percent) were agencies that serve only disability populations with visual impairments (New York and Minnesota).

Table 2 summarizes the FY 2005 performance of the 80 state VR agencies on Evaluation Standard 2.

Table 2. Evaluation Standard 2 and Performance Indicators: State VR Agency Performance, FY 2005

Performance Factors	General and Combined VR Agencies	VR Agencies Serving The Blind
Ratio* of .80 or Higher	47	8
Ratio of Less than .80	6	2
Fewer than 100 Individuals From Minority Backgrounds Exiting the State VR Program	3	14

* Ratio of .80 or higher is the performance level for Performance Indicator 2.1. It is the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds in relation to the service rate for all nonminority individuals with disabilities.

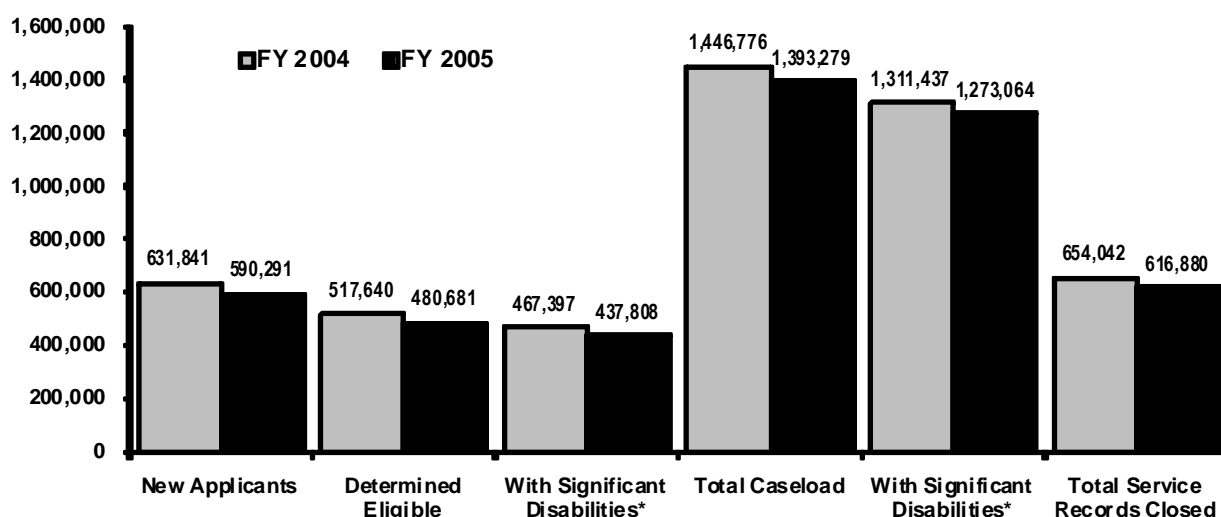
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Washington, D.C.

¹¹ For purposes of calculating this indicator, the numerator for the service rate is the number of individuals whose service records are closed after they receive services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE; see footnote 9) whether or not they achieved an employment outcome; the denominator is the number of all individuals whose records are closed after they applied for services whether or not they had an IPE.

A state-by-state breakdown of VR agency FY 2005 performance for both evaluation standards is provided in Appendix A of this report.

Figure 3 compares statistical information from fiscal years 2004 and 2005 on a variety of key indices for the VR program. In FY 2005, 590,291 individuals with disabilities applied for VR services. Of this number, 480,681 (81 percent of the applicants) were determined to be eligible to participate in the VR program. Of the individuals determined to be eligible to receive VR services, 437,808 (91 percent) were individuals with significant disabilities.

Figure 3. VR Program Participants: Selected Data on New Applicants and Total Caseload, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005



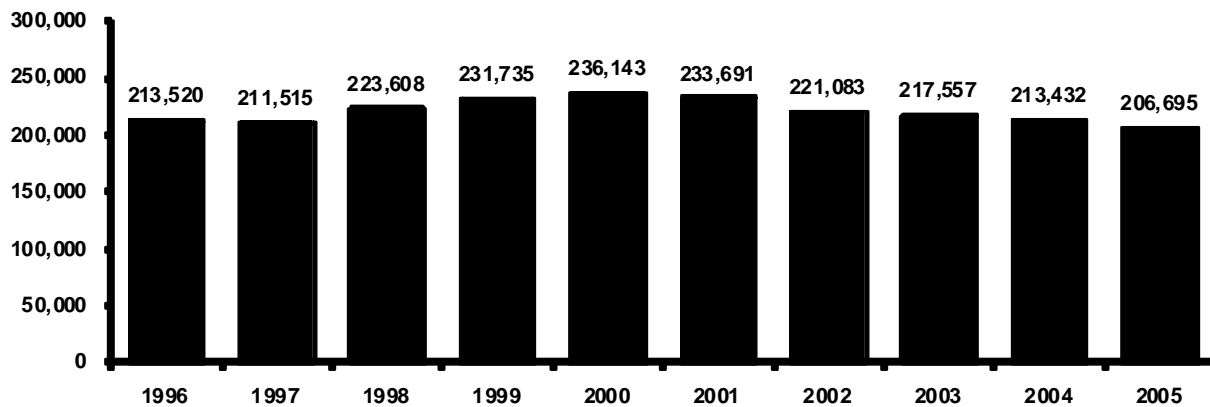
* See footnote 6 on page 12 for definition of individuals with significant disabilities.
 Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (Form RSA-113)*. Washington, D.C.

During FY 2005, 1.39 million individuals were involved in the public VR process, actively pursuing the achievement of their employment aspirations and choices. Of the 966,467 receiving services under an IPE, 892,363 or 92 percent were individuals with significant disabilities.

Figure 4 shows the number of individuals who achieved employment outcomes after receiving VR services for each fiscal year from 1996 through 2005. In FY 2005, there were 206,695 individuals who achieved an employment outcome, less than all previous years from 1996 through 2004. Declines beginning in FY 2001 are the result of several factors that have had an impact on the VR program. Some of these contributing factors include:

- The large decline in employment outcomes from 2004 to 2005. This was primarily due to significant decreases in four states—Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Texas.

Figure 4. VR Program Participants Achieving Employment, Fiscal Years 1996–2005



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Washington, D.C.

- The elimination in FY 2001 of extended employment¹² as an allowable employment outcome under the VR program. Immediately prior to the implementation of this new policy, state VR agencies reported that 7,359 persons had achieved an employment outcome in extended employment. This number fell sharply in FY 2002 to 497 persons, followed by slight decreases in fiscal years 2003 and 2004, respectively, and an additional drop in FY 2005 to 252 persons.
- RSA policies that stimulate VR agencies to serve individuals with significant disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities,¹³ and that focus efforts on assisting these individuals to achieve high-quality employment outcomes that are consistent with their aspirations and informed choices.
- Reduction in state matching funds for VR federal funds and the difficulties experienced by several states in satisfying their maintenance of effort requirements.
- VR agencies implementation of an order of selection. Agencies operating under an order of selection must give priority to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. In FY 2005, of the 80 state VR agencies 42 reported that they could not serve all eligible individuals and implemented an order of selection. At the end of FY

¹² Extended employment is defined as work in a nonintegrated or sheltered setting for a public or private nonprofit agency or organization that provides compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. See 34 CFR 361.5(b)(19). Although extended employment is no longer an allowable employment outcome under the VR program, state VR agencies may continue to serve eligible individuals who choose to continue to train or otherwise prepare for competitive employment in an extended employment setting, unless the individual, through informed choice, chooses to remain in extended employment.

¹³ An individual with a most significant disability means an individual with a significant disability who meets the designated state unit's (the state entity responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program under the state plan) criteria for an individual with a most significant disability (see footnote 6, page 12, for the definition of an individual with a significant disability). These criteria must be consistent with the requirements in Sections 361.36(d)(1) and (2) of the program regulations.

Table 3. Individuals Obtaining Employment After Exiting Vocational Rehabilitation, Fiscal Years 1995–2004

Fiscal Year	Individuals With Significant Disabilities*	Individuals Without Significant Disabilities	Percentage With Significant Disabilities
1995	159,138	50,371	76.0
1996	165,686	47,834	77.6
1997	168,422	43,093	79.6
1998	184,651	38,957	82.6
1999	196,827	34,908	84.9
2000	205,444	30,699	87.0
2001	205,706	27,985	88.0
2002	196,286	24,799	88.8
2003	195,787	21,770	90.0
2004	193,695	19,737	90.8
2005	188,353	18,342	91.1

* See footnote 6 on page 12.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (Form RSA-113)*. Washington, D.C.

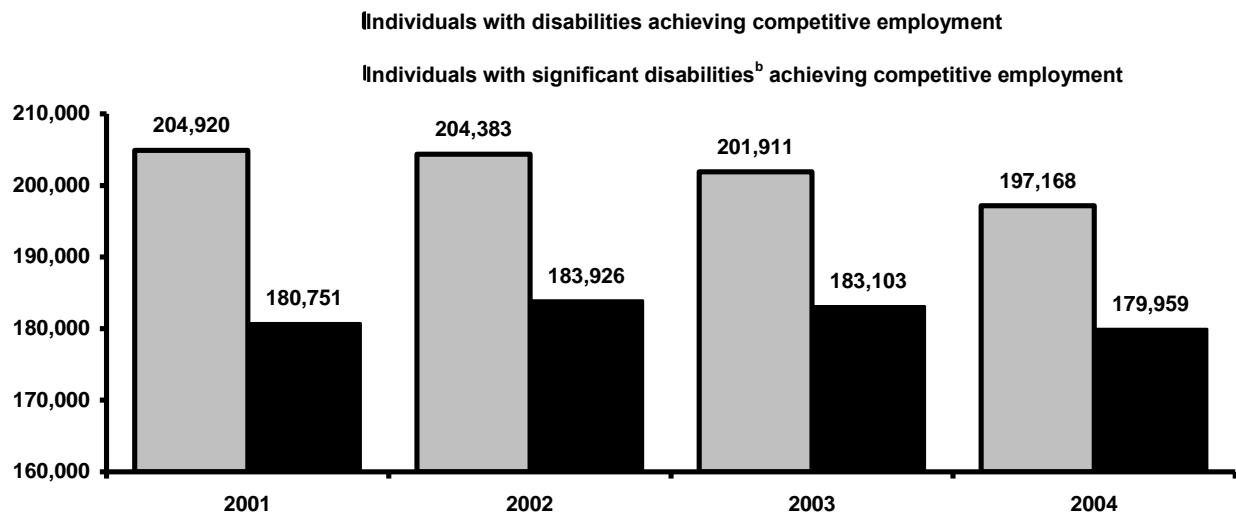
2005, there were 48,279 individuals on waiting lists, 7.3 percent less than at the end of FY 2004. Only 27 of the 48,279 individuals were awaiting services from separate agencies serving only blind or visually impaired individuals.

- Increases in cost of services, such as tuition costs, that reduce the availability of resources for individuals with disabilities for other services that lead to employment outcomes.

The success of individuals with significant disabilities achieving employment outcomes is reflected in the data provided in table 3 (above). The number of individuals with significant disabilities who exited the VR program after receiving VR services and achieving employment increased each fiscal year from 1995 through 2001. While this trend stopped in FY 2002 for the reasons cited above, among others, the number of individuals with significant disabilities as a percentage of all individuals achieving employment outcomes has continued to increase since FY 1995. In that year, individuals with significant disabilities represented 76 percent of all individuals with disabilities who obtained competitive employment after receiving VR services. During FY 2005, over 91 percent of individuals who got jobs after receiving VR services were individuals with significant disabilities.

The number of individuals with disabilities achieving competitive employment outcomes under the VR program steadily increased or remained stable on an annual basis during the 1990s. As shown in figure 5, for the most recent four fiscal years there was a slight decrease in overall competitive employment outcomes (see footnote 10 on page 17), while competitive employment outcomes for individuals with significant disabilities (see footnote 6 on page 12) remained relatively stable.

Figure 5. VR Program Participants Achieving Competitive Employment,^a Fiscal Years 2002–06



^a See footnote 10 on page 17.

^b See footnote 6 on page 12.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (Form RSA-911)*. Washington, D.C.

An important aspect of employment for anyone, particularly individuals with disabilities, is employer-provided medical benefits. In FY 2005, approximately 130,000 individuals with disabilities got competitive jobs with medical benefits, of whom approximately 121,500 were individuals with significant disabilities.

A more detailed, state-by-state breakdown of statistical information regarding the VR program for FY 2005 is provided in Appendix B of this report. Additional information is available by calling the RSA State Monitoring and Program Improvement Division's Data Collection and Analysis Unit, 202-245-7598, or by going to the RSA Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/research.html>.

Program Assessment Rating Tool Results

The VR program was one of the first programs in the Department to be assessed using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)¹⁴ during the FY 2002 mid-session budget review. The program was formally reviewed in early FY 2003 and received an overall rating of "adequate." The PART assessment noted that the *Longitudinal Study of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program* (RTI 1992) indicated that the program has been successful in achieving positive results (U.S. Department of Education, 2003b). Data from the longitudinal study showed benefits to program participants, particularly in terms of improvements in employment and earning status. Results from this study also indicated that VR consumers remained employed over a sustained period of time. The

¹⁴ Assessment tool designed to assess and improve federal program performance. It enables analysis of factors that affect and reflect program performance, including program purpose and design; performance measurement, evaluations and strategic planning; program management; and program results.

assessment pinpointed a number of areas needing improvement, including the development of long-term goals and the use and timeliness of performance data.

At the time the PART assessment was conducted, RSA had not begun the process of developing long-term goals for its programs. The PART review noted that the VR program has performance goals that focus on outcomes and meaningfully reflect the purpose of the program, but they are not ambitious long-term performance goals. Since that time, RSA has revised the program's annual goals and adopted a long-term performance goal. Along with other components in the Department, RSA also has initiated a review of its programs with regard to the development of program efficiency measures. In addition, RSA is working to assist states in collecting the necessary data to implement job training common measures to aid in the measurement of outcomes across federal job training and employment programs.

The PART assessment acknowledged that the agency regularly collects credible performance information. Evaluation standards and performance indicators are used by RSA to increase state accountability while conducting monitoring and providing technical assistance to states. However, the PART identified the following concerns about the performance data: (1) inadequate use of the performance data in managing the overall program; (2) delays in the receipt and reporting of the data, including its accessibility to the public; and (3) wide variation in individual state agency performance.

RSA's weakness in using performance information to manage the overall program had been largely due to the fact that the data were not timely. RSA is working to improve both the timeliness and the accessibility of the data. RSA has taken a number of steps to improve the timeliness of its VR data and to promote the use of the data for program improvement by RSA and the state VR agencies funded under this program. RSA has made significant progress in making the data it collects from state VR agencies available sooner to consumers and their families, public administrators and researchers. By automating data submission and improving the data editing process, RSA's FY 2005 data were available only four months after the close of the fiscal year, a significant improvement over previous years. Improving the timeliness of the data will enhance RSA's ability to use its data for enhanced program management and monitoring.

In addition to posting the performance of state agencies using the program's standards and indicators on the Department's Web site, RSA has developed detailed data tables and outcome reports that are being used by both program staff and state VR agencies to manage the program. In addition, RSA revised its VR program measures to address the wide variation in individual state agency performance. The measures now focus on the percentage of agencies that meet an established criterion rather than overall program averages. In FY 2005, RSA began the development of a long-term plan focused on using data together with strategic interventions to increase employment outcomes, particularly high-quality employment outcomes.

Supported Employment Services Program Authorized Under Sections 621–628 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The Supported Employment Services Program¹⁵ implements an approach to the rehabilitation of persons with the most significant disabilities¹⁶ that has been proven effective and enjoys wide support.

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$37,378,560**

The concept of supported employment was developed to assist in the transition of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities into a work setting through the use of on-site job coaches and other supports. By federal regulation, state VR agencies must provide ongoing support services needed by individuals with significant disabilities to maintain supported employment. Such supports may include monthly monitoring at the work site, from the time of job placement until transition to extended services.¹⁷

Under the program, state VR agencies collaborate with appropriate public and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services. State VR agencies provide eligible individuals with disabilities time-limited services for a period not to exceed 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the IPE. Once this period has ended, the state VR agency must arrange for extended services to be provided by other appropriate state agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources for the duration of employment. Supported employment placements are achieved when the short-term VR services are augmented with extended services by other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations.

An individual's potential need for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine eligibility for the VR program. The requirements pertaining to individuals with an employment goal of supported employment are the same in both the Title I VR program and the Title VI-B Supported Employment Services Program. A state VR agency may support an individual's supported employment services solely with VR program (Title I) grant funds, or it may fund the cost of supported employment services in whole or in part with Supported Employment Services (Title VI-B) grant funds. Title VI-B supported employment funds may be used only to provide supported employment services and are essentially used to supplement Title I funds.

Data from the Department's *FY 2005 Case Service Report (RSA 911)* show that a total of 38,679 individuals whose cases were closed that year after receiving services had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at some time during their participation in the VR program. About half of those individuals received at least some support for their supported

¹⁵ Also known as the Supported Employment State Grants Program and as Supported Employment for Individuals With the Most significant Disabilities, Title VI-B State Grants.

¹⁶ See footnote 13 on page 25.

¹⁷ Extended services is defined in the program regulations at 34 *CFR* 361.5(b)(20) as ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment and that are provided by a state agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer or any other appropriate resource, from funds other than funds received under this part and 34 *CFR* Part 363 after an individual with a most significant disability has made the transition from support provided by the designated state unit.

employment services from Title VI-B funds. These numbers do not include those individuals who were still receiving supported employment services at the close of the fiscal year.

Approximately 22,280 individuals, or about 57.6 percent of the total individuals with a supported employment goal (including those funded solely by Title I and those that received some Title VI-B support), achieved an employment outcome. Of those achieving an employment outcome, 7,887 individuals received funding for supported employment services solely under the Title I VR program and 14,390 received partial funding for supported employment services through the Title I VR program with the remainder of their funding coming from the Title VI-B supplement.

Fiscal year 2005 data also show that 67.8 percent or 9,763 of 14,390 individuals receiving some funding for supported employment services through the Title VI-B program and achieving an employment outcome obtained a supported employment outcome. Of those who obtained a supported employment outcome, 8,729, or 84.9 percent, were in competitive employment. In FY 2005, the mean hourly wage for individuals with supported employment outcomes closed in competitive employment was \$7.04.

Some individuals who have an initial goal of supported employment achieve an employment outcome other than a supported employment outcome. Of those individuals receiving some funding for supported employment services through the Title VI-B program who obtained other types of employment outcomes, 31.2 percent were employed in an integrated setting without supports and 1 percent were self-employed, employed in a state VR agency managed BEP program or were a homemaker or unpaid family worker.

As state VR agencies serve an increasing number of individuals with significant disabilities, the number of individuals receiving supported employment services will likely continue to increase. The prevalence of supported employment outcomes in the VR program illustrates its acceptance as a viable rehabilitation alternative. Consistent with this finding, budget requests to Congress for fiscal years 2002 through 2005 have included the consolidation of Title VI-B funding into the broader Title I program.

The *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)* indicator for the Supported Employment Services Program assesses the effectiveness of state agency efforts to increase the competitive employment outcomes of individuals with the most significant disabilities who have received supported employment services. Individuals in supported employment can achieve competitive employment (with wages at or above minimum wage), although not all individuals in supported employment do achieve these competitive wages. RSA is encouraging state agencies to help individuals with disabilities in supported employment to achieve competitive employment outcomes. The measure is the percentage of individuals with a supported employment goal achieving an employment outcome who obtain competitive employment. In fiscal years 2002 through 2004, state VR agencies far surpassed their performance targets of 77 to 78 percent for this measure. In FY 2005, 92.6 percent of the individuals with a supported employment goal achieved a competitive employment outcome.

American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program Authorized Under Section 121 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) Program¹⁸ provides grants to governing bodies of Indian tribes and consortia of those governing bodies to deliver VR services to American Indians with disabilities who live on or near federal or state reservations. The term “reservation” includes Indian reservations, public domain Indian allotments, former Indian reservations in Oklahoma and land held by incorporated Native groups, regional corporations and village corporations under the provisions of the *Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act*.

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$32,000,000**

Awards are made through competitive applications for a period of up to five years to provide a broad range of VR services including, where appropriate, services traditionally used by Indian tribes, designed to assist American Indians with disabilities to prepare for and engage in gainful employment. Applicants must ensure that the broad scope of rehabilitation services provided shall be, to the maximum extent feasible, comparable to the rehabilitation services provided by the state VR agencies, and that effort will be made to provide VR services in a manner and at a level of quality comparable to those services provided by the state agencies.

The AIVRS program is supported through funds reserved by the RSA commissioner from funds allocated under Title I, Part B, Section 110, of the *Rehabilitation Act*. As table 4 shows, the program has grown in the last several years as a result of increases in the minimum amount of funds required to be reserved for the program.

Table 4. American Indian VR Services Grants: Numbers and Funding Amounts, Fiscal Years 1999–2005

Fiscal Year	Total Grants	Funding Amount
1999	53	\$17,243,871
2000	64	\$23,343,067
2001	66	\$23,986,113
2002	69	\$25,552,272
2003	69	\$28,398,635
2004	70	\$30,762,517
2005	72	\$32,964,316

The number of grantees funded increased from 53 in FY 1999 to 72 in FY 2005. The funding for each award (both new and continuations) has increased also. The average award size in FY 1997 was about \$290,000, and it was over \$400,000 in FY 2005, about a 38 percent increase. Established projects that recompile for new grants often request higher levels of funding from RSA’s AIVRS program because they have increased their capacity to serve effectively more individuals with disabilities. In addition, the 1998 amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act* extended the grant period from three years to five years, providing more

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) Annual Performance Report*. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C. Last accessed March 24, 2009 at <http://rsamis.ed.gov/>.

¹⁸ Also known as Vocational Rehabilitation Services Projects for American Indians with Disabilities.

Table 5. Number of Individuals Achieving Employment Through American Indian VR Services, Fiscal Years 1997–2005.

Fiscal Year	Number Served	Total Number Exiting After Receiving Services	Number Achieving Employment
1997	2,617	819	530
1998	3,243	1,047	598
1999	3,186	1,109	678
2000	4,148	1,530	951
2001	4,473	1,683	1,088
2002	5,003	2,047	1,311
2003	5,105	2,200	1,452
2004	5,681	2,005	1,238
2005	6,222	2,352	1,563

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) Annual Performance Report. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C. Last accessed March 24, 2009 at <http://rsamis.ed.gov/>.

program stability. The evaluation of the program has shown that experienced grantees are more efficient and effective and continue to show significant improvements in their performance. The *GPR*A program goal is to improve employment outcomes of American Indians with disabilities that live on or near reservations by providing effective tribal vocational rehabilitation services. Program outcome data extrapolated from the AIVRS program performance database are shown in table 5.

As table 5 shows, the number of American Indians with disabilities who achieved an employment outcome increased from 530 in FY 1997 to 1,573 in FY 2005. In FY 2005, 66.2 percent of American Indians with disabilities who received services and exited the program achieved an employment outcome. Although there is fluctuation from year to year, this percentage has consistently ranged from about 61 percent to 66 percent.

Technical assistance to the tribal VR projects is provided by a variety of sources, including: RSA, state VR agencies, Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Programs, NIDRR and its grantees and the capacity-building grantees funded under Section 21 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. Tribal VR projects, for example, are building strong relationships with the state VR agencies. These relationships, in turn, are promoting cross-training in which state VR agencies are sharing techniques of VR service delivery with tribal VR staff members and tribal project staff persons are sharing techniques on delivering VR services designed for diverse cultures with state VR agency staff members. As another example, the technical assistance network sponsors annual conferences for the AIVRS projects that focus on training and networking. Other grantees funded under the *Rehabilitation Act* participate in the conferences as both trainers and learners, further promoting strong partnerships within the program and among RSA grantees.

RSA continues to monitor tribal VR projects but has changed its monitoring strategy from the conduct of on-site reviews to the provision of self-assessment tools designed to assist tribal projects to identify issues and needs requiring training and technical assistance.

Program Assessment Rating Tool Results

The AIVRS program was assessed in 2004 using the PART and received an overall rating of “adequate.” However, certain aspects of the program were identified as needing improvement. RSA is undertaking the following activities to address these concerns:

- Examine reporting inconsistencies and develop guidance to grantees in time to collect FY 2006 data. RSA has implemented an AIVRS annual performance reporting form on the RSA Management Information System (MIS)¹⁹ Database in order to collect project data effectively and consistently. Through monthly teleconferences with grantees and distribution of correspondence, RSA staff provides guidance on data entry into this collection instrument.
- Develop an implementation strategy for collecting the necessary data to support the administration’s job training common measures initiative and establish specific performance targets. The Department conducted a study to assess the capacity of grantees to collect and report unemployment insurance (UI) wage records for implementation of the common measures. The 2005 draft final report documented significant barriers to implementing the job training common measures in the AIVRS program, including grantees access to UI records and capacity to collect and report the data.
- Implement an outcome efficiency measure. The Department has established an efficiency measure that will examine the percentage of projects whose average annual cost per employment outcome is within a specified range. Under this measure the cost per employment outcome is calculated by dividing a project’s total federal grant by the number of employment outcomes reported. The cost per outcome for AIVRS grantees has been calculated for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 in order to establish a range of acceptable performance and future targets for the performance measure.
- Improve use and transparency of project data to manage and improve the program. As a first step, RSA plans to post key aggregate performance data on the Web.

¹⁹ The RSA Management Information System (MIS) is the online reporting tool developed by RSA to request, receive and manage performance and GPRA data from grantees. Through monthly teleconferences with grantees and distribution of correspondence, RSA staff provides guidance on data entry into this collection instrument.

Demonstration and Training Programs

Authorized Under Section 303 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

Demonstration and Training Programs provide competitive grants to, or enter into contracts with, eligible entities to expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*. The grants and contracts are to further the purposes and policies of the *Rehabilitation Act*, and to support activities that increase the provision, extent, availability, scope and quality of rehabilitation services under the *Rehabilitation Act*, including related research and evaluation activities.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$25,607,488

Section 303(a), (c) and (d) of the *Rehabilitation Act* authorize demonstration projects designed specifically to increase client choice in the rehabilitation process, make information and training available to parents of individuals with disabilities and provide Braille training to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and their families.

Section 303(b) of the *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes the support of projects that provide activities to demonstrate and implement methods of service delivery for individuals with disabilities, and includes such activities as technical assistance, systems change, special studies and evaluation and the dissemination and utilization of project findings. Entities eligible for grants under Section 303(b) include state VR agencies, community rehabilitation programs, American Indian tribes or tribal organizations or other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations. Competitions may be limited to one or more type of entity. The program supports projects for up to 60 months. During that period, many projects provide comprehensive services that may demonstrate the application of innovative procedures that could lead to the successful achievement of employment outcomes.

Section 303(b) special projects develop strategies that enhance the delivery of rehabilitation services by community-based programs and state VR agencies to meet the needs of underserved populations or underserved areas. Projects have been successful in creating intensive outreach and rehabilitation support systems, including benefits counseling, career development and job placement assistance.

Although special demonstration project types vary, the objective for a majority of the projects is to provide comprehensive services to individuals with disabilities that lead to employment outcomes. The common measures used to evaluate these projects are the number of individuals served and the number of individuals placed into employment. The *GPRRA* program goal is “to expand, improve, or further the purposes of activities authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*,” with an objective that specifically sets out to “expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation services that lead to employment outcomes.” There are two performance indicators that support this goal and objective. They are as follows:

- Projects will be judged to have successfully implemented strategies that contribute to the expansion of services for the employment of individuals with disabilities according to the percentage of individuals served and placed into employment by the projects.

Table 6. Demonstration and Training Programs Outcome Data, Fiscal Years 2001–05

Fiscal Year	Number of Projects ^a	Served	Placed
2001	45	8,247	1,635
2002	36	6,718	1,249
2003	47	11,769	3,744
2004	38	16,495	2,576
2005	11	1,296	536 ^b

^a *Program* is statutory language; *projects* can be funded under the program.

^b The decrease in individuals placed from FY 2003 through FY 2005 resulted from a decline in the number of funded projects with an employment placement goal.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Internal records of program data for FY 2001–FY 2005.

- The increase in referrals of individuals to or from VR agencies and the subsequent expansion of service provision due to the impact of interactions, presentations and information made to and by state VR agencies.

Outcome data extracted from the demonstration programs Web-based performance report instrument and reported in the Department’s Program Performance Management Database (PPMD), in response to *GPR*A, are identified in table 6 for fiscal years 2001–05.

Eleven field-initiated grants were continued in FY 2005. These projects are model demonstration grants reflecting diverse and innovative approaches and methodologies that provide services for individuals with disabilities that increase employment outcomes. The projects focus on various priorities that include the provision of affordable transportation for individuals with disabilities, services to increase self-employment outcomes, business ownership opportunities for American Indians with disabilities and employment opportunities with career advancement for individuals with disabilities who are homeless or reside in supportive or subsidized housing.

Five systems change grants were continued in FY 2005. These projects are designed to identify and eliminate barriers to competitive employment for individuals with disabilities who receive public support.

Two technical assistance centers for persons with disabilities whose focus is Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Hispanics were continued in FY 2005. These centers are designed to provide technical assistance leading to employment opportunities, vocational skills and education advancement for these populations.

Five model demonstration projects to improve the literacy and employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities were continued in FY 2005. These projects assess whether certain specific literacy services raise literacy levels and, consequently, the earnings of individuals with disabilities compared to individuals who receive the usual VR services.

Seven parent information and training grants and the technical assistance center that supports them received continuation grants. These centers provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities and their parents, family members, guardians, advocates or other authorized representatives of the individuals to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.

Nine demonstration projects, in the area of mentoring for transition-age youths and young adults with disabilities, were continued. The projects must demonstrate research-based mentoring models that are effective in increasing meaningful community integration, postsecondary education and employment outcomes for youths with disabilities.

Two Braille training grants received funding for continuation. These projects provide training to youths and adults who are blind and build the capacity of service providers who work with those individuals.

The Senate appropriations conference agreement for FY 2005 states that within the budget amount provided for the vocational rehabilitation demonstration and training programs, RSA must support the activities of 20 earmarked organizations. The Congressional Appropriation Bill, P.L. 108-792, authorizes funding under the Demonstration and Training Program, Title III, Section 303.

Grants under the Demonstration and Training Programs provided funds to state vocational rehabilitation agencies or other state organizations, public or nonprofit agencies or organizations, community rehabilitation programs or other organizations to expand and improve rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities. Two examples follow:

- A grant of \$992,000 for a University of South Florida project that expanded organized studies in prosthetics and orthotics (P&O) and also built an educational research lab that provided a seamless continuum of educational opportunity for P&O professionals. This environment induces a timeless flow of educational materials that support practicing health care professionals statewide and nationwide. The program was designed to improve the quality of applied P&O research, meet the increasing demand for provider services and simultaneously collaborate with and complement the planned undergraduate educational program in prosthetics and orthotics.
- A grant of \$992,000 for a National Federation of the Blind project that proposed to field test innovative technology for blind and low vision individuals, and persons with learning disabilities that limit their ability to read print. This state-of-the-art technology was designed to enhance and enrich lives of persons who are blind or visually impaired. The project demonstrated the effectiveness of consumer participation in assistive technology development for persons with disabilities.

The Demonstration and Training Programs are continuing to monitor the progress and impact of 20 Access-to-Telework grants that were provided funding in FY 2003. These

projects provide support for alternative financing mechanisms with the goal of expanding telework opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Projects are designed to continue until there are no longer any funds available and all outstanding loans have been repaid.

The Demonstration and Training Programs continued the use of the Web-based performance report instrument in FY 2005 that was put into practice in FY 2000. This instrument collects data from projects funded under Section 303(b) of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program **Authorized Under Section 304 of the *Rehabilitation Act***

The goal of the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program (MSFW) is to ensure that eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities receive rehabilitation services and increased employment opportunities. The *GPRA* performance indicator for this program assesses the effectiveness of MSFW projects within states with an MSFW project. The percentage of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities who achieve employment outcomes and who are served both by the VR program and the MSFW projects is compared to the percentage of seasonal farmworkers who achieve employment outcomes and who access only the VR program and do not access the MSFW project.

The MSFW Program makes comprehensive VR services available to migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities. Projects under the program develop innovative methods for reaching and serving this population. Emphasis is placed on outreach to migrant camps, providing bilingual rehabilitation counseling to this population, and coordinating VR services with services from other sources. Projects provide VR services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and to members of their families when such services will contribute to the rehabilitation of the worker with a disability.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$2,302,432

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities and their families are faced with many obstacles in securing employment. They are in need of highly individualized services to meet specific employment needs. The significant barriers to securing employment are: language barriers, culturally diverse backgrounds and relocation from state to state, making tracking individuals difficult if not impossible.

The program is administered in coordination with other programs serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including programs under Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)*, Section 330 of the *Public Health Service Act*, the *Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act* and the *WIA*. In addition, RSA participates as a member of the Federal Migrant Interagency Committee to share information and develop strategies to improve the coordination and delivery of services to this population.

Projects funded in FY 2005 trained migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities to develop other skills that can be applied outside the agricultural area to increase their prospects for entering new occupations. In addition, projects under this program worked directly with employers to create opportunities for on-the-job training and job placement. The *Case Service Report (RSA 911)* (U.S. Department of Education, 2005a) collects data on the number of individuals whose cases are closed from state VR agencies during a particular fiscal year. One element in the system reports on the number of persons who also participated in a migrant or seasonal farmworkers project at some time during their VR program. This is the data element used to assess the performance indicator for this program. In FY 2005, 13 projects funded under this program served a total of 522 individuals who also were served by the VR program and placed a total of 216 individuals into competitive employment, a 41.4 percent placement rate. During this same time period, the VR program in those same 13 states that have an MSFW project served an additional 207 migrant or seasonal farmworkers who did not participate in a project funded under this program, but only placed a total of 61 individuals into competitive employment, a 29.5 percent placement rate.

In 2005, the National Alliance for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Vocational Rehabilitation (NAMSFVR) organization, in partnership with RSA, held another national project directors' conference with funding from FY 2005. The conference was organized by and for migrant and seasonal farmworker grantees. Its goal was to improve quality and consistency of services provided by these grantees. This conference provided grantees with a forum for sharing common concerns and solutions regarding services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities. As a result of the conference, grantees achieved a more unified approach to serving this population and providing data to RSA to address the performance measures.

The number of grants awarded under the MSFW Program from fiscal years 2000–05 is illustrated in table 7.

Table 7. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program: Number of Continuation And New Grants, Fiscal Years 2000–05

Fiscal Year	Continuation Grants	New Grants	Total Grants
2000	10	4	14
2001	11	4	15
2002	11	4	15
2003	13	1	14
2004	13	0	13
2005	9	4	13

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program Annual Performance Report (ED 524B). Washington, D.C.

Projects With Industry

Authorized Under Sections 611–612 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The Projects With Industry (PWI) program creates and expands job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market by engaging the participation of business and industry in the VR process. PWI projects promote the involvement of business and private industry through business advisory councils (BACs) that identify jobs and careers available in the community and provide advice on the appropriate skills and training for program participants. BACs are required to identify job and career availability within the community, consistent with the current and projected local employment opportunities identified by the local workforce investment board for the community under *WIA*.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
21,624,608

PWI grants are made to a variety of agencies and organizations, including businesses and industrial corporations, community rehabilitation programs, labor organizations, trade associations, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, designated state units and foundations. Grants are awarded for either a three- or five-year period, and the federal share may not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of a project. In making awards under this program, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Education considers the equitable distribution of projects among the states.

PWI grantees must provide to RSA an annual evaluation of project operations in accordance with established program evaluation standards and performance indicators. Specifically, Appendix A to the program regulations at 34 *CFR* 379 established seven standards to evaluate the performance of a PWI grant.

PWI Evaluation Standard 1: The primary objective of the project must be to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain competitive employment. The activities carried out by the project must support the accomplishment of this objective.

PWI Evaluation Standard 2: The project must serve individuals with disabilities that impair their capacity to obtain competitive employment. In selecting persons to receive services, priority must be given to individuals with significant disabilities.

PWI Evaluation Standard 3: The project must ensure the provision of services that will assist in the placement of individuals with disabilities.

PWI Evaluation Standard 4: Funds must be used to achieve the project's primary objective at minimum cost to the federal government.

PWI Evaluation Standard 5: The project's advisory council must provide policy guidance and assistance in the conduct of the project.

PWI Evaluation Standard 6: Working relationships, including partnerships, must be established with agencies and organizations to expand the project's capacity to meet its objectives.

PWI Evaluation Standard 7: The project must obtain positive results in assisting individuals with disabilities to obtain competitive employment.

RSA established five compliance indicators designed to measure the effectiveness of individual grants found in the program regulations at 34 *CFR* 379.53. A grantee must meet the minimum performance levels on the two "primary" program compliance indicators and any two of the three "secondary" compliance indicators identified below.

PWI Compliance Indicator 1: (Primary) Placement rate. (A minimum of 55 percent of individuals served by the project during FY 2005 must be placed into competitive employment.)

PWI Compliance Indicator 2: (Primary) Change in earnings. (Based upon hours worked, projects must have an average increase in earnings of at least \$125 a week per individual placed in competitive employment or \$100 per week for those projects in which at least 75 percent of individuals placed into competitive employment are working fewer than 30 hours per week.)

PWI Compliance Indicator 3: (Secondary) Percentage placed who have significant disabilities. (At least 50 percent of individuals served by the project who are placed into competitive employment are individuals who have significant disabilities.)

PWI Compliance Indicator 4: (Secondary) Percentage placed who were previously unemployed. (At least 50 percent of individuals who are placed into competitive employment are individuals who were continuously unemployed for at least six months at the time of project entry.)

PWI Compliance Indicator 5: (Secondary) Average cost per placement. (The actual average cost per placement of individuals served by the project does not exceed 115 percent of the projected average cost per placement in the grantee's application.)

Three of the compliance indicators also serve as the program's measures established pursuant to *GPRA*. These measures, including FY 2005 performance results based on the reports of 85 grantees, are provided below.

- Placement Rate of individuals with disabilities into competitive employment. The placement rate for FY 2005 was 52 percent.
- Change in earnings of individuals who are placed in competitive employment. In FY 2005, the change in earnings of individuals who were placed in competitive employment averaged \$253 per week.
- Percentage of individuals served who were unemployed for six months or more prior to program entry who are placed in competitive employment. In fiscal FY 2005, 65 percent of individuals served who were unemployed six months or more prior to program entry were placed in employment.

In order to receive continuation funding for the third and subsequent years, PWI grantees must demonstrate compliance with the standards and indicators by submitting data for the most recent complete fiscal year. If a grantee does not demonstrate compliance on the basis of the previous fiscal year's data, the grantee has an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the standards by submitting data from the first six months of the current fiscal year.

In FY 2005, 92 percent of the projects completed their third and final year of their grant and 8 percent completed their second year of their grant. In FY 2005, about 8 percent of the projects failed the compliance indicators. Of the seven failed projects, all were in their final year of funding. The failure rate was lower in FY 2005 as compared to FY 2004 when about 12 percent of the projects failed to meet the compliance indicators.

Table 8 presents selected performance information for the PWI program for fiscal years 2004 and 2005. In FY 2005, there were 85 projects in operation, five less than in FY 2004. The 85 PWI projects operating and reporting data in FY 2005 placed 52 percent of the total 12,652 individuals served into competitive employment. Approximately 80 percent of the total number of individuals served and 90 percent of individuals placed were individuals with significant disabilities. About 65 percent of individuals served and 78 percent of individuals placed in employment were individuals who were unemployed six months or more prior to program entry. In FY 2005, the placement rate for individuals with significant disabilities (percentage of individuals with significant disabilities served who were placed in employment) was 58 percent. The placement rate for individuals who were unemployed six months or more prior to program entry was 62 percent.

The PWI data collection instrument was revised for FY 2005 reporting. In addition to the number of new persons (persons entering the system in FY 2005) served in the reporting period, grantees were required to report the total number of persons served in the reporting period. The reporting change resulted in a significant reduction in the reporting of the number of new persons served in the reporting period and inconsistencies in the grantee-reported data on number of new served persons compared to previous years. Analysis of the data indicates that, in previous years, a number of grantees incorrectly reported data on the number of new persons served. As a result, data on the numbers of

persons served and calculations using this data, such as the percentage of persons placed in employment, are not comparable with previous years.

**Table 8. Projects With Industry Selected Program Outcomes,^a
Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005**

Selected Outcome	2004	2005
Total projects reporting	90	85
Total persons served	NA	12,652
New persons served		
Persons served with significant disabilities ^b	10,557	8,148
Percentage served with significant disabilities	88%	80%
Persons served who were unemployed six months or more	7,792	8,226
Percentage served who were unemployed six months or more	74%	65%
Total persons placed in employment	6,493	6,564
Percentage of total persons placed in employment	62%	52%
Persons placed with significant disabilities ^b	5,792	5,880
Percentage of individuals with significant disabilities placed in employment	89%	90%
Persons placed who were unemployed six months or more in employment	5,108	5,133
Percentage of previously unemployed individuals placed in employment	79%	78%
Placement rate of individuals with significant disabilities ^b	63%	58%
Placement rate of previously unemployed individuals	66%	62%

^a Fiscal years 2004 and 2005 data on the number of persons served are not comparable. To correct for this problem, the FY 2005 placement rate was calculated as the percentage of individuals served who were placed into competitive employment of the total number of individuals served by the projects during the reporting period. In prior fiscal years, the placement rate was calculated based on grantee reported data on the total new individuals (individuals first entering the system) served in the reporting period. This change in calculation resulted in a significantly lower placement rate as compared to previous years.

^b See footnote 6 on page 12 for definition of individual with a significant disability.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. Projects With Industry Annual Compliance Indicators and Annual Evaluation Plan Report. Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005. Washington, D.C.

Program Assessment Rating Tool Results

In FY 2004, the Department selected the PWI program to undergo a PART assessment. The PART is designed to assess performance of federal programs and to develop methods to improve performance in order to achieve better results. The program was given an “adequate” rating, but the PART finding cited that many of the program’s activities were redundant with allowable activities under the VR program. Although the program is generally successful in meeting its performance goals, the PART finding was that these results are undermined by the lack of credibility of the data collected and reported by grantees and highly variable grantee performance.

As a result of the PART findings, RSA: (1) implemented a plan to improve grantee data collection and reporting by providing technical assistance to grantees on the program in the form of group teleconference calls and technical assistance documents; (2) revised the program measures to be comparable with other job training programs; (3) improved the use and transparency of project data to manage and improve the program, including posting summary analysis and key data on the Department's Web site; and (4) developed and implemented a plan to meet the program's statutory requirement for on-site compliance reviews.

RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD VENDING FACILITY PROGRAM

Authorized Under Section 103(b)(1) of the *Rehabilitation Act* And Under the *Randolph-Sheppard Act*

Section 103(b) of the *Rehabilitation Act* states that vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, when provided to groups, can include management, supervision and other services to improve businesses operated by significantly disabled individuals (see footnote 6 on page 12 for definition). State VR agencies, therefore, are authorized to use funds under the VR program to support the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program, which is authorized under the *Randolph-Sheppard Act*. The original intent of the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* was to enhance employment opportunities for blind individuals who are trained and licensed to operate vending facilities.

Supported by a combination of RSA program funds, state appropriations, federal vending machine income and levied set-asides from vendors, the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program (also known as the Business Enterprise Program in many states) provides persons who are blind with remunerative employment and self-support through the operation of vending facilities on federal and other property. The program recruits qualified individuals who are blind, trains them on the management and operation of small business enterprises and then licenses qualified blind vendors to operate the facilities.

At the outset, the program placed sundry stands in the lobbies of federal office buildings and post offices selling such items as newspapers, magazines, candies and tobacco products. Through the years, the program has grown and broadened from federal locations to also include state, county, municipal and private installations as well as interstate highway rest areas. Operations have expanded to include military mess halls, cafeterias, snack bars, miscellaneous shops and facilities comprised of vending machines.

RSA administers the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* in accordance with the goals of providing blind persons with remunerative employment, enlarging the economic opportunities of the blind and stimulating the blind to greater efforts in striving to make themselves self-supporting. To this end, RSA has established standards and performance indicators to encourage state agencies to increase average earnings of individuals in the program.

The data contained in table 9 on the next page were obtained from the *Report of Vending Facility Program*, Form RSA-15, for FY 2005. The total gross income for the program was \$661.3 million in FY 2005, compared to \$620.4²⁰ million in FY 2004, a 6.6 percent increase. The total earnings of all vendors were \$111.2 million in FY 2005 and \$105.2 million in FY 2004, an increase of 5.6 percent. The national average annual earnings of vendors increased 7.6 percent to \$43,584 in FY 2005 from \$40,503 the previous year. The number of vendors in FY 2005 was 2,564 compared to 2,529 in FY 2004, an

²⁰ The figures cited in this report for FY 2004 are different than those reported in the RSA annual report for FY 2004. These data reflect revisions in the treatment of data involving cafeteria contracts and were received after publication of that report. Any subsequent revisions by individual states may cause minor changes in the totals for FY 2005.

increase of 35 operators. There were 3,080 vending facilities in FY 2005 and 3,104 the previous year, a decrease of 24 facilities.

Table 9. Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program: Selected Outcomes, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Income and Earnings		
Gross Income	\$620,449,758*	\$661,311,042
Vendor Earnings	\$105,239,118	\$111,165,525
Average Earnings	\$40,503	\$43,584
Number of Vendors		
Federal Locations	911	895
Nonfederal Locations	1,618	1,669
Total Vendors	2,529	2,564
Number of Vending Facilities		
Federal Locations	1,110	1,115
Nonfederal Locations	1,994	1,965
Total Vending Facilities	3,104	3,080

* See footnote 20 on page 45.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. IM06-09. Aug. 2006 for FY 2005. Washington, D.C.

INDEPENDENT LIVING AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

The purpose of the independent living (IL) and community integration programs is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of American society. Title VII of the *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes financial assistance to provide, expand and improve IL services; to develop and support statewide networks of centers for independent living; and to improve working relationships among state IL programs, centers for independent living, statewide independent living councils, other programs authorized by the *Rehabilitation Act* and other federal, state, local and nongovernmental programs.

State Independent Living Services Program Authorized Under Title VII, Chapter I, Part B, of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The State Independent Living Services (SILS) program²¹ provides formula grants, based on population, to states for the purpose of funding, directly or through grant or contractual arrangements, one or more of the following activities:

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$22,816,000**

1. Supporting the operation of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs);
2. Demonstrating ways to expand and improve IL services;
3. Providing IL services;
4. Supporting the operation of centers for independent living (CILs);
5. Increasing the capacity of public or nonprofit organizations and other entities to develop comprehensive approaches or systems for providing IL services;
6. Conducting studies and analyses, developing model policies and procedures and presenting information, approaches, strategies, findings, conclusions and recommendations to federal, state and local policymakers;
7. Training service providers and individuals with disabilities on the IL philosophy; and
8. Providing outreach to populations that are unserved or underserved by IL programs, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.

²¹ Also known as the Independent Living State Grants Program.

To be eligible for financial assistance, states are required to establish an SILC and to submit a state plan for independent living jointly developed and signed by the chairperson of the SILC and the director of the designated state unit.

Program Assessment Rating Tool Results

In 2002, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) conducted a Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) review of the SILS and CIL programs and rated the programs “results not demonstrated.” The PART evaluation identified certain aspects of this program that needed improvement. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has taken the following actions in accordance with PART recommendations:

- Implementation of new performance measures that include the following:
 - As a result of services provided directly by the SILS program, increase the percentage of consumers who report having access to (previously unavailable) transportation, or appropriate health-care services, or assistive technology, or all three, resulting in increased independence in at least one significant life area.
 - Increase the percentage of consumers reporting satisfaction with the IL services they have received or are currently receiving.
 - Decrease the number of months between the states’ data submission due date and RSA’s review, analysis and release of data to the public.
- Revision of states’ annual performance report forms to incorporate the new performance measures, improve data collection and reduce paperwork burdens.

Centers for Independent Living Program Authorized Under Title VII, Chapter I, Part C of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The CIL program provides grants to consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability,²² nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies for the provision of independent living services. At a minimum, centers funded by the program are required to provide the following independent living core services: information and referral; independent living skills training, peer counseling and individual and systems advocacy. Centers also may provide, among other services: psychological counseling, assistance in securing housing or shelter, personal assistance services, transportation referral and assistance,

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$75,392,000**

²² Cross-disability means (according to the program regulations at 34 *CFR* 364.4), with respect to a center for independent living, that a center provides IL services to an individual with a range of significant disabilities and does not require the presence of one or more specific significant disabilities before determining that an individual is eligible for IL services.

Table 10. Centers for Independent Living Program: Selected Accomplishments, FY 2005

In FY 2005, centers for independent living nationwide served over **218,498** individuals with disabilities. A few examples of their beneficial impact on individuals follow:

- 2,868** individuals relocated from nursing homes or other institutions to community-based living arrangements.
- 47,203** individuals who received assistive technology or rehabilitation services.
- 78,443** individuals who received independent living skills training and life skills training.
- 61,093** individuals who received independent living services related to securing housing or shelter.
- 42,034** individuals received services related to transportation.
- 60,960** individuals who received personal assistance services.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. RSA Annual Performance Report (Form RSA-704). Compilation. 2005. Washington, D.C.

physical therapy, mobility training, rehabilitation technology, recreation and other services necessary to improve the ability of individuals with significant disabilities to function independently in the family or community or to continue in employment or both.

The *Rehabilitation Act* establishes a set of standards and assurances that centers are required to meet. To continue receiving CIL program funding, centers must demonstrate minimum compliance with the following evaluation standards: promotion of the independent living philosophy; provision of independent living services on a cross-disability basis; support for the development and achievement of independent living goals chosen by the consumer; efforts to increase the availability of quality community options for independent living; provision of independent living core services; resource development activities to secure other funding sources, and community capacity-building activities.

A population-based formula determines the total funding available for discretionary grants to centers in each state. Subject to the availability of appropriations, the RSA commissioner is required to fund centers that existed as of fiscal year (FY) 1997 at the same level of funding they received the prior fiscal year and to provide them with a cost-of-living increase. Funding for new centers in a state is awarded on a competitive basis, based on the state's priority designation of unserved or underserved areas and the availability of funds within the state. In FY 2005, there were 344 CILs operating nationwide that received funds under this program.

CILs are required to submit an annual performance report (U.S. Department of Education, 2005h). The report tracks sources, amounts and allocation of funds; numbers and demographic breakdowns of service recipients; services rendered and consumer outcomes achieved; and major accomplishments, challenges, opportunities and other IL program activities within the state.

Program Assessment Rating Tool Results

In 2002, OMB conducted a PART review of the SILS and CIL programs and rated the programs “results not demonstrated.” The PART is designed to assess performance of federal programs and to develop methods to improve performance in order to achieve better results, given that the PART evaluation identified certain aspects of this program that needed improvement. RSA has taken the following actions in accordance with PART recommendations:

- Implementation of new performance measures that include the following:
 - As a result of services provided directly by a CIL (including referral to another service provider), increase the percentage of CIL consumers who report having access to (previously unavailable) transportation, or appropriate health-care services, or assistive technology, or all three, resulting in increased independence in at least one significant life area.
 - Through the provision of IL services (including the IL four core services²³), increase the percentage of CIL consumers who move out of institutions into a community-based setting.
 - Decrease the number of months between the CILs’ data submission due date and RSA’s review, analysis and release of data to the public.
- Revision of the CILs’ annual performance report forms to incorporate the new performance measures listed above, improve data collection and reduce paperwork burdens.
- Development of a plan to improve the fiscal and program site review system for CIL accountability in accordance with RSA’s statutory oversight requirements.

Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind Authorized Under Title VII, Chapter 2 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program delivers IL services to individuals who are 55 years of age or older, and whose significant visual impairment

makes competitive employment extremely difficult to attain, but for whom IL goals are feasible. The program delivers services designed to improve the ability of older individuals who are blind to maintain a desired level of personal independence. These services assist older individuals who are blind in coping with activities of daily living and

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$33,227,040**

²³ Centers are required to provide the core services of 1) information and referral, 2) IL skills training, 3) peer counseling and 4) individual and systems advocacy.

increasing their functional independence by providing adaptive aids and services, orientation and mobility training, training in communication skills and Braille instruction, information and referral services, peer counseling and individual advocacy instruction.

The *Rehabilitation Act* provides that in any fiscal year in which appropriations to this program exceed \$13 million, grants will be made on a formula basis rather than on a discretionary basis. Grants to state agencies for the blind or, in states that have no such agency, to state VR agencies have been made on a formula basis since FY 2000. States participating in this program must match every \$9 of federal funds with \$1 in nonfederal cash or in-kind resources in the year for which the federal funds are appropriated.

The program received an increase in federal funding from \$31,811,200 in FY 2004 to \$33,227,040 in FY 2005. This increased funding for the Title VII, Chapter 2, program promoted sustainability of the state-operated programs nationwide and enhanced the capacity of states to address the growing numbers of older individuals with blindness and visual impairment. Approximately one in six older individuals over the age of 65 experience age-related vision loss. In FY 2005, 63,766 older individuals nationwide (excluding Guam and Virgin Islands, which did not report data) received independent living services through this program. The average overall nonfederal support (in cash and in kind) per state increased from \$255,520 in FY 2004 to \$256,404 in FY 2005.

Through this program, state programs increased their delivery of services to consumers that have other severe or multiple disabilities in addition to a significant visual impairment. Results from a national consumer satisfaction survey of participants served under the Title VII, Chapter 2, program conducted by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University suggest that consumers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of services (95 percent), the timeliness of services (93 percent) and with the program's ability to help them meet their independent living goals (90 percent). Consistent with measuring outcomes as well as output, RSA is in the process of developing additional performance indicators for the program. These indicators will support the objective to increase the percentage of consumers receiving services who report having access to services and training needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their home communities. This program prolongs independence and quality of life for older Americans and provides an alternative to the costly investment in long-term institutionalization and care.

Recreational Programs

Authorized Under Section 305 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The goal of this program is to provide recreation activities and related experiences for individuals with disabilities that can be expected to aid in their employment, mobility, independence, socialization and community integration.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$2,543,488

Under Recreational Programs, discretionary grants are awarded on a competitive basis to states, public agencies and nonprofit private organizations, including institutions of higher education (IHEs). Projects funded under this program must provide recreational activities for individuals with disabilities in settings with peers without disabilities when possible and appropriate.

Grants are available for periods of up to three years. The federal share of the costs of each grant is 100 percent for the first year, 75 percent for the second year and 50 percent for the third. Projects funded under this program authority are required to provide a nonfederal match (cash or in-kind contribution or both) for year two, at 25 percent of year one federal funding, and for year three, at 50 percent of year one federal funding.

Table 11 shows the number of new and continuing recreational grants funded over a six-year period, as well as the total of the two.

Table 11. Recreational Programs: Number of Continuation and New Grants, Fiscal Years 2000–05

Fiscal Year	Continuations	New	Total
2000	16	9	25
2001	18	6	24
2002	15	10	25
2003	16	8	24
2004	18	8	26
2005	16	9	25

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, internal records of program data for FY 2000–FY 2005.

The goal stated above—to provide recreation activities and related experiences for individuals with disabilities that can be expected to aid in their employment, mobility, independence, socialization and community integration—includes an objective for Recreational Programs to sustain the activities initiated by the grant after federal funding ceases. This objective under the *Government Performance and Results Act (GPR)* requirements is the only measurement currently used to demonstrate a tie between the mandated goal of the program and the needs of the communities where the grants are funded. Grantees must describe in their applications the manner in which the program will be continued after federal funding has ended. The latest data available relative to this objective come from grants that were closed from fiscal years 2001–03 and tracked one year later in FY 2004. Based on data obtained from the Department’s Program Performance Management Database (PPMD), at least 20 (83 percent) of the 24 projects closed during this period continued in operation after federal funding ended. Six (75 percent) of eight projects closed in FY 2004 continued in operation after federal funding ended.

The connection between recreational activities and the creation of employment opportunities is evident in the kinds of projects funded in FY 2005. For example, the Fortune Society in New York City served individuals with long-term substance abuse histories who had been incarcerated for lengthy or repeated periods. Their histories created a significant impediment to the ability to achieve independence, interact and socialize with others and fully integrate into their communities. President Bush in his 2004 State of the Union spoke of this group specifically: "...if [ex-prisoners] can't find work, or a home, or help, they are much more likely to commit crime and return to prison." The Fortune Society project served substance abuse disabled ex-prisoners in learning new, healthy ways of interacting and socializing with others and integrating into their communities as productive members so that they do not repeat the cycle of substance abuse, crime and incarceration. Through specific recreational activities that include leisure and socialization, physical education, handicrafts and art and homemaking activities, the project served a minimum of 250 disabled ex-prisoners. Continuous assessment was made to determine the improvement of the participants in socialization skills and increased retention in Fortune Society core programs, such as housing, treatment services, career development and education as compared with a control group of nonparticipants.

Another project funded in FY 2005 was the Eagle Mount in Billings, Mont. Eagle Mount initiated the LIFE Academy (Lessons in Future Employment) and, as its name implies, this program was designed to ensure the success of young adults with disabilities as they move from school to the adult world of work, and to enhance both vocational and avocational outcomes for young adults with disabilities, ages 18–28. The LIFE Academy was built on three core components: social skill development, vocational skill development and service learning.

By partnering with members of the Billings Disabilities Services Coalition and other public agencies to expand and augment vocational skill development, Eagle Mount offers a unique strategy for helping young adults with disabilities achieve their potential as contributing members of society.

These and other grants are helping individuals who participate in a project funded by Recreational Programs to develop important life skills (i.e., job seeking and mobility skills).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) operates and provides funding for a number of programs that support the central work of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. These support programs frequently are discretionary programs that have been established to provide funding for addressing new and emerging needs of individuals with disabilities. They may, for example, provide technical assistance for more efficient management of service provision, open opportunities for previously underserved populations, initiate partnerships with the business community and help establish an atmosphere of independence and self-confidence among individuals with disabilities that fosters competitive employment. They include training efforts designed to qualify new personnel and expand the knowledge and skills of current professionals through recurrent training, continuing education and professional development.

Program Improvement Authorized Under Section 12 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

Program Improvement²⁴ funds allocated under Section 12 of the *Rehabilitation Act* are used to support activities that increase program effectiveness, improve accountability and enhance

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$843,200**

RSA's ability to address issues of national significance in achieving the purposes of the *Rehabilitation Act*. Program funds are awarded through grants and contracts and may be used to procure expertise to provide short-term training and technical instruction; conduct special projects and demonstrations; develop, collect, prepare, publish and disseminate educational or informational materials, and carry out monitoring and evaluation activities.

Under this section of the *Rehabilitation Act*, the RSA commissioner is authorized to provide technical assistance and consultative services to public and nonprofit private agencies and organizations, including assistance to agencies and organizations to facilitate meaningful and effective participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities.

During fiscal year (FY) 2005, RSA undertook a major initiative to redesign its program monitoring and improvement system. The goal of the redesign was to improve VR services and the employment of persons with disabilities through the development of a new performance-based monitoring system. The system promotes greater stakeholder involvement with RSA in assisting to identify improvements and supports the provision of resources and technical assistance necessary to achieve such improvements.

²⁴ Also known as *Rehabilitation Act* Program Improvement.

To initiate the first step in its redesign process, RSA used Section 12 funds to convene an open forum of key stakeholders and partners, including state VR agencies, state rehabilitation councils, consumer and advocacy groups and community partners and providers to seek their input, feedback and guidance on the redesign for the new monitoring system. RSA sought input from stakeholders and partners during the planning of the national conference, which was conducted in August 2005 in Washington, D.C., and included over 150 participants.

The conference conveyed information about the current monitoring process, including its statutory requirements, the databases used to assess state VR agency performance and review processes currently in effect targeted for revision. More importantly, the conference provided stakeholders and partners with an opportunity to respond to a blue print for a new monitoring process based on increased collaboration and improved technical assistance from RSA. RSA used this input to refine the monitoring design that is now: performance-based, closely linked to the State Plan (the State Plan for Title I and Title VIB of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, and the Statewide Plan for Independent Living under title VII of the *Rehabilitation Act*), transparent, collaborative, timely and tailored to individual state VR agencies.

As a second step in its approach to program improvement, RSA awarded a two-year \$500,000 contract under Section 12 in FY 2005 to identify and analyze the technical assistance needs of state VR agencies and state rehabilitation councils. The information from this assessment will assist RSA in better targeting and coordinating funding priorities under its demonstration and improvement programs. The project design includes the development of survey instruments, using input from selected state VR agencies and state rehabilitation council representatives, as well as a panel of outside experts. Information will be collected on the scope and extent of technical assistance needed to support state VR agencies and state rehabilitation councils in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.

In keeping with its emphasis on improving performance, RSA awarded a two-year contract to assist in increasing access to and use of program performance data. Weakness in the use and transparency of data in the management and improvement of RSA's programs was a common finding in a recently conducted Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) assessment. Although RSA collects basic data on all its programs, the definitions, types, collection formats and usage of that collected data vary greatly among programs. Limitations on RSA's usage of these data arise from: differences in reporting practices, database structures and ease in manipulation, and problems in ascertaining data reasonableness or constraints on analysis methods. In particular, there is a need to develop a valid and reliable data collection for the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) Program (see page 48). This contract will increase RSA's capacity to more effectively utilize the performance data it collects to manage and improve program performance.

Capacity-building for Traditionally Underserved Populations²⁵ Authorized Under Section 21 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

Section 21 of the *Rehabilitation Act* requires RSA and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to ensure that individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have equal

**FY 2005 RSA Federal Funding
\$2,597,175**

access to programs authorized by the *Rehabilitation Act*. In order to implement this mandate, RSA and NIDRR must reserve 1 percent of funds appropriated each year for programs under titles II, III, VI and VII to make awards to minority entities and American Indian tribes to carry out activities under the *Rehabilitation Act*, including supporting capacity-building projects designed to provide outreach and technical assistance to minority entities and American Indian tribes and to make awards to minority entities and Indian tribes to carry out activities under the *Rehabilitation Act*. In FY 2005, \$2,597,175 was reserved from programs administered by RSA under titles III, VI and VII; and \$1,066,520 was reserved from NIDRR programs under Title II (see page 68).

The 1998 amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act* define “minority entities” as historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions of higher education (IHEs), American Indian tribal colleges or universities and other institutions of higher learning whose minority student enrollment is at least 50 percent. Capacity-building projects are designed to expand the service-providing capabilities of these entities and increase their participation in activities funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Training and technical assistance activities funded under the *Rehabilitation Act* may include training on the mission of RSA, RSA-funded programs, disability legislation and other pertinent subjects to increase awareness of RSA and its programs.

In FY 2005, RSA awarded 11 new grants under the RSA Rehabilitation Capacity-building Program under two priority areas. The two priority areas were: (Priority 1) Establishing New Rehabilitation Training Programs (CFDA²⁶ 84.315C), and (Priority 2) Capacity Building for Minority Entities (CFDA 84.315D). Six grants were awarded under Priority 1 and five under Priority 2. Two grants were awarded to Hispanic-serving IHEs, four grants were awarded to three historically black universities and one grant was awarded to a Pacific island university.

In addition, two supplements were awarded to a capacity-building project in FY 2005. One supplement sponsored training workshops and traineeships at the annual conference of the National Association on Multicultural and Rehabilitation Concerns. Twenty persons were sponsored to participate in workshops focusing on vocational rehabilitation and independent living (IL) programs. The other supplement carried out the Leadership Initiative. This initiative consists of a four-day training conference and community-based leadership activities. Training was provided to 40 participants through a nomination and selection process. Nominations were sent to approximately 790

²⁵ Also known as Traditionally Underserved Populations.

²⁶ CFDA means Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

organizations involved in disability legislation, independent living, civil rights, service delivery to individuals and parent groups. Key components of the training included the delivery of six training modules by a nationally recognized group of training professionals. The training modules included disability legislation, group building and dynamics, group facilitation, networking, identification of community resources, disability awareness, diversity awareness, grant development and grant management.

Completion of the training modules was followed by the development of a personal action plan. The plans are based on the interest of the trainee. Trainees are required, as a condition of their selection, to work on projects to improve the inclusion of people with disabilities within their respective communities. The projects include community education and awareness, and access to transportation, housing and technology, as well as other areas of interest and need for people with disabilities.

Trainees also were exposed to a variety of leaders from the disability field who served as guest speakers and consultants. The Leadership Initiative gives participants the tools they need to effectively advocate for and improve the inclusion of people with disabilities within their communities.

Rehabilitation Training **Authorized Under Section 302 of the *Rehabilitation Act***

The purpose of the Rehabilitation Training program is to ensure that skilled personnel are available to serve the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities assisted through VR, supported employment and IL programs. To that end, the program supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel trained in providing rehabilitation services.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$38,825,888

Grants and contracts under this program authority are awarded to states and public and nonprofit agencies and organizations, including IHEs, to pay all or part of the cost of conducting training programs. Awards can be made in any of 31 long-term training fields, in addition to awards for continuing education, short-term training, experimental and innovative training and training interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and persons who are deaf-blind. These training programs vary in terms of content, methodology and audience.

The long-term training program supports academic training grants that must direct 75 percent of the funds to trainee scholarships. The statute requires trainees who receive assistance either to: 1) work two years for every year of assistance in public or private nonprofit rehabilitation agencies or related agencies, including professional corporations or professional practice groups that have service arrangements with a state agency or 2) pay back the assistance they received. Grant recipients under the long-term training program are required to build closer relationships between training institutions and state VR

agencies; promote careers in VR; identify potential employers who would meet the trainee's payback requirements and assure that data on the employment of students are accurate.

In FY 2005 RSA funded five-year projects in two priority areas under the interpreter training program: Priority 1—the National Interpreter Education Center (NIEC), and Priority 2—Regional Interpreter Education Centers (RIECs). The purpose of the NIEC is to coordinate the activities of the RIECs to ensure the effectiveness of the educational opportunities offered by the RIECs, to ensure the effectiveness of the program as a whole by evaluating and reporting outcomes, to provide technical assistance to the field on effective practices in interpreter education and to provide educational opportunities for interpreter educators so they can, in turn, provide higher quality interpreter education to student interpreters and ultimately increase the quality of graduates. The purpose of the five RIECs is to provide quality educational opportunities for interpreters at all skill levels through collaboration between the NIEC and the RIECs and in collaboration with local partner networks and deaf consumers.

Training of statewide workforce systems personnel is authorized under this program and may be jointly funded with the Department of Labor (DOL). Statewide workforce systems personnel may be trained in evaluative skills to determine whether an individual with a disability may be served by the VR program or by another component of the statewide workforce system. Of the funds appropriated for the Rehabilitation Training Program, 15 percent must be used to support in-service training. In-service training is intended to assist state VR agencies in the training of their staff consistent with the state's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD).²⁷

Under Title I of the *Rehabilitation Act*, each state is required to establish procedures to ensure there is an adequate supply of qualified staff for the state agency, assess personnel needs and make projections for future needs and address current and projected personnel training needs. States are further required to develop and maintain policies and procedures for job-specific personnel standards that are consistent with national or state-approved certification, licensure, registration requirements or, in the absence of these requirements, other state personnel requirements for comparable positions. If a state's current personnel do not meet the highest requirements for personnel standards within the state, the CSPD must identify the steps the state will take to upgrade the qualifications of its staff, through retraining or hiring. Funds under the VR program also may be used to comply with these requirements.

In FY 2005 RSA awarded \$2,315,279 in CSPD grants to help retrain VR counselors to comply with the state degree standard. During FY 2005 the Rehabilitation Training

²⁷ Section 101(a)(7) of the *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992*, commonly referred to as the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), requires state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to establish qualified personnel standards for rehabilitation personnel, including VR counselors, that are consistent with any national or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing or registration that apply to a particular profession. To the extent that a state's existing personnel standards are not based on the highest requirements of the state, the state agency also is required to develop a plan to retrain or hire personnel to meet personnel standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state. The purpose of the CSPD provisions is to ensure the quality of personnel who provide VR services and assist individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes through the VR program.

Program made 79 in-service training awards to state VR agencies totaling \$5,870,807 million to assist efforts to train VR staff nationwide. The Rehabilitation Training Program continued to play a critical role in helping state VR agencies develop and implement their CSPD standards for hiring and training qualified rehabilitation professionals in their respective states.

The RSA Rehabilitation Training Program is very active in leading universities and state VR agencies in an effort to increase the pool of qualified VR counselors available to state agencies. As large numbers of existing counselors are reaching retirement age, the RSA training program is targeting more of its resources toward preservice counselor training to expand the pool of potential candidates. The Rehabilitation Training Program provides both leadership and assistance to the national initiative to develop rehabilitation professional recruitment plans to recruit students into counselor training programs and to recruit graduates of these training programs into state VR agencies. In addition, the RSA Training Program Unit staff meets with stakeholders on an ad hoc basis to develop and implement effective strategies to increase the recruitment pool of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors. It also funded an evaluation of the responsiveness of the program to VR needs, with a special focus on meeting the person-power needs of the VR system. Results are expected in FY 2006.

The program also sponsors an annual conference for educators and state agencies to discuss human resource issues and solutions. A rehabilitation educators' conference was held Oct. 15–18, 2005, in Washington, D.C. The conference theme, "Promoting Professional Rehabilitation Practices in a Changing Environment," dealt with current and future perspectives of the qualified rehabilitation counselor in the public vocational rehabilitation sector. The Rehabilitation Training Program also sponsored a three-day forum for new state vocational rehabilitation administrators, directors of state VR agencies for the blind, tribal VR agency directors, chief deputies and chairs of the State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs).²⁸ The forum is designed to ensure that rehabilitation executives have the content and leadership skills needed to meet the challenges of the state VR rehabilitation system.

Government Performance and Results Act (GPR) Performance Indicators:

The RSA training program has two objectives and three indicators upon which grantees report. Summaries of data on these indicators appear below. Data on performance indicators reflect FY 2004 activities. Fiscal year 2005 activities will be reported in the FY 2006 annual report.

²⁸ The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is established in Section 105 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, and 34 *CFR* 361.16-361.17 of its implementing regulations. It is composed of members appointed by the state to represent specific stakeholder groups with interest in the VR program and employment, including individuals with disabilities who have received or are receiving VR services. The SRC represents the consumer of VR services in coordinating with other councils in the state, advising the VR agency or unit, working in partnership with the VR agency or unit to evaluate the effectiveness of the VR program, conduct statewide needs assessments and to establish goals and priorities for the titles I and VI, Part B, state plan for VR services. The SRC prepares and submits an annual report to the governor and RSA on the status of VR services.

Objective a: To provide graduates who work within the VR system to help individuals with disabilities achieve their goals.

Indicator 1: Numbers Trained: The number of students supported by RSA scholarships and the number of RSA scholars graduating will remain stable.

The number of scholars supported by RSA scholarships decreased slightly from 2,378 in FY 2003 to 1,798 in FY 2004. This decrease is partially due to decreased funding of the program and increased cost of college tuition. The number of scholars graduating decreased slightly from 802 in FY 2003 to 598 in FY 2004. These figures reflect the fact that RSA is supporting more part-time scholars as state agency counselors return to school to obtain their master's degrees (hence more students) and the fact that the budget for the RSA Rehabilitation Training Program has decreased slightly while tuition rates continue to climb (hence fewer graduates). The FY 2004 performance did not meet performance targets of 2,050 scholars and 725 graduates.

Indicator 2: Percentage Working: The percentage of graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through acceptable employment will increase annually.

In FY 2004, the percentage of graduates fulfilling their obligation through acceptable employment decreased slightly (from 82 percent to 81 percent), but remains well above earlier levels such as 72 percent in FY 2000 and 71 percent in FY 2001. The FY 2003 figures exceed the targets of 72 percent. Given that the demand for counselors exceeds the number of graduates produced by counselor training programs, the 81 percent figure reflects strong performance by the RSA Rehabilitation Training Program. To increase the numbers further, university training programs will need to generate more graduates. This is unlikely in the immediate future due to limited funding.

Objective b: Maintain and upgrade the knowledge and skills of personnel currently employed in the public VR system.

Indicator 1: Qualified Personnel: The percentage of currently employed VR state agency counselors who meet their state's CSPD standard will increase annually.

The percentage of staff that met their state's standard remained the same—67 percent in FY 2003 and 67 percent in FY 2004. This trend may shift downward in the near future as younger counselors replace seasoned counselors who are expected to retire in the coming years.

Allocations

The allocation of rehabilitation training grant funds for FY 2005 is shown in table 12. Funds have been shifted to programs designed to meet the critical need of training current and new counselors to meet state agency personnel needs as retirement levels increase.

Table 12. Rehabilitation Training Projects: Number of Awards and Funding Amounts, by Type of Project, Fiscal Year 2005

Type of Project	Number of Awards FY 2005	Grant Amount (\$)
Long-term Training		
Medical Rehabilitation	1	67,753
Rehabilitation Counseling	66	9,565,267
Rehabilitation Administration	4	399,980
Rehabilitation Engineer	4	375,226
Vocational Evaluation/Adjustment	8	799,828
Rehabilitation of Mentally Ill	6	599,942
Rehabilitation Psychology	2	199,475
Undergraduate Education	19	1,278,410
Rehabilitation-of-the Blind	14	1,397,316
Rehabilitation-of-the Deaf	8	798,564
Job Development/Placement	9	688,901
CSPD Priority	12	2,275,413
Long-term Training Totals	153	\$18,446,075
Short-term Training		
Continuing Education	3	190,000
In-service Training	76	5,289,877
Interpreter Training	6	2,093,185
Experimental & Innovative ^a	3	299,480
Clearinghouse	1	300,000
RCEP ^b : General & CRP ^c	21	9,862,397
GRAND TOTALS	265	\$36,931,006

^a Experimental and Innovative: 34 *CFR* 387 (p. 417)—1) Program to develop new types of training for rehabilitation personnel and to demonstrate effectiveness; 2) Develop new and improved methods of training.

^b Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program: 34 *CFR* 389 (p. 421).

^c Community Rehabilitation Program

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitative Services Administration, internal records of program data for FY 2005.

Institute on Rehabilitation Issues:

The RSA Rehabilitation Training Program supports the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI), an annual activity that funds the University of Arkansas and the George Washington University to coordinate two separate study groups composed of experts from all facets of the VR program, who come

together to: 1) discuss and debate contemporary VR service delivery challenges and 2) develop and disseminate publications that are used in training VR professionals and technical assistance resources for other stakeholders in the VR program. For 57 years, the IRI has served to exemplify the unique partnership between the federal and state governments, the university training programs and persons served by the VR agencies. IRI publications are posted on the two university Web sites, where they are readily accessible by persons interested in the topics. The two publications released during FY 2005 are: *Promoting Consumer Empowerment Through Professional Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling* (University of Arkansas Institute on Rehabilitation Issues. 2005. *Promoting Consumer Empowerment Through Professional Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling* IRI No. 29. Hot Springs, Ark.: University of Arkansas, Rehabilitation Continuing Education Center), and *Innovative Methods for Providing VR Services to Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities* (Dew, D. W. & Alan, G. M. (Eds.). 2005. *Innovative Methods for Providing VR Services to Individuals With Psychiatric Disabilities*. Institute on Rehabilitation Issues Monograph No. 30. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University, Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education). VR counselors obtain continuing education credits applicable to maintaining their certification as certified rehabilitation counselors by completing a questionnaire based on the content of an IRI publication.

IRI Topics Studied During FY 2005–06

- Rehabilitation of Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorders
- The VR-Business Partnership

EVALUATION, RESEARCH AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

To improve the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities, the *Rehabilitation Act* requires the distribution of practical and scientific information regarding state-of-the-art practices, scientific breakthroughs and new knowledge regarding disabilities. To address those requirements, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) funds and promotes a variety of research and demonstration programs, training programs and a range of information dissemination projects designed to generate and make available critical data and information to appropriate audiences.

Program Evaluation Authorized Under Section 14 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

Section 14 mandates that RSA evaluate all programs authorized by the *Rehabilitation Act* using appropriate methodology and evaluative research design. The purpose of this mandate is to evaluate the effectiveness of programs in relation to their cost, and the impact on target populations and mechanisms for delivery of services. The *Rehabilitation Act* further requires that standards be established and used for evaluations and that evaluations be conducted by individuals who are not immediately involved in the administration of the program or project to be evaluated. RSA relies significantly on evaluation studies to obtain information on the operations and effects of the programs it administers and to help make judgments about the programs' levels of success and decisions on how to improve them.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$1,488,000

RSA continued to fund two existing studies in fiscal year (FY) 2005:

- ***An Assessment of Transition Policies and Practices in State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies***

The purpose of this study is to provide the Department with a descriptive national picture of transition policies and practices among state VR agencies, including the resources supporting such practices, and to identify policy issues and promising state practices in the provision of transition services. This study focuses on the population of individuals with disabilities aged 14 and over that is transitioning from secondary school (or equivalent education institution) to post-school activities, including postsecondary education or training and employment. This is a two-year contract, but because of some delays that occurred in getting the data collection instrument cleared, the final report is expected in June 2007.

- ***Evaluation of Projects Demonstrating the Use of Literacy Services by State VR Agencies to Improve the Earnings of Individuals With Disabilities***

The Department is currently supporting five model projects to demonstrate the effect that the provision of specific literacy services has on the earnings outcomes of targeted groups of VR consumers. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether

instruction in the Wilson Reading System and provision of relevant support services has an impact on the literacy skills, utilization of postsecondary education, employability and earning and benefits of VR consumers with poor literacy skills, particularly individuals with learning disabilities. A final report is expected in September 2009.

One new study was initiated in FY 2005:

- ***Long-term Post-program Experiences of VR Services Consumers***

A contract was awarded in FY 2003 for the design of a study focusing on the post-program experiences of former VR consumers, with particular emphasis on long-term employment status, earnings and reductions in federal benefits. A five-year contract to implement this longitudinal study then was awarded in 2005. This national study will document the long-term outcomes of VR consumers, including outcomes for important subgroups of consumers, and examine the role of post-employment services in enhancing these outcomes. Of particular interest are VR services that: (1) assist persons with most significant disabilities in maintaining stable employment over time and (2) support the career advancement goals of persons desiring to improve their employment experiences over time. The contractor will collect data on a nationally representative sample of VR consumers who recently exited the program through a baseline interview and three annual follow-up interviews. A final report is expected in September 2010.

The following research questions will be addressed by this study:

1. What is the labor market progression of former VR consumers in terms of employment status, earnings and receipt of job-related benefits?
2. What are the noneconomic outcomes (e.g., community integration) of former VR consumers?
3. To what extent do former VR consumers continue to obtain post-employment and other services and resources from the community following participation in VR? In what ways do such services improve employment stability and advancement?
4. How, and in what ways, does former consumers' receipt of Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits change over time following participation in VR?
5. How do the demographic, disability and other characteristics of individuals affect economic and other outcomes following participation in VR?
6. To what extent and how do outcomes vary by specific subgroups of former VR consumers, including transitional youths, individuals with long-term mental illness, individuals with mental retardation and individuals who had not achieved an employment outcome at the time their service record was closed?

7. What are the major policy implications of the findings of this study for the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and for the long-term employment of former VR consumers?

National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials Authorized Under Section 15 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) responds to inquiries and provides the public with information about what is going on in the rehabilitation community. Inquiries usually come from individuals with disabilities, their families, national organizations, other federal and state agencies, information providers, the news media and the general public. Most inquiries are related to federal funding, legislation affecting individuals with disabilities and federal programs and policies. These inquiries are often referred to other appropriate sources of disability-related information and assistance.

Periodically, the NCRTM staff will analyze all forms of inquiries to assess current information needs. Based on these analyses, fact sheets and other relevant publications are prepared in various formats and made available to the public.

During FY 2005, the NCRTM shipped approximately 1,856 orders of training materials. This total represents a 25.4 percent reduction in orders of training materials shipped during the previous program year. The total newsletter print mailings in FY 2005 totaled approximately 15,338, representing an 18 percent decrease in the number of print quarterly newsletters sent during the previous program year. In addition, e-newsletter subscriptions for FY 2005 totaled 1,829, representing a 12.4 percent decrease in the utilization of this resource. The decline in the overall number of orders shipped during FY 2005 is directly related to an unprecedented relocation of the entire NCRTM program with its massive amounts of materials and products from the Oklahoma State University campus community to a new grantee, Utah State University.

RSA is currently working with Utah State University to develop a number of additional recruitment strategies focused on a national initiative to recruit qualified VR counseling professionals into the state-federal VR system. A few of these initiatives include:

- Launching a recruitment materials Web page on RSA's site where rehabilitation professionals can purchase or download brochures and other recruitment materials;
- Developing an online rehabilitation job database where employers can post jobs and professionals can post resumes; and
- Providing links to rehabilitation agency and education programs.

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
Authorized Under Sections 200–204 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Office of Special Education
And Rehabilitative Services

Created in 1978, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research, demonstration projects, training and related activities that promote full inclusion and integration into society; employment; independent living; maintenance of health and function; and the transfer of rehabilitation technology to individuals with disabilities. NIDRR activities are designed to improve the economic and social self-sufficiency of these individuals, with particular emphasis on improving the effectiveness of services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$110,000,000

The primary role of NIDRR is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated program of research and related activities to advance knowledge and inform and improve policy, practice and system capacity designed to maximize the inclusion and social integration, health and function, employment and independent living of individuals of all ages with disabilities.

To address this role, NIDRR supports rehabilitation research and development centers, demonstration projects and related activities, including the training of persons who provide rehabilitation services or who conduct rehabilitation research. In addition, NIDRR supports projects to disseminate and promote the use of information concerning developments in rehabilitation procedures, methods and devices. Information is provided to rehabilitation professionals and to persons with disabilities and their representatives.

NIDRR also supports data analyses on the demographics of those with disabilities and provides that information to policymakers, administrators and other relevant groups. Awards are competitive, with applications reviewed by panels of experts, including rehabilitation professionals, rehabilitation researchers and persons with disabilities.

NIDRR’s Research Program Mechanisms and Selected Accomplishments for 2005

NIDRR is unique among the offices that administer programs for individuals with disabilities within the Department. In contrast to RSA and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) that implement and monitor nationwide service and compliance programs, NIDRR fulfills its mission through targeted investments in research, dissemination and capacity-building activities across 11 discretionary–grant-funding mechanisms. Each of these mechanisms is described below along with selected accomplishments that highlight how the results of NIDRR funding are contributing to the goals of Title II of the *Rehabilitation Act*. Three other categories of NIDRR accomplishments also are reported under the subheadings of the Interagency Committee on Disability Research, NIDRR Management and Peer-reviewed

Publications. Consistent with guidance provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), all accomplishments reported consist of either *outputs* or *outcomes*.²⁹ *Outputs* constitute the direct results of NIDRR-funded research and related activities and consist of the goods and services (e.g., significant findings, publications and products) that are provided to external audiences outside of the boundaries of the project conducting the activities. *Outcomes*, on the other hand, describe the intended results or consequences of NIDRR-funded activities for beneficiaries and consist of advances in knowledge and understanding (i.e., short-term outcomes) and changes or improvements in policy, practice and system capacity (i.e., intermediate outcomes).

The 14 categories of NIDRR accomplishments described in this report were taken from two sources. Wherever possible, outputs and outcomes reported were based on the favorable judgments of independent reviewers who participated in the 2005 pilot of NIDRR's new annual portfolio assessment expert review (APAER) for the Technology and Employment domains of the *NIDRR Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005–09*. However, since the 2005 pilot APAER did not include NIDRR's the three other LRP domains of Participation and Community Living, Health and Function and Disability Statistics; in most cases accomplishments reported were selected based on internal review by NIDRR project officers. Regardless of the source, all accomplishments reported were externally assessed or internally reviewed in 2005, although the research activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years.

1. Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers

Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) conduct coordinated, integrated and advanced programs of research, training and information dissemination in general problem areas that are specified by NIDRR. More specifically, RRTCs conduct research to improve rehabilitation methodology and service delivery systems, to alleviate or stabilize disabling conditions and promote maximum social and economic independence for individuals with disabilities; provide training, including graduate, preservice and in-service training, to assist rehabilitation personnel to more effectively provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities; and serve as centers of national excellence in rehabilitation research for providers and for individuals with disabilities and their representatives. RRTCs develop methods, procedures and rehabilitation technologies that are intended to maximize the full inclusion and integration of individuals, especially individuals with significant disabilities (see footnote 6 on page 12), into society by improving outcomes in the areas of employment, independent living, family support and economic and social self-sufficiency. Awards are for five years, except that grants to new recipients or to support new or innovative research may be made for less than five years.

²⁹ See PART Performance Measurement Challenges and Strategies at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/part/challenges_strategies.html. This document provides definitions of key terms and practical strategies for addressing common performance measurement challenges. It grew out of the workshop on performance measurement organized by the Office of Management and Budget and the Council for Excellence in Government, which was held on April 22, 2003.

The following accomplishments for the RRTC program for 2005 were evaluated independently as part of NIDRR's 2005 pilot APAER process, although the activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *RRTC Employment Outcome*: In 2004 the RRTC on Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Severe Visual Impairments published an article titled "Access to vocational rehabilitation: The impact of race and ethnicity" by Cavanaugh, Giesen and Sansing (*Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 98(7): 410–419). Expert reviewers for the 2005 pilot APAER for Employment agreed that this article contains significant findings that have the potential to advance knowledge and improve VR practice. The authors report that application and entry percentages to the state-federal VR system were higher for black Americans, lower for white Americans and about the same for Hispanic Americans, relative to the percentages of persons of the same race and ethnicity who are visually impaired in the national population. Based on this finding, the authors concluded that socioeconomic disadvantages of black Americans who are visually impaired increase their need to access VR relative to white Americans who are visually impaired. (The abstract for this publication is available at: <http://www.afb.org/store/product.asp?sku=jvib980703&mscssid=XHWH1PHMCT7Q8K8J176M3G0JLAU2C5J3>).³⁰

- ▶ *RRTC Employment Output*: Publication of a report by the RRTC on Employment of People with Disabilities titled *HR Processes and Information Technology (IT) Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: Improving Employer Practices under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act* (2003, Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, available at: <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/edicollect/67/>). It was disseminated in 2004 by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) to 170,000 members through its *Workplace Visions* series which is available to members only. Expert panelists for the 2005 pilot APAER for Employment agreed that this report was an important output, given its potential to reach a large number of human resource professionals. The report provides recommendations on how to improve IT accessibility for visually and cognitive impaired individuals who are completing Web-based employment applications. The main conclusion was that human resources and employment recruitment professionals need specialized training on *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) requirements and accommodations practices, particularly in the IT industry.³¹

³⁰ Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Improving Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Severe Visual Impairments (H133B010101), Mississippi State University (<http://www.blind.msstate.edu>) (J. Elton Moore, principal investigator).

³¹ Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment of People With Disabilities (H133B00013), Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations-Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability (<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/p-eprrtc.cfm>) (Susanne M. Bruyere, David C. Stapleton, and Richard V. Burkhauser, principal investigators).

1. Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs) focus on issues dealing with rehabilitation technology, including rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology devices and services. The purpose of the RERC program is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, by conducting advanced engineering research and development on innovative technologies that are designed to solve particular rehabilitation problems or remove environmental barriers. RERCs also demonstrate and evaluate such technologies, facilitate service delivery systems changes, stimulate the production and distribution of equipment in the private sector and provide training opportunities to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become researchers and practitioners of rehabilitation technology. Awards are for five years, except that grants to new recipients or to support new or innovative research may be made for less than five years.

The following accomplishments for the RERC program for 2005 were evaluated independently as part of the pilot phase of NIDRR's new APAER process, although the activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *RERC Technology Outcome:* With help from the city of San Francisco and a manufacturer, the RERC on Blindness and Low Vision, in conjunction with the RERC on Information Technology Access, jointly designed under previous NIDRR awards the accessibility features for a new building entry system that is now being manufactured under the product name of AES-2000 Apartment Door Entry System (see 2005 description of "ADA Related Products" at: <http://www.vikingelectronics.com/shockwave/autorun.swf>). The RERC at Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute also participated in the premarket evaluation of the AES-2000 system. By incorporating both written and verbal operating instructions, as well as written and verbal building tenant directories, and being fully text TTY compatible, expert panelists from the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology agreed that the RERC-designed entry system represents an advance over existing products that are often inaccessible for blind and visually impaired visitors, and often also for deaf individuals. Based on the familiar raised tactile diamond-shaped EZ Help system developed by the University of Wisconsin Trace Center, the AES-2000 system is also simple to operate and extremely user friendly. In addition, the AES-2000 follows all ADA guidelines for physical design and accessibility issues, including recommended mounting heights, thus making the system fully accessible to all wheelchair visitors and those with physical challenges. Examples of the commercially available accessible entry systems are available at <http://www.vikingelectronics.com/shockwave/autorun.swf>.³²

³² Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Blindness and Low Vision (H133E001002), the Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, San Francisco (<http://www.ski.org/Rehab>) (John A. Braybn, principal investigator) and the RERC on Information Technology Access (H133E980008) (see also H133E030012), University of Wisconsin-Madison, Trace Center (<http://trace.wisc.edu/itrerc>), College of Engineering (Gregg C. Vanderheiden, principal investigator).

- ▶ *RERC Technology Outcome:* In 2004, the RERC on Technology Transfer (T2RERC) served as a broker between the University of Pittsburgh, Technology Transfer Office, and Infogrip to successfully license a mouse driver software developed at the University of Pittsburgh. The software improves access to the Windows graphical user interface for people with mobility impairments related to their hands, arms and upper body. As a result of this RERC-negotiated agreement, the mouse driver software was introduced to the market in 2005 under the product label PointSmart mouse driver. The PointSmart has been tested and found to be generally useful for people who cannot use sensitivities in the standard range that Microsoft or Logitech offer. According to the manufacturer, the PointSmart is the first mouse driver enhancement software that makes any mouse, trackball, touchpad, joystick or any other pointing device accessible for users with upper extremity physical limitations. Based on product testing and manufacturer claims, expert panelists from the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology agreed the PointSmart mouse driver represents an important outcome of NIDRR funding that increases the capacity of assistive technology manufacturer's to meet the needs of people with mobility impairments and, at the same time, also increases the capacity of people with mobility impairments to use personal computers for education, work and recreation. The T2RERC also participated in post-transfer joint development with Infogrip to refine the software prototype, so the improved PointSmart driver can run with other operating systems (i.e., Windows 98, ME, 2K and XP) beyond Windows 95. More on PointSmart is available at:
http://www.infogrip.com/product_view.asp?RecordNumber=988&sbcolor=%23006600&option=software&subcategory=51&CatTxt=Mouse+Enhancements&optiontxt=Software.³³

- ▶ *RERC Technology Outcome:* A group of five new informational technology industry standards on a universal remote console were adopted in August 2005 by American National Standards Institute and as of this report are in the final stages of approval with the International Standards Organization. The standards were developed by the InterNational Committee for Information Technology Standards (also known as INCITS/V2) Technical Committee, of which the RERC on Universal Interface and Information Technology Access at the Trace Center was a founding member, and in conjunction with representatives of four other NIDRR-funded RERCs. Expert panelists from the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology agreed that adoption of these standards constitutes an important outcome of the RERC program and goes a long way towards establishing credibility for the concept of universal remote control with major electronics companies. Although implementation of these standards by manufacturers is strictly voluntary, adoption has the potential to allow people with disabilities to use their universally remote-equipped technologies, such as cell phones, laptop computers or handheld organizers, to control the standard appliances and devices in their environment, such as light switches, thermostats, complex devices (TVs, VCRs) and environmental control units, if these devices also incorporate the new standards. (A description of these standards is available at:
<http://trace.wisc.edu/news/archives/000214.php>).³⁴

³³ Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer (H133E030025), University at Buffalo, the State University of New York (SUNY), Center for Assistive Technology (<http://t2rerc.buffalo.edu>) (Steve Bauer, principal investigator).

- ▶ *RERC Technology Output:* In 2005 the RERC on Technologies for Successful Aging published a book, titled, *Smart Technology for Aging, Disability, and Independence*, edited by W.C. Mann (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons). Panelists for the 2005 pilot APAER on Technology agreed this publication is an important output that illustrates the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to addressing the challenges of individuals aging with and aging into disabilities in mid- to later-life. The publication, which is an outgrowth of the 2003 International Conference on Aging, Disability and Independence (ICADI) held in Washington, D.C., brings together current research and technological developments from engineering, computer science and rehabilitation sciences detailing how its applications can promote continuing independence for older persons and those with disabilities.³⁵

- ▶ *RERC Technology Output:* Development by the RERC on Recreational Technologies and Exercise Physiology (RecTech) of an online information technology-based recreational technologies solutions database that provides people with disabilities easy access to recreational technologies by browsing through categories of available adaptive equipment for activities, such as fishing, hunting, boating, fitness, gardening, specific sports, etc. Expert panelists from the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology agreed that creation of this Web-based resource is an important output, with the potential to remove barriers and support the inclusion of people with disabilities in community-based recreation and physical fitness activities. To ensure that the information provided would be useful to and used by consumers, the design of this solutions database was developed collaboratively with people with disabilities who are members of the RERC RecTech National Consumer Advisory Panel. The design then was refined further by consulting with members of the RERC RecTech Rehabilitation Engineering Advisory Panel to determine that the information was technically accurate and would also be of value to engineers and assistive technology specialists. The database currently contains more than 1,000 equipment options. New entries are added on an ongoing basis. More information is available at:
http://www.rectech.org/demonstration/fact_sheet.php?sheet=3.³⁶

³⁴ Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Universal Interface and Information Technology Access (H133E030012, formerly H133E980008), University of Wisconsin-Madison, Trace Center (<http://trace.wisc.edu/itrerc>), College of Engineering (Gregg C. Vanderheiden, principal investigator), in conjunction with the RERC on Mobile Wireless Technologies for Persons With Disabilities (H133E010804), Georgia Institute of Technology (Helena Mitchell, Michael Jones, [Shepherd Center]; John Peifer [Georgia Institute of Technology], principal investigators); the RERC on Accessible Medical Instrumentation (H133E020729), Marquette University, Department of Biomedical Engineering (Jack Winters, Molly Follette Story, principal investigators), the RERC on Communication Enhancement (H133E030018) Duke University (Frank DeRuyter, principal investigator); and the RERC on Telecommunications Access (H133E040013), University of Wisconsin-Madison, Trace Center, College of Engineering (Gregg C. Vanderheiden [Trace] and Judy Harkins [Gallaudet University], principal investigators).

³⁵ Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technologies for Successful Aging (H133E010106), University of Florida, College of Public Health and Health Professions (<http://www.lerc.ufl.edu>) (William C. Mann, principal investigator).

³⁶ Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Recreational Technologies and Exercise Physiology Benefiting Persons With Disabilities (H133E020715), University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Disability and Human Development (<http://www.rectech.org>) (James H. Rimmer, principal investigator).

2. Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects

The Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project (DRRP) program supports projects that carry out one or more of the following activities: research, development, demonstration, training, dissemination, utilization and technical assistance. The purpose of the DRRP program is to plan and conduct research, demonstration projects, training and related activities to develop methods, procedures and rehabilitation technology that maximize the full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into society, employment, independent living, family support and economic and social self-sufficiency and to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended.

NIDRR funds four types of DRRPs: (1) Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization (KDU) projects, (2) Model Systems in Traumatic Brain Injury and Burn Injury, described hereafter under Model Systems, (3) Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC) projects and (4) individual research projects. Since the first three types of DRRPs are managed as separate programs and, therefore, discussed later in this report, only research DRRPs are described here under the general DRRP heading. Research DRRPs differ from RRTCs and RERCs in that they support short-term research relating to the development of methods, procedures and devices to assist in the provision of rehabilitation services, particularly to persons with significant disabilities. Awards are for five years, except that grants to new recipients or to support new or innovative research may be made for less than five years.

The following accomplishments for research DRRPs were evaluated independently as part of the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology, although the activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *DRRP Technology Output: Development by the DRRP on Information Technology for Independence of an automated tool for evaluating Web accessibility barriers (WAB) for persons with disabilities that was described in a 2004 journal article titled "Web Content Accessibility of Consumer Health Information Web Sites for People with Disabilities: A Cross Sectional Evaluation" by Zeng and Parmanto (*Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 6(2), e19: 1–20). Key findings from the use of the WAB in a cross-sectional validation study indicate that none of the randomly selected 108 consumer health information Web sites examined was completely accessible to people with disabilities; however, government and educational health information Web sites exhibit better Web accessibility than other categories of Web sites. Based on these findings and citations of the 2004 Zeng and Parmanto article by others in the field, expert panelists from the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology agreed that the WAB tool has the potential to improve measurement of Web accessibility and advance knowledge about the prevalence of Web accessibility violations and the barriers consumers with disabilities face in accessing needed health information, particularly those that rely on special devices or technologies to process online*

information due to visual, hearing, mobility or cognitive limitations. More information is available at: <http://www.jmir.org/2004/2/e19>.³⁷

- *DRRP Technology Output:* In 2004 the DRRP on I.T. works published a book titled, *Disability Civil Rights Law and Policy* by Blanck, Hill, Siegal and Waterstone (St. Paul, Minn.: West Thomson Publisher, and also available at http://bbi.syr.edu/publications/DLP_treatise.htm). Panelists from the 2005 pilot APAER for Employment agreed this book is an important output of NIDRR funding and is likely to have a positive effect on advancing the understanding of the history of discrimination against people with disabilities and the passage of the *ADA*. The populations likely to benefit most directly from this publication are disability and employment policy experts and academics in the fields of disability civil rights law and disability studies. The book presents a comprehensive examination of the development of disability rights law and policy in the United States, with additional commentary on international disability law. It examines the basis of discrimination against people with disabilities and *ADA*'s definition of disability, focusing on how *ADA* has been interpreted and studied, and the three major titles of this legislation, including a review of the remedies available for various *ADA* claims and the procedures required to pursue them.³⁸

3. Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization

NIDRR's KDU projects, referred to as Knowledge Translation (KT) projects in the *NIDRR Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005–09*, support information utilization and dissemination, including state-of-the-art assessments and diffusion centers, to ensure that knowledge generated from research is available and can be fully used to improve services, opportunities and conditions for persons with disabilities. Through this program, NIDRR reaches many constituencies, including research scientists, people with disabilities and their families, service providers, policymakers, educators, human resource developers, advocates, entities covered by *ADA* and others. In carrying out this part of its mission, NIDRR's challenge is to reach diverse and changing populations, to present research results in many different and accessible formats and to use technology appropriately. In addition to requiring grantees to engage in dissemination of research results, demonstration, training and other activities, NIDRR supports a range of centers that address other specific aspects of its mission, such as providing information on specific disabilities or information to specific target audiences. These projects focus on knowledge dissemination and utilization and those involved work collaboratively with each other and other NIDRR centers through publication of materials, Web-based communication and participation in meetings of project directors.

³⁷ Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project on Information Technology for Independence: Community-Based Research (H133A021916), University of Pittsburgh (<http://www.pitt.edu/~curbcut>) (Bambang Parmanto, principal investigator).

³⁸ Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project on I.T. Works (H133A011803), University of Iowa. Law, Health Policy & Disability Center (<http://disability.law.uiowa.edu>) (Peter D. Blanck, principal investigator).

The following KDU accomplishments were identified and reviewed in 2005 by NIDRR staff, although the research-related activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *KDU Output*: Publication in 2005 of *Culture and Disability: Providing Culturally Competent Services* by John H. Stone (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications) based on a previously funded and published monograph series describing the unique service delivery needs of persons with disabilities with migrant backgrounds in the United States. Evidence of the usefulness of this book as a learning tool for students and instructors in disability studies and social work in cross-cultural environments is reflected in recent citations from national and international newsletters, book reviews and academic reading lists (e.g., newsletter of the International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research (INCTR) available at: http://www.inctr.org/publications/2005_v06_n01_s02.shtml; book review in the *Journal of Psychology in Africa* (2005), 15 (1): 111–112, “Culture and Disability: Providing Culturally Competent Services,” by John H. Stone (ed.) (2005), available at: <http://www.ajol.info/viewarticle.php?jid=203&id=22749&layout=abstract>. It is also cited in a suggested reading guide for a University of California, Berkeley, course, “Social Work and Disability,” available at: <http://socialwelfare.berkeley.edu/academics/syllabi/spring06/250k/250k.Syllabus.s06.doc>.³⁹

- ▶ *KDU Outcome*: Publication, under a previous NIDRR award, of *A Review of the Literature on Dissemination and Knowledge Utilization*, 1996, by the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) (available at: <http://198.214.141.98/kt/products/reviews/du/index.html>) was cited in 2005 by several national and health research journals. These citations indicate that NCDDR’s pioneering work in the area of KDU is valued by other institutions and programs and is contributing to advances in knowledge regarding how to improve the translation of research to practice to benefit persons with disabilities and other end users. Examples of authors and publications that cited the 1996 NCDDR report in 2005 follow.⁴⁰
 1. Crane, K., & Mooney, M. (2005). *Essential tools: improving secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities*. Minneapolis, Minn.: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human Development, (p. 29, last retrieved June 16, 2006, from: http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/mapping/NCSET_EssentialTools_ResourceMapping.pdf).

 2. Jones, R.J.E., & Santaguida, P. (2005). Evidence-based practice and health policy development: the link between knowledge and action. *Physiotherapy*, 91, 14–21.

³⁹ Center for International Rehabilitation Research and Information Exchanges (CIRRIE-2: (H133A050008; <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu>), University at Buffalo, the State University of New York (SUNY), Center for Assistive Technology, (John H. Stone, principal investigator).

⁴⁰ National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) (H133060028; www.ncddr.org), Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin, Texas (John Westbrook, principal investigator).

3. Kothari, A., Birch, S., & Charles, C. (2005). "Interaction" and research utilization in health policies and programs: does it work? *Health Policy*, 71, 117–125.
4. Krasny, M. (2005, April). University K-12 science outreach programs: how can we reach a broad audience? *BioScience*, 55(4), 350–359.
5. Mozammel, M., & Odugbemi, S. (Eds.). (2005). *With the support of multitudes: using strategic communication to fight poverty through PRSPs*. London: The Department for International Development. (Includes a summary of NCDDR (1996) in its annotated bibliography).
6. Ottoson, J.M., & Green, L.W. (2005). Community outreach: from measuring the difference to making a difference with health information. *J Med Libr Assoc* 93(4) Supplement 2005.
7. Southwell, D., Gannaway, D., Orrell, J., Chalmers, D., & Abraham, C. (2005, April). Strategies for effective dissemination of project outcomes. *A Report for the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*. Adelaide, Australia: The University of Queensland and Flinders University.

4. Model Systems

Model systems projects are intended for the conduct of research activities across all of NIDRR's LRP research domains described in the introduction to this section. For example, in the Health and Function domain, model systems projects address challenges to individual care, rehabilitation services and supports for people with spinal cord injury (SCI), traumatic brain injury (TBI) and burn injury. Other projects associated with these three model systems focus on the Employment and Participation and Community living LRP domains and test the effectiveness of social interventions in terms of enhancing options for workplace and community reintegration for individuals with these disabilities. TBI and burn model systems are funded as Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects. The SCI Model System is funded under its own authority (34 CFR 359—Disability and Rehabilitation Research: Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries).

The following Model Systems accomplishments were identified and reviewed in 2005 by NIDRR staff, although the research-related activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *Model Systems Output*: Publication in 2005 of a peer-reviewed article titled "Consumer-assistant education to reduce the occurrence of urinary tract infections among persons with spinal cord injury" by Hagglund, Clark, Schopp, Sherman and Acuff (*Topics in Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation*, 10(3), 53–62, 2005) that examines the impact of educational workshops for consumers with spinal cord injury and their personal assistants. The article documented a decrease in the occurrence of urinary tract infections (UTIs) among consumers attending the workshops compared to those not attending during a six-month follow-up period. Publication of these findings has the

potential to improve the effectiveness of treatment for one of the most common and costly complications of spinal cord injury.⁴¹

- ▶ *Model Systems Output:* Researchers affiliated with the NIDRR-funded University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Spinal Cord Injury Model System, in collaboration with the Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine, contributed to the publication in 2005 of a new clinical practice guideline (CPG) titled “Preservation of Upper Limb Function in Spinal Cord Injury: A Clinical Practice Guideline for Health-Care Professionals,” which was supported financially and distributed by the Paralyzed Veterans of America (<http://www.pva.org/site/DocServer/upperlimb.pdf?docID=705>). The guideline contains 35 evidenced-based recommendations on preventing and treating upper limb pain in persons with SCI. The recommendations range in scope from what to assess at an annual evaluation to specific equipment for mobility to the need for a surgical opinion. Each recommendation is graded for the scientific evidence that supports the statement and the degree of consensus among panel members. Recommendations in the new CPG are supported by research reported in the following two publications:⁴²
 - “Preservation of Upper Limb Function in Spinal Cord Injury: A Clinical Practice Guideline for Health-Care Professionals.” Paralyzed Veterans of America Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine. Washington, D.C.: Paralyzed Veterans of America. *Journal of Spinal Cord Medicine*. 2005; 28(5): 434-470.
 - Boninger, M.L., et al., “Pushrim biomechanics and injury prevention in spinal cord injury: Recommendations based on CULP-SCI Investigations.” *Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development*. 2005; 42(3, Supp. 1): 9–20.

5. Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers

The DBTACs are a network of 10 regional centers that provide information, training and technical assistance to businesses and agencies with responsibilities under the *ADA*. An additional grantee serves as an *ADA* technical assistance coordinator and assists all of the grantees with their activities. DBTACs are responsible for providing technical assistance, disseminating information and providing training to individuals or entities with responsibilities and rights under the *Rehabilitation Act* on the requirements of *ADA* and developments in *ADA* case law, policy and implementation. DBTACs also are responsible for increasing the capacity of organizations at the state and local level to provide technical assistance, disseminate information, provide training and promote awareness of *ADA* requirements. DBTACs also promote the availability of services provided by the DBTACs, other NIDRR grantees working on *ADA* issues and other federal information sources on *ADA*.

⁴¹ Missouri Spinal Cord Injury Model System (H133N000012), University of Missouri-Columbia, Department of Health Psychology (Laura H. Schopp, principal investigator).

⁴² Spinal Cord Injury Model System University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (H133N000019; <http://www.upmc-sci.org>) (Michael L. Boninger, M.D., principal investigator).

The following accomplishments for the overall DBTAC program were identified and reviewed in 2005 by NIDRR staff, although the activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *DBTAC Employment Outcome*: A new coordinated pilot training program on the reasonable accommodation process and requirements under Title I of the *ADA*, conducted in 60 sessions across the United States between 2004 and 2005 by all 10 regional DBTACs, is having a positive effect on employers' knowledge and behavior. Data from a post-training follow-up survey indicate that 87 percent of sampled employers experienced an increase in knowledge regarding the reasonable accommodation requirements under Title I of the *Rehabilitation Act*, and 31 percent reported that they had created or modified practices or procedures within their organizations to improve the provision of accommodations for individuals with disabilities.⁴³
- ▶ *DBTAC Accessible Educational IT Outcome*: A new series of 51 training sessions on accessible education and information technology conducted by the 10 regional DBTACs for K–12 schools and selected postsecondary education settings is having a positive effect on educators' awareness and behavior. Data from post-training follow-up surveys indicate that 76 percent of K–12 participants reported an increase in knowledge and awareness regarding the importance of accessible IT to equalizing educational opportunity and increasing education achievement, and 24 percent of participants from selected two-year public or tribal community or technical colleges increased accessibility of their publicly available Web site pages as measured by a common postsecondary Web accessibility checklist developed by the DBTACs.⁴⁴

6. Field-Initiated Projects

Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs) are intended for the conduct of research and development activities that address topics and issues identified by researchers. Most FIP awards are made for three years.

The following accomplishments for the FIP program for 2005 were evaluated independently as part of the pilot phase of NIDRR's APAER process, although the activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *FIP Technology Output*: Production and maintenance of an accessibility comparison table that lists all available hardware and software for e-books, digital talking books (DTBs) and prototypes that demonstrate design solutions for various forms of accessible multimedia for users who are blind or deaf (see <http://ncam.wgbh.org/ebooks/comparison.html>). The table also provides information about device availability, multimedia capability and general accessibility. To keep pace with the rapid change in e-book software and hardware, project staff updates

⁴³ For evidence supporting this outcome, see the DBTAC Outcomes Web site "DBTAC Accomplishments Evidence" at: <http://www.dbtac-outcomes.org/default-evidence-links.htm>. For general information on the DBTAC program, including a listing of all the individual centers by region, see <http://www.adata.org> or www.adaportal.org.

⁴⁴ See footnote 43.

the comparison table on the project Web site approximately every six weeks to reflect the development of new devices and improvements to existing devices. The comparison table and prototypes have been widely promoted by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C),⁴⁵ Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) and International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF, formerly the Open e-Book Forum) working groups, which include representatives from all of the major digital talking book and e-book technology developers. Expert panelist from the 2005 pilot APAER for Technology agreed that this is an important output of NIDRR funding that is likely to have a positive effect on improving access to images, audio and multimedia books for individuals with visual and hearing impairments by providing the e-book industry with a set of prototypes to which they can refer when investigating changes to the accessibility of their materials. An article about the goals of the Beyond Text project and the addition of multimedia to the DAISY/National Information Standards Organization (NISO) specification was published in the September 2003 issue of the DAISY monthly newsletter (<http://www.daisy.org>). This was followed in 2004 by staff presentations at the annual conference on “Technology and Persons With Disabilities,” at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) (<http://www.csun.edu/cod/conf/2004/proceedings/69.htm>).⁴⁶

7. Small Business Innovation Research

The intent of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR), as mandated under the *Small Business Reauthorization Act of 2000*, is to help support the development of new ideas and projects that are useful to persons with disabilities by inviting the participation of small business firms with strong research capabilities in science, engineering or educational technology. Small businesses must meet certain eligibility criteria to participate: the company must be American-owned and independently operated, it must be for profit and employ no more than 500 employees and the principal researcher must be employed by the business. Governmentwide, this program funds small businesses in three phases, although NIDRR and the Department of Education only participate in the first two of these phases. During Phase I, NIDRR funds firms to conduct feasibility studies to evaluate the scientific and technical merit of an idea. During Phase II, NIDRR funds firms to expand on the results of Phase I and to pursue further development. In Phase III, the program focuses on helping small businesses find funding in the private sector to move innovations from the laboratory into the marketplace.

The following SBIR accomplishments were identified and reviewed in 2005 by NIDRR staff, although the research-related activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

⁴⁵ The World Wide Web Consortium is an international consortium where Member organizations, a full-time staff, and the public work together to develop vendor-neutral Web standards and guidelines. W3C's mission is “to lead the World Wide Web to its full potential by developing protocols and guidelines that ensure long-term growth for the Web” (see <http://www.w3.org/>).

⁴⁶ Field-Initiated Project on Beyond Text: Access to Images, Audio and Multimedia Books (H133G020091; <http://ncam.wgbh.org/ebook>), WGBH Educational Foundation, National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM) (Geoff Freed, principal investigator).

- ▶ *SBIR Technology Outcome:* Funding from NIDRR, along with other federal agencies, contributed to successful development and commercialization of an educational monitoring and assessment product line, CosmoWeb, for use in conducting rehabilitation with children with disabilities in clinical and home settings. This product line, manufactured by AnthroTronic, Inc., consists of the Cosmo's Learning System and an interactive robot (CosmoBot) that introduces new technology to motivate and entertain the child while simultaneously evaluating the child's progress in meeting developmental goals over time. The potential of CosmoWeb to improve the future rehabilitation and education outcomes for children with disabilities was acknowledged through the manufacturer's receipt of one of five 2005 Knight Ridder Equality Awards from the Tech Museum of Innovation. (<http://www.nextbillion.net/newsroom/2005/09/22/25-global-innovators-named-as-2005-tech-awards-laureates>). More details on the CosmoWeb system are available at: <http://www.anthrotronix.com/template.php?content=currentprojects>).⁴⁷
- ▶ *SBIR Technology Outcome:* In conjunction with the National Science Foundation (NSF), NIDRR funding contributed to the successful development and commercialization of the *Talking Tactile Tablet* (<http://www.touchgraphics.com>), an inexpensive, rugged and simple new computer peripheral device designed for use as a "viewer" for audio and tactile materials that is now being regularly utilized in museums, exhibits and other environments to extend the accessibility of visually impaired individuals. The importance of this new product, also known as TTT or T3, in opening up the world for visually impaired individuals was recognized through receipt of a 2006 Industrial Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) gold medal http://www.idsa.org/idea2006/galleries/idea/idea2006/award_details.asp?ID=59.⁴⁸ More information about the IDEA awards is available at: <http://www.idsa.org/idea2006/galleries/idea/idea2006/>.

9. Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT) projects support grants to institutions to provide advanced training in research to physicians, nurses, engineers, physical therapists and other professionals. Grants are made to institutions to recruit qualified persons with doctoral or similar advanced degrees with clinical, management or basic science research experience and to prepare them to conduct independent research in areas related to disability and rehabilitation. This research training may integrate disciplines, teach research methodology and promote the capacity for disability studies and rehabilitation science. Training projects must operate in interdisciplinary environments and provide training in rigorous scientific methods.

⁴⁷ Small Business Innovation Research award (H133S030037) to AnthroTronic, Silver Spring, Md. (<http://www.anthrotronix.com>) (Corinna E. Latham, founder and CEO).

⁴⁸ Small Business Innovation Research award (H133S020147) to Touch Graphics, New York, N.Y. (<http://www.touchgraphics.com>) (Steven Landau, president and project director).

Selected ARRT project statistics for the most recent reporting period where data are available (June 2004–June 2005) are reflected in table 13.

Table 13. Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT) Selected Statistics For June 2004 to June 2005

Total number of active awards	12
Fellows enrolled since last report	33
Fellows completing program	22
Total number of fellows in program (unduplicated count)	50
Fellows with disabilities	4
Fellows contributing to publications	22
Total number of publications authored by fellows	31

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. Grantee Performance Report, annual performance reporting (APR) forms for NIDRR ARRT program for fiscal years 2004 and 2005. Prepared by RTI International under ED contract No. ED-04-CO-0036/0001. 2007. Washington, D.C.

10. Mary E. Switzer Fellowship Program

This fellowship program supports one-year fellowships to highly qualified individuals to carry out discrete research activities that are related to NIDRR’s research priorities or to pursue studies of importance to the rehabilitation community. Awards are made to individuals of doctoral or comparable academic status who have had seven or more years of relevant experience and to individuals who are at earlier stages in their careers.

Selected Switzer Fellowship program statistics for FY 2005 are reflected in table 14. Publications by grantees funded by this program are not available for 2005, due to limitations in NIDRR’s previous performance reporting system. However, in 2006 this limitation was corrected and future reports to Congress will contain this information.

Table 14. Mary E. Switzer Fellowship Program: Selected Statistics for FY 2005

Total number of awards	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of merit fellows • Number of distinguished fellows 	6 4
Fellows from minority backgrounds	2
Fellows with disabilities	1

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. NIDRR administrative data for the Mary E. Switzer Fellowship program for FY 2005.

11. Outreach to Minority Colleges and Universities

Section 21 of the *Rehabilitation Act* instructs NIDRR and RSA to reserve 1 percent of the appropriated budget each year for programs authorized under Titles II, III, VI and VII to serve traditionally underserved populations. These funds then are awarded through

grants, contracts or cooperative agreements to minority entities, Indian tribes, colleges and universities, state, public or private nonprofit agencies and organizations to support program activities focused on: (1) research training, (2) professional development, special projects and demonstrations and (3) employment opportunities. Within NIDRR, this 1 percent set-aside can be used to fund separate grants across various program mechanisms (e.g., RRTCs, DRRPs) or to supplement existing grants to conduct specific Section 21-related activities.

The following Section 21 accomplishments are from individually funded DRRPs and were identified and reviewed in 2005 by NIDRR staff, although the research-related activities on which they are based may have occurred in previous years:

- ▶ *Section 21 Output:* 2005 publication of "Eligibility rates of traditionally underserved individuals with disabilities revisited: A data mining approach," an article by Chan, Wong, Rosenthal, Kundu and Dutta (*Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, 36(3), 3 -10 and also available at: http://www.redorbit.com/news/technology/272887/eligibility_rates_of_traditionally_underserved_individuals_with_disabilities_revisited_a/). This article examined the eligibility and acceptance rates of VR consumers by race using information from the *Case Service Report (RSA 911)* for FY 2001. The study reported in this article was conducted extracting closed cases of VR consumers served between 1992 and 2002 from New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, Houston and Honolulu. Key findings indicated that racial bias is smaller when the criteria for eligibility are clearly defined as in the case of severe disability. However, racial bias has a higher propensity to manifest itself when the criteria for eligibility are more ambiguous as in the case of justifying eligibility for those without severe disabilities. These findings have potential to advance the understanding of VR practitioners and policymakers regarding strategies for minimizing racial bias in decision-making for VR eligibility.⁴⁹
- ▶ *Section 21 Output:* The Center for Minority Training and Capacity Building for Disability Research developed a three-month pilot training program to enhance the scientific writing skills of predoctoral and doctoral students in rehabilitation from minority backgrounds. The program was conducted in 2005 with four trainees and an end goal of developing a scientifically sound research abstract for submission at a professional conference. Results of a pre- and post-assessment and three-month follow up demonstrated that the pilot program was effective in improving trainees' baseline knowledge of technical writing skills and in meeting its stated end goal. Based on their abstracts, all four trainees were invited to present at the 2006 Research Association of Minority Professors (RAMP) Annual Conference in Kansas City, Mo.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project, Rehabilitation Research Institute for Underrepresented Populations (RRIUP) (H133A031705), Southern University A&M College, (<http://www.subr.edu/science/rehabcounsel/RRIUP/index.htm>) (Alo Dutta, principal investigator).

⁵⁰ Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project, Minority Scholar/Champion Research Training Project (H133A031704), Texas Southern University, Center for Minority Training and Capacity Building for Disability Research (<http://www.tsu.edu/academics/continue/research/index.asp>) (Irvine E. Epps, principal investigator).

Other

NIDRR funding also supports a variety of other activities, including interagency research initiatives and activities to improve the quality and utility of NIDRR-funded research.

12. Interagency Committee on Disability Research

Within the U.S. Department of Education, the director of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) serves as the chair of the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR). The purpose of the ICDR authorized by the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, is to promote cooperation among federal departments and agencies conducting disability and rehabilitation research. Representatives of 35 federal entities regularly participate in the ICDR. In addition to the full committee, five subcommittees address specific issues: Disability Statistics, Medical Rehabilitation, Technology, Employment and the New Freedom Initiative (NFI). The ICDR is responsible for coordinating federal research related to the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, facilitating the compilation of information about the status of rehabilitation research sponsored by federal agencies, promoting the exchange of information, making recommendations regarding disability and rehabilitation research and preparing reports to the president and Congress. ICDR maintains a public Web site with links to ongoing research activities supported by ICDR member agencies and other useful information about disability and rehabilitation research. For more information, visit <http://www.icdr.us>.

Selected ICDR accomplishments for 2005 include:

- ▶ *ICDR Output:* In 2005, ICDR released a report entitled *Compendium of Assistive Technology Research: A Guide to Currently Funded Research Projects*. In the report, ICDR identifies federal agencies that fund research on assistive technology and provides a review of their program directories, funding databases and project Web sites that highlight currently funded research projects. The compendium also serves as an important tool to help ICDR respond to a key component of the New Freedom Initiative, which directs ICDR to improve the coordination of federal assistive technology research and development programs. The report is available at: <http://www.icdr.us>.
- ▶ *ICDR Output:* In 2005, the ICDR released a report entitled *Emergency Evacuation of People With Physical Disabilities From Buildings: 2004 Conference Proceedings*. This report documents the proceedings of a two-day workshop and highlights research recommendations to improve available data, building safety codes, evacuation technologies and evacuation practices for people with physical disabilities. ICDR's Interagency Subcommittee on Technology conducted this workshop Oct. 13–14, 2004, in Rockville, Md. This and other ICDR reports are available at: <http://www.icdr.us>.

13. NIDRR Management—Planning for and Demonstrating Results

NIDRR's management of its research investments involves long-term strategic planning, performance management and a multilevel evaluation process (APAER) that includes independent expert review of awards at the portfolio or programmatic level corresponding to the primary domains of the *NIDRR Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005–09*. Both the pilot phase of the APAER process and the five domains of the *NIDRR Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005–09* are described in more detail in the introduction to this section.

Selected NIDRR management accomplishments for 2005 include:

- ▶ *Management Output:* The proposed *NIDRR Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005–09* was published in the *Federal Register* on July 27, 2005, at 70 FR 43521.
- ▶ *Management Output:* In 2005, NIDRR launched the pilot phase of its new APAER process for the Employment and Technology domains of the *NIDRR Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005–09*. This represents a major step in redesigning the agency's evaluation system to accommodate the governmentwide shift to accountability for results and the new emphasis on program performance and outcomes.
- ▶ *Management Output:* In 2005 NIDRR received a score of “adequate” on the OMB Program Assessment Reporting Tool (PART), which is an increase over the initial 2003 score of “results not demonstrated.” This improvement in NIDRR's PART score represents a major accomplishment and reflects the agency's success in launching the APAER evaluation process and in refining the agency's performance measures. Detailed information on NIDRR's performance measures and FY 2005 PART report is available at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/detail/10001041.2005.html>.
- ▶ *Management Output:* In June 2005 NIDRR held a meeting of experts in national and international knowledge translation to set the agency's future agenda in this area. The meeting included experts from the origination point of the knowledge translation movement—the Canadian Center for Health Research—and representatives from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the Campbell Collaboration and other leaders in the field. Recommendations from this meeting set the stage for NIDRR's new approach to knowledge dissemination that is intended to lead to an improved alignment with NIDRR's new official performance measures, consistent with both the *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)* and PART requirements, which emphasize research quality and systematic reviews. More information on the KDU expert panel and NIDRR's efforts in this area is available at:
http://www.ncddr.org/new/announcements/ktpanel_summary.

14. Peer-reviewed Publications by Select Research Mechanisms

In addition to the narrative accomplishments reported above for all 13 NIDRR funding mechanisms and other program areas, including the ICDR and NIDRR management, NIDRR demonstrates accountability for results quantitatively through the average number of publications per award based on NIDRR-funded research and development activities in refereed journals. Information on the quantity of peer-reviewed publications is important because it constitutes the “gold standard” for evaluating the scientific productivity, as opposed to the scientific quality, of research and demonstration (R&D) activities and because it corresponds to one of NIDRR’s official performance measures used to satisfy *GPR*A and PART requirements. By including the number of peer-reviewed publications in this report, NIDRR establishes a baseline that can be used to evaluate the scientific productivity of its investments under the *Rehabilitation Act* over time and to compare with other federal agencies that also fund rehabilitation and disability-related research.

As indicated in table 15, the average number of peer-reviewed publications per award for calendar year 2004 for the combined three research programs where data were available (RERCs, RRTC’s and Model Systems) was 2.71.⁵¹ However, among the research programs there is considerable variation by type of program and nature of research. Not surprisingly, the Model Systems program, which is more focused on medical rehabilitation research, produced more than twice the average number of peer-reviewed publications per award compared to the RRTC’s, which are more oriented to employment and psychosocial research that is frequently less quantitative and, therefore, harder to publish in refereed journals. Similarly, it is not surprising that the RRTC’s produced almost twice the number of peer-reviewed publications per award compared to the RERCs, given the later program’s emphasis on development and commercialization of devices and products that typically do not lend themselves to dissemination in refereed journals.⁵²

⁵¹ Beginning in 2006, information on peer-reviewed publications will be collected for all 11 of NIDRR’s research-related mechanisms, not including the ICDR or management program areas.

⁵² Information on NIDRR-related R&D publications is collected through citations entered into the agency’s Web-based annual performance reporting (APR) form, which is completed by all grantees to demonstrate progress on their award as part of the Department of Education’s required grant continuation process. The peer-review status of publications is verified independently through the Thomson Reuters (formerly Thomson International Scientific Index) Master Journal List (see <http://scientific.thomsonreuters.com/mjl/>). Because the average number of peer-reviewed publications is measured by calendar year not fiscal year, calculating this measure requires data from two performance-reporting periods and always lags one year behind the current fiscal year. The next complete data on this indicator for calendar year 2005 publications will be available in October 2006, based on refereed journal articles published in 2005 and reported in grantees’ APRs for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Table 15. NIDRR Peer-reviewed Publications for Calendar Year 2004, by Selected Program Funding Mechanism

Program Funding Mechanism^a	Total No. Refereed Publications	Total No. Awards Reporting	Average No. Refereed Publications/Award
RERCs^b	24	24	1.0
RRTCs^c	78	41	1.9
Model Systems	174	37	4.7
Combined Research Mechanisms	276	102	2.71

^a Data in this table correspond to NIDRR's official *GPR*A performance measure based on peer-reviewed publications for an entire calendar year rather than a fiscal year, and are also used to satisfy NIDRR's PART requirements. As a result, reported publications data always lag one calendar year behind the current fiscal year. This is because it requires two fiscal years of annual performance information from grantees in order to calculate the total and average number of peer-reviewed publications for a full calendar year.

^b Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers.

^c Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers.

Note: Program performance report based on annual performance reports (APR) for reporting periods ending May 31, 2006.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. Grantee Performance Report, annual performance reporting (APR) forms for NIDRR ARRT program for fiscal years 2004 and 2005. Prepared by RTI International under ED contract No. ED-04-CO-0036/0001. 2007. Washington, D.C.

15. NIDRR Allocations

The allocation of NIDRR grant funds for FY 2004 and FY 2005 for the 11 funding mechanisms discussed in this section on NIDRR is shown in table 16 on the following two pages. For each funding mechanism, the table includes the number of new and continuation awards along with the corresponding grant amount and the combined totals for fiscal years 2004 and 2005. NIDRR's overall grant allocations across all 11 funding mechanisms totaled \$98,982 million for FY 2004 and \$100,756 for FY 2005.

Table 16. NIDRR-funded Centers and Projects:* Grant Amounts and Awards, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005

NIDRR-funded Centers and Projects	Number of Awards FY 2004	Grant Amount (in thousands of dollars)	Number of Awards FY 2005	Grant Amount (in thousands of dollars)
RRTCs				
Continuations	21	\$12,693	26	\$17,899
New Awards	10	\$5,950	3	\$1,750
Total	31	\$18,643	29	\$19,649
RERCs				
Continuations	18	\$16,328	19	\$16,484
New Awards	3	\$2,550	2	\$1,900
Total	21	\$18,878	21	\$18,384
ARRTs				
Continuations	10	\$1,195	12	\$1,794
New Awards	4	\$595	2	\$300
Total	14	\$1,790	14	\$2,094
DRRPs				
Continuations	23	\$8,249	23	\$7,032
New Awards	1	\$600	1	\$500
Total	24	\$8,849	24	\$7,532
DBTACs				
Continuations	13	\$13,127	13	\$11,830
New Awards	0	0	0	0
Total	13	\$13,127	13	\$11,830
SBIRs				
	32	\$5,037	34	\$5,131
KDUs				
Continuations	4	\$3,961	4	\$2,509
New	1	\$514	4	\$2,250
Total	5	\$4,475	8	\$7,759
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)				
Continuations	61	\$9,221	47	\$6,857
New Awards	20	\$2,984	27	\$4,050
Total	81	\$12,205	74	\$10,907
Mary E. Switzer Fellowship Program				
New Awards	10	\$535	5	\$500

Table 16. NIDRR-funded Centers and Projects:* Grant Amounts and Awards, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

NIDRR-funded Centers and Projects	Number of Awards FY 2004	Grant Amount (in thousands of dollars)	Number of Awards FY 2005	Grant Amount (in thousands of dollars)
Model Systems				
Spinal Cord Injury				
Continuations	20	\$5,542	4	\$1,200
New Awards	0	0	15	\$6,000
Total	20	\$5,542	19	\$7,200
Traumatic Brain Injury				
Continuations	18	\$6,784	19	\$7,386
New Awards	1	\$600	0	0
Total	19	\$7,384	19	\$7,386
Burn Injury				
Continuations	5	\$1,450	5	\$1,448
New Awards	0	0	0	0
Total	5	\$1,450	5	\$1,448
Outreach to Minority Institutions				
	3	\$1,067	3	\$1,067
TOTAL	278	\$98,982	254	\$100,756

* Abbreviations and full titles of NIDRR-funded Centers and Projects:

- RRTCs--- Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers
- RERCs--- Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers
- ARRTs--- Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Grants
- DRRPs--- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
- DBTACs- Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers
- SBIRs ---- Small Business Innovation Research Projects
- KDUs----- Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization Projects

Source: U. S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS). 2005. Washington, D.C.

ADVOCACY AND ENFORCEMENT

Through the programs and activities described in this report, Congress and the federal government are doing much to improve opportunities for employment and community integration for persons with disabilities. However, full independence cannot be achieved if individuals are not able to protect their rights under the law. Recognizing this need, Congress has created a number of programs to assist and advocate on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Several of these programs are administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and include the Client Assistance Program (CAP), the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program and the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program. Each of these programs directs its advocacy efforts to a particular group of persons with disabilities or to a specific issue. This section of the annual report provides data and information concerning the activities and performance of the CAP and PAIR programs. Information pertaining to the PAAT program is contained in the *Annual Report to Congress on the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 for fiscal years 2004 and 2005* to be published in FY 2006 and prepared in accordance with Section 7 of the *Assistive Technology Act*.

Requirements under the *Rehabilitation Act* call for the continuous review of policies and practices related to the nondiscrimination and affirmative employment of individuals with disabilities and their access to facilities and information. To carry out the responsibilities stemming from those requirements, the *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes a number of advocacy and advisory programs operating at national and state levels. Such programs conduct periodic reviews of existing employment policies and practices. In addition, these programs develop and recommend policies and procedures that facilitate the nondiscrimination and affirmative employment of individuals who have received rehabilitation services to ensure compliance with standards prescribed by congressional legislation.

Some of the advocacy programs also develop advisory information and provide appropriate training and technical assistance, as well as make recommendations to the president, Congress and the secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. Other advocacy programs authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act* assist individuals with disabilities to obtain the services they need and are entitled to under the *Rehabilitation Act* or protect their legal human rights, or do both.

Several federal agencies have been given the authority to use enforcement and compliance techniques to ensure that government agencies and private firms doing business with the government subscribe to and implement legislative provisions related to the employment of individuals with disabilities. These enforcement agencies review complaints, conduct investigations, conduct public hearings and issue orders. These agencies participate, when necessary, as *amicus curiae*⁵³ in any United States courts in

⁵³ "Friend of the court"; acts as advisor to the court.

civil actions. They design appropriate and equitable affirmative action remedies. Orders of compliance may include the withholding of or suspension of federal funds.

Client Assistance Program **Authorized Under Section 112 of the *Rehabilitation Act***

The Client Assistance Program (CAP), through grants to the 56 states,⁵⁴ provides advocacy and legal representation to individuals in dispute with other programs, projects or facilities funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Primarily, CAPs assist individuals in their relationships with the VR program. In addition, CAP grantees provide information to individuals with disabilities regarding the programs and services available under the *Rehabilitation Act* and the rights afforded them by *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies and the other programs and projects funded under the *Rehabilitation Act* must inform consumers about the services available from the CAP and how to contact the CAP. As important, states must operate a CAP in order to receive other allotments under the *Rehabilitation Act*, including VR grant funds.

FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$11,901,024

Each governor designates a public or private agency to operate a CAP. This designated agency must be independent of any agency that provides services under the *Rehabilitation Act*, except in those cases where the *Rehabilitation Act* grandfathered in CAPs that were already housed within state agencies providing services. In the event that one of these state agencies providing services under the *Rehabilitation Act* restructures, the *Rehabilitation Act* requires the governor to redesignate the CAP in an agency that does not provide services under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Currently, very few “internal” CAPs (e.g., those housed within a state VR agency or other agency providing services under the *Rehabilitation Act*) remain.

Overall, in fiscal year (FY) 2005, CAPs nationwide responded to 53,255 requests for information and provided extensive services to 6,792 individuals. More than 98 percent of cases in which extensive services were provided involved applicants for, or recipients of, services from the VR program. These data also demonstrate that in 21 percent of the cases closed, CAPs provided explanations of policies that assisted the individuals in advocating for themselves; 13 percent of these cases resulted in the reestablishment of communication between the individuals and other parties; and 14 percent resulted in the development or implementation of an individualized plan for employment (IPE).

A specific example of CAP activities during FY 2005 follows:

Kathy, a 22-year-old Louisiana native, has worked and lived on her own since she was 17. Both parents live out of state and neither provides any financial support to her.

⁵⁴ The term “state” includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

When she requested financial assistance from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) in order to attend college, she was told that because she is only 22 years old, her parents' income must be considered in her request for financial assistance. Her total income, including her parents' income, was over the limit for financial assistance from LRS.

The CAP advocate assisted Kathy in developing a request for an exception to the age requirement. They asked that she be considered a "single student," receiving no parental support. Kathy provided all information and documentation necessary to support the request.

The research and documentation paid off—both the school and LRS agreed to identify Kathy as a single student. She is now receiving financial aid, assistive technology equipment and the necessary VR services, and, as a result of the extra funding, Kathy has been able to enroll as a full-time student and currently has a 3.0 grade point average.

Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights Authorized Under Section 509 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program is a mandatory component of the protection and advocacy (P&A) system, established in each of the 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin

**FY 2005 Federal Funding
\$16,655,680**

Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the American Indian consortium pursuant to Part C of the *Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act)*. The 57 PAIR programs provide information, advocacy and legal representation to individuals with disabilities who are not eligible for other P&A programs serving persons with developmental disabilities and mental illness, or whose issues do not pertain to programs funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Of all the various P&A programs, the PAIR program has the broadest mandate and the potential to represent the greatest number of individuals. Through the provision of information and the conduct of advocacy, PAIR programs help to ensure the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities under federal and state law in a wide variety of areas, including employment, access to public accommodations, education, housing and transportation. PAIR programs investigate, negotiate or mediate solutions to problems expressed by individuals with disabilities. Grantees provide information and technical assistance to requesting individuals and organizations. PAIR programs also provide legal counsel and litigation services.

Prior to making allotments to the individual grantees, a portion of the total appropriation must be set aside for each of the following two activities: (1) During any fiscal year in which the appropriation is equal to or exceeds \$5.5 million, the secretary must first set aside not less than 1.8 percent and not more than 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to eligible systems established under this program. (2) In any fiscal year in which the total appropriation exceeds \$10.5

million, the secretary must award \$50,000 to the eligible system established under the *DD Act* to serve the American Indian consortium. The secretary then distributes the remainder of the appropriation to the eligible systems within the states on a population basis after satisfying minimum allocations of \$100,000 for states, except for Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands that each get \$50,000.

Each year, PAIR programs, with the input of public comment, must develop a statement of objectives and priorities, including a rationale for the selection of the objectives and priorities and a plan for achieving them. These objectives and priorities define the issues that PAIR programs will address during the year, whether through individual or systemic advocacy. During FY 2005, PAIR programs reported representing 17,450 individuals and responding to 59,107 requests for information or referral. Of the cases handled by PAIR programs in that fiscal year, the greatest number of specified issues involved education (21 percent), employment (13 percent) and government benefits or services (13 percent). Because PAIR programs cannot address all issues facing individuals with disabilities solely through individual advocacy, they seek to change public and private policies and practices that present barriers to the rights of individuals with disabilities, utilizing negotiations and class action litigation. In FY 2005, 51 out of the 57 PAIR programs (89 percent) reported participating in negotiations or class action litigation that resulted in changes in policies and practices, ultimately benefiting individuals with disabilities.

A specific example of PAIR activities during FY 2005 follows:

Florida is experiencing a disturbing increase of children as young as 5 years old being arrested and handcuffed in schools in addition to the abuse and neglect issues reported on a regular basis. In July of 2005, the Florida PAIR program held a two-day training workshop in collaboration with experts of the Florida Association of School Resource Officers (FASRO) to address the growing problem of needlessly arresting and funneling children in the public school system into the juvenile justice system.

On Sept. 21, 2005, a PAIR proposal was sent to the secretary of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the commissioner of the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) and the president of the Florida Sheriffs Association for consideration of a partnership that clarifies the respective roles of educators, law enforcement, the juvenile justice system and others in providing for the health, safety and education of Florida's children, including children with disabilities, while at the same time providing for community security.

The proposal included the recommendation to consider, under a memorandum of understanding (MOU), the successful model in New York that has directly resulted in substantial declines in arrests, juvenile delinquency petitions, juvenile delinquency offenses and foster care placements, as well as reductions in bullying, crimes against persons, fighting, property crimes and bomb threats. It is estimated that this needed systemic reform regarding children with disabilities not receiving adequate supports and

services currently affects approximately 150,000 at-risk children with disabilities, and, if a partnership, an MOU and proper procedures are put in place, it is projected to favorably affect approximately 150,000 children with disabilities every year thereafter.

Employment of People With Disabilities
Authorized Under Section 501 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

The *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce the nondiscrimination and affirmative employment provisions of laws and regulations concerning the employment of individuals with disabilities. As part of its oversight responsibilities, the EEOC conducts on-site reviews of federal agency affirmative action employment programs. Based on these reviews, the EEOC submits findings and recommendations for federal agency, including the Department of Education, implementation. The EEOC then monitors the implementation of these findings and recommendations by performing follow-up on-site reviews. More information is available at: <http://www.eeoc.gov/types/ada.html>.

Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board
(Access Board)
Authorized Under Section 502 and Section 508 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

Section 502 of the *Rehabilitation Act* created the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, also known as the Access Board. Section 502 lays out the duties of the board under the *Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)*, which include: ensuring compliance with standards issued under the *ABA*, developing and maintaining guidelines for complying with the *ABA* and promoting access throughout all segments of society. The Access Board also has the primary responsibility for developing and maintaining accessibility guidelines and providing technical assistance under the *ADA* with respect to overcoming architectural, transportation and communication barriers. The Access Board is also responsible for developing and periodically updating guidelines under the *Telecommunications Act of 1996* that ensure access to various telecommunication products.

Composed of 25 members, the Access Board is structured to function as a representative of the general public and as a coordinating body among federal agencies, including the Department of Education. Twelve of its members are senior managers from federal departments; the other 13 are private citizens appointed by the president, a majority of whom must be individuals with disabilities. Key responsibilities of the Access Board include: developing and maintaining accessibility requirements for the built environment, transit vehicles, telecommunications equipment and electronic and information technology; providing technical assistance and training on these guidelines and standards; and enforcing accessibility standards for federally funded facilities.

The 1998 amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act* expanded the Access Board's role and gave it responsibility for developing access standards for electronic and information technology under Section 508 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. The description of the Access Board in Section 508 provides Information regarding its expanded role and those standards. The Access Board provides training and technical assistance on all its guidelines and standards.

With its publications, hotline and training sessions, the Access Board also provides a range of services to private as well as public organizations. In addition, the board enforces accessibility provisions of the *ABA*, the *ADA* and the *Telecommunications Act* through the investigation of complaints. The Access Board conducts its investigations through the responsible federal agencies and strives for amicable resolution of complaints. More information is available at: <http://www.access-board.gov>.

Electronic and Information Technology
Authorized Under Section 508 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Chief Information Officer,
Activities of the Assistive Technology Team

Section 508 requires that when federal agencies develop, procure, maintain or use electronic and information technology, they shall ensure that the electronic and information technology allows federal employees with disabilities to have access to and use of information and data that are comparable to the access to and use of information and data by federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency. Section 508 also requires that individuals with disabilities who are members of the public seeking information or services from a federal agency have access to and use of information and data that are comparable to the access to and use of information and data by members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency. The intention is to eliminate barriers in accessing information technology, make new opportunities available for individuals with disabilities and encourage development of technologies that will help achieve a more accessible society. The 1998 amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act* significantly expanded and strengthened the technology access requirements in Section 508.

The Department's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) plays a lead role in the implementation of Section 508 through such activities as product performance testing and the provision of technical assistance to government agencies and vendors on the implementation of the Section 508 standards. The OCIO Assistive Technology Team delivers assistive technology (AT) workshops, presentations and demonstrations to other federal agencies, to state and local education institutions and at AT and information technology industry seminars and conferences and conducts numerous conformance tests of high-visibility government-sponsored Web sites.

The OCIO, in conjunction with the Access Board and the General Services Administration (GSA), and a number of other government agencies, also participates in the Interagency Section 508 Working Group, an effort coordinated by GSA and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), to offer technical assistance and to provide an informal means of cooperation and information sharing on implementation of Section 508 throughout the federal government. More information on OCIO is available at:
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocio/ocio.html>.

Employment Under Federal Contracts
Authorized Under Section 503 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration

The Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is responsible for ensuring that employers with federal contracts or subcontracts in excess of \$10,000 take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities. OFCCP investigators conduct at least several thousand compliance reviews and investigate hundreds of complaints each year. OFCCP also issues policy guidance to private companies and develops innovative ways to gain compliance with the law. More information is available at:
<http://www.dol.gov/esa/ofccp>.

Nondiscrimination Under Federal Grants and Programs
Authorized Under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
And the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights

Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in federally assisted programs and activities. This provision of the *Rehabilitation Act* is designed to protect the rights of any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself and performing manual tasks.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division (CRD) has overall responsibility for coordinating the implementation and enforcement of Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. As part of its regulatory and review efforts, the CRD responds to education agencies, elementary and secondary school systems, colleges and universities, vocational schools, proprietary schools, state VR agencies, libraries and museums. Such programs, projects or activities may include, but are not limited to: admissions, recruitment, financial aid, academic programs, student treatment and services, counseling and guidance, discipline, classroom assignment, grading, vocational education, recreation, physical education, athletics, housing and employment.

Examples of the types of discrimination prohibited by Section 504 and its implementing regulations include access to educational programs and facilities, denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for elementary and secondary students and academic adjustments in higher education. Section 504 and its implementing regulations also prohibit employment discrimination and retaliation for filing an Office for Civil Rights (OCR) complaint or for advocating for a right protected by this provision of the law.

More information on OCR is available at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr>.

National Council on Disability
(An Independent Federal Agency)
Authorized Under Section 400 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

As an independent agency, the National Council on Disability (NCD) promotes policies, programs, practices and procedures that guarantee equal opportunity for all individuals with disabilities and that empower people with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, independent living and inclusion and integration into all aspects of society. More specifically, the NCD reviews and evaluates laws, policies, programs, practices and procedures conducted or assisted by federal departments or agencies to see if they meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. The council makes recommendations to the president, the Congress, the secretary of education, the commissioner of RSA, the director of NIDRR and officials of federal agencies based on those evaluations.

In FY 2005, NCD conducted a number of activities designed to increase consumer input and awareness regarding policy issues affecting individuals with disabilities. Those activities included dissemination of information through the conduct of hearings, forums and conferences throughout the country and through response to thousands of telephone, e-mail and written inquiries on *ADA* and other disability civil rights issues. More information is available at: <http://www.ncd.gov>.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

DEFINITION OF *INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY* AS LISTED IN SECTION 7(20) OF THE *REHABILITATION ACT*

(A) In general

Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (B), the term “individual with a disability” means any individual who —

- (i) has a physical or mental impairment which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- (ii) can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services provided pursuant to Title I, III or VI.

(B) Certain programs; limitations on major life activities

Subject to subparagraphs (C), (D) (E) and (F), the term “individual with a disability” means, for purposes of Sections 2, 14 and 15 and Titles II, IV, V and VII of this act, any person who —

- (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities;
- (ii) has a record of such an impairment; or
- (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment.

(C) Rights and advocacy provisions

- (i) In general; exclusion of individuals engaging in drug use
For purposes of Title V, the term “individual with a disability” does not include an individual who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs, when a covered entity acts on the basis of such use.
- (ii) Exception for individuals no longer engaging in drug use
Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to exclude as an individual with a disability an individual who —
 - (I) has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs, or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully and is no longer engaging in such use;
 - (II) is participating in a supervised rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in such use; or
 - (III) is erroneously regarded as engaging in such use, but is not engaging in such use; except that it shall not be a violation of this act for a covered entity to adopt or administer reasonable policies or procedures, including but not limited to drug testing, designed to ensure that an individual described in subclause (I) or (II) is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs.

- (iii) **Exclusion for certain services**
Notwithstanding clause (i), for purposes of programs and activities providing health services and services provided under Titles I, II and III, an individual shall not be excluded from the benefits of such programs or activities on the basis of his or her current illegal use of drugs if he or she is otherwise entitled to such services.
- (iv) **Disciplinary action**
For purposes of programs and activities providing educational services, local educational agencies may take disciplinary action pertaining to the use of possession of illegal drugs or alcohol against any student who is an individual with a disability and who currently is engaging in the illegal use of drugs or in the use of alcohol to the same extent that such disciplinary action is taken against students who are not individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, the due process procedures at Section 104.36 of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling) shall not apply to such disciplinary actions.
- (v) **Employment; exclusion of alcoholics**
For purposes of Sections 503 and 504 as such sections relate to employment, the term "individual with a disability" does not include any individual who is an alcoholic whose current use of alcohol prevents such individual from performing the duties of the job in question or whose employment, by reason of such current alcohol abuse, would constitute a direct threat to property or the safety of others.

(D) Employment; exclusion of individuals with certain diseases or infections
For the purposes of Section 503 and 504, as such sections relate to employment, such terms does not include an individual who has a currently contagious disease or infection and who, by reason of such disease or infection, would constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals or who, by reason of the currently contagious disease or infection, is unable to perform the duties of the job.

(E) Rights provision; exclusion of individual on basis of homosexuality or bisexuality
For purposes of Sections 501, 503 and 504 —

- (i) for purposes of the application of subparagraph (B) to such sections, the term "impairment" does not include homosexuality or bisexuality; and
- (ii) therefore the term "individual with a disability" does not include an individual on the basis of homosexuality or bisexuality.

(F) Rights provisions; exclusion of individuals on basis of certain disorders
For the purposes of Sections 501, 503 and 504, the term "individual with a disability" does not include an individual on the basis of —

- (i) transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments, or other sexual behavior disorders;
- (ii) compulsive gambling, kleptomania, or pyromania; or
- (iii) psychoactive substance use disorders resulting from current illegal use of drugs.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

Table B-1. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005

Must pass at least four of six indicators and two of three primary indicators^b
 Performance level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.

Agency ^c	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes After An IPE ^d (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Services Under An IPE ^e (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for All Individuals That Were Competitive Employment ^f (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes That Were for Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^g (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average VR Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
Arkansas	9	82.77	72.29	100.00	0.622	32.05	6	3
Connecticut	-62	78.76	61.77	100.00	0.559	40.33	4	2
Delaware	-15	70.00	100.00	100.00	0.468	57.14	4	2
Florida	-76	62.64	97.34	98.39	0.621	46.30	4	3
Idaho	-15	68.59	66.41	100.00	0.787	27.59	3	3

^a The term "state" includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the Rehabilitation Act, Section 7(32).

^b Minimum performance-level criteria for each standard and indicator were established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the Federal Register on June 5, 2000 (34 *CFR* 361).

^c Separate agencies in 24 states provide specialized services to blind and visually impaired persons.

^d An individualized plan for employment (IPE) is a written document developed for each individual determined to be eligible for VR services. To pass this indicator, the number of individuals exiting the VR program securing employment during the current performance period must be at least the same as the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period and, hence, comparison of the two elements must yield a number greater than or equal to zero.

^e Percentage who have employment outcomes after provision of VR services.

^f Percentage of employed individuals that exit the VR program and are placed in an integrated setting, self-employment or Vending Facility Program, also known as the Business Enterprise Program (BEP), with earning equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^g Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C.

Table B-1. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005 (Continued)

Must pass at least four of six indicators and two of three primary indicators^b
 Performance level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.

Agency ^c	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes After An IPE ^d (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Services Under An IPE ^e (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for All Individuals That Were Competitive Employment ^f (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes That Were for Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^g (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average VR Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
Iowa	-8	82.30	86.42	95.63	0.920	22.27	4	3
Kentucky	61	81.50	85.02	100.00	0.647	29.97	5	3
Maine	0	77.06	29.17	98.98	0.814	45.92	5	2
Massachusetts	11	59.97	54.82	100.00	0.698	31.94	5	3
Michigan	12	56.73	58.94	99.69	0.622	34.37	5	3
Minnesota	1	43.97	94.09	98.65	0.645	35.43	5	3
Missouri	-100	71.90	92.31	98.42	0.780	31.53	5	3
Nebraska	16	56.16	66.46	100.00	0.669	31.19	5	3
New Jersey	-16	62.62	94.78	96.85	0.613	45.08	4	3
New Mexico	-2	52.10	98.85	100.00	1.153	51.16	4	3
New York	-589	76.71	30.14	94.10	0.617	24.44	3	2
North Carolina	36	69.58	95.79	96.50	0.592	33.56	6	3
Oregon	26	80.00	74.55	100.00	0.804	34.15	6	3
South Carolina	-27	67.58	76.98	94.52	0.610	22.15	3	3
South Dakota	22	73.09	95.09	97.42	0.728	31.61	6	3
Texas	-336	73.97	84.55	99.91	0.607	26.84	4	3
Vermont	11	77.78	64.55	99.18	0.797	23.77	5	3
Virginia	-93	61.49	89.25	99.10	0.598	34.34	4	3
Washington	4	54.53	93.82	99.18	0.782	43.62	5	3

**Table B-2. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies—
General and Combined^b, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005**

Must Pass at least four of the six Indicators and two of three Primary Indicators
Performance level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator

Agency	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes After An IPE ^c (≥ 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Services Under An IPE ^d (≥ 55.8%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for All Individuals That Were Competitive Employment ^e (≥ 72.6%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes That Were Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (≥ 62.4%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average VR Wage to Average State Wage ^g (≥ .52)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (≥ 53.0)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
Alabama	7	70.62	98.17	89.81	0.502	80.43	5	2
Alaska	2	61.09	96.58	83.66	0.676	59.06	6	3
American Samoa	5	79.31	60.87	100.00	N/A	85.71	5	2
Arizona	212	48.48	92.68	95.68	0.536	68.88	5	3
Arkansas	-87	60.97	99.62	89.76	0.624	78.63	5	3
California	160	54.70	83.37	99.79	0.490	70.03	4	2
Colorado	311	59.64	89.93	93.91	0.503	57.90	5	2

^a The term "state" includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

^b General agencies serve persons with various disabilities other than blindness or other visual impairments. Combined agencies serve all individuals with disabilities, including persons who are blind or visually impaired.

^c An individualized plan for employment (IPE) is a written document developed for each individual determined to be eligible for VR services. To pass this indicator, the number of individuals exiting the VR program securing employment during the current performance period must be at least the same as the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period and, hence, comparison of the two elements must yield a number greater than or equal to zero.

^d Percentage who have employment outcomes after provision of VR services.

^e Percentage of employed individuals that exit the VR program and are placed in an integrated setting, self-employment or Business Enterprise Program (BEP), also known as the Vending Facility Program, with earning equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^f Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

^g No state wage data exists for Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa. Therefore, Indicator 1.5 cannot be computed for these VR agencies.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C.

**Table B-2. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies—
General and Combined^b, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005 (Continued)**

Must Pass at least four of the six Indicators and two of three Primary Indicators
Performance level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator

Agency	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes After An IPE ^c (≥ 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Services Under An IPE ^d (≥ 55.8%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for All Individuals That Were Competitive Employment ^e (≥ 72.6%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes That Were Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (≥ 62.4%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average VR Wage to Average State Wage ^g (≥ .52)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (≥ 53.0)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
Connecticut	-146	61.14	99.10	100.00	0.592	38.36	4	3
Delaware	39	58.43	99.16	66.67	0.450	67.63	5	2
District of Columbia	2	59.21	99.46	99.73	0.358	80.87	5	2
Florida	717	57.07	98.94	77.27	0.565	53.10	6	3
Georgia	242	53.64	90.89	88.01	0.446	69.42	4	2
Guam	5	40.00	88.89	100.00	N/A	75.00	5	3
Hawaii	-43	58.55	97.70	83.36	0.568	68.34	5	3
Idaho	130	58.44	99.74	97.21	0.622	68.98	6	3
Illinois	-2,495	53.13	93.68	99.98	0.435	54.56	3	2
Indiana	940	49.13	95.60	68.96	0.660	33.64	4	3
Iowa	8	58.13	98.02	90.81	0.605	56.28	6	3
Kansas	53	57.31	97.44	96.14	0.516	57.51	5	2
Kentucky	187	68.15	97.64	99.88	0.632	68.38	6	3
Louisiana	-31	47.93	99.24	99.94	0.686	61.50	4	3
Maine	-90	47.78	96.64	99.68	0.611	59.24	4	3
Maryland	43	72.48	96.54	99.97	0.450	67.39	5	2
Massachusetts	307	62.32	97.41	99.82	0.474	56.61	5	2
Michigan	434	58.61	98.42	90.60	0.545	62.39	6	3
Minnesota	-601	57.59	96.12	100.00	0.508	62.78	4	2
Mississippi	2	73.29	98.50	99.75	0.696	67.54	6	3
Missouri	-1,309	67.65	96.68	93.93	0.524	61.67	5	3

**Table B-2. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies—
General and Combined^b, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005 (Continued)**

Must Pass at least four of the six Indicators and two of three Primary Indicators
Performance level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator

Agency	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes After An IPE ^c (≥ 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Services Under An IPE ^d (≥ 55.8%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for All Individuals That Were Competitive Employment ^e (≥ 72.6%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes That Were Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (≥ 62.4%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average VR Wage to Average State Wage ^g (≥ .52)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (≥ 53.0)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
Montana	7	58.49	96.22	80.92	0.658	57.92	6	3
Nebraska	152	54.20	97.32	100.00	0.564	56.30	5	3
Nevada	64	58.34	99.03	96.18	0.538	75.73	6	3
New Hampshire	134	72.66	95.21	96.73	0.515	54.15	5	2
New Jersey	276	60.56	99.62	93.46	0.435	66.09	5	2
New Mexico	192	58.17	98.30	93.02	0.640	58.11	6	3
New York	-534	54.28	94.83	97.26	0.391	63.79	3	2
North Carolina	-277	49.61	99.33	61.68	0.502	65.10	2	1
North Dakota	133	68.61	96.12	84.77	0.682	57.22	6	3
Northern Mariana Islands	8	68.97	57.50	78.26	N/A	13.04	4	2
Ohio	133	59.34	96.73	100.00	0.604	49.38	5	3
Oklahoma	96	37.34	96.77	94.89	0.614	66.03	5	3
Oregon	147	64.50	97.35	92.45	0.582	79.46	6	3
Pennsylvania	-170	57.61	95.99	99.92	0.528	58.12	5	3
Puerto Rico	355	76.27	95.55	75.95	0.711	89.71	6	3
Rhode Island	65	64.28	90.57	100.00	0.539	63.09	6	3
South Carolina	-377	67.41	99.36	94.09	0.614	64.20	5	3
South Dakota	55	56.08	96.75	93.40	0.570	57.91	6	3
Tennessee	-391	74.17	92.58	87.29	0.558	71.93	5	3
Texas	-5,174	56.46	99.39	81.87	0.500	55.46	4	2
Utah	292	58.19	98.49	94.91	0.658	69.27	6	3

**Table B-2. Employment Outcomes (Evaluation Standard 1) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies—
General and Combined^b, by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005 (Continued)**

Must Pass at least four of the six Indicators and two of three Primary Indicators
Performance level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator

Agency	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes After An IPE ^c (≥ 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes After Services Under An IPE ^d (≥ 55.8%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for All Individuals That Were Competitive Employment ^e (≥ 72.6%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes That Were Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (≥ 62.4%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average VR Wage to Average State Wage ^g (≥ .52)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (≥ 53.0)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
Vermont	84	60.45	97.25	98.77	0.599	46.78	5	3
Virginia	1	53.06	100.00	80.77	0.634	61.54	5	3
Virgin Islands	-323	53.74	92.00	94.31	0.454	53.39	3	2
Washington	-370	43.90	98.10	99.82	0.532	56.69	4	3
West Virginia	112	61.47	98.65	92.32	0.624	65.04	6	3
Wisconsin	-213	43.21	96.43	97.41	0.569	51.82	3	3
Wyoming	157	67.69	98.80	71.95	0.605	65.85	6	3

Table B-3. Equal Access to Service (Evaluation Standard 2) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired, By Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005

Agency ^b	Indicator 2.1: Minority Service rate ratio ($\geq .80$) ^c	Minorities Exiting the VR Program ^d <i>An asterisk indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority populations exiting program.</i>
Arkansas	1.027	145
Connecticut	0.902	62*
Delaware	0.931	17*
Florida	0.949	683
Idaho	1.202	15*
Iowa	0.757	22*
Kentucky	1.028	82*
Maine	1.216	3*
Massachusetts	0.942	98*
Michigan	0.807	171
Minnesota	0.721	102
Missouri	1.013	68*
Nebraska	1.278	43*
New Jersey	0.911	265
New Mexico	1.013	73*
New York	0.736	577
North Carolina	0.853	562
Oregon	0.706	36*
South Carolina	0.982	256
South Dakota	0.893	26*
Texas	0.801	1932
Vermont	0.916	6*
Virginia	0.891	137
Washington	0.836	99*

^a The term "state" includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

^b Separate agencies in 24 states provide specialized services to blind and visually impaired persons.

^c Minority services rate ratio is the ratio of the percentage of minorities exiting the VR program who received services to the percentage of nonminorities exiting the program who received services. Minimum performance level criterion for this standard and indicator was established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 *CFR* 361).

^d Total number of individuals from minority populations exiting the VR program during the performance period.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C.

Table B-4. Access to Service (Evaluation Standard 2) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies—General and Combined,^b By Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005

Agency	Indicator 2.1: Minority Service rate ratio ($\geq .80$) ^c	Minorities Exiting the VR Program ^d <i>An asterisk indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority populations exiting program.</i>
Alabama	1.016	5,707
Alaska	0.949	536
American Samoa	0.667	42*
Arizona	0.885	2,371
Arkansas	0.866	1,770
California	0.998	19,706
Colorado	0.866	2,336
Connecticut	0.829	913
Delaware	0.964	1,032
District of Columbia	0.860	2,387
Florida	0.877	12,594
Georgia	0.968	6,807
Guam	0.785	137
Hawaii	1.063	1,351
Idaho	1.002	668
Illinois	0.909	7,455
Indiana	0.900	2,701
Iowa	0.748	834
Kansas	0.840	1,261
Kentucky	0.949	2,203
Louisiana	0.882	2,889
Maine	0.875	104
Maryland	0.799	5,123
Massachusetts	0.822	2,550
Michigan	0.853	5,957
Minnesota	0.784	2,141
Mississippi	0.898	3,958
Missouri	0.869	3,457
Montana	0.903	529
Nebraska	0.830	744
Nevada	0.864	1,042

^a The term "state" includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

^b General Agencies serve persons with various disabilities other than blindness or other visual impairments. Combined agencies serve all individuals including persons who are blind or visually impaired.

^c Minority service rate ratio is the ratio of the percentage of minorities exiting the VR program who received services to the percentage of nonminorities exiting the program who received services. Minimum performance level criterion for this standard and indicator was established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the Federal Register on June 5, 2000 (34 *CFR* 361).

^d Total number of individuals from minority populations exiting the VR program during the performance period.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C.

Table B-4. Access to Service (Evaluation Standard 2) of State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies—General and Combined,^b by Indicator and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Year 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Indicator 2.1: Minority Service rate ratio ($\geq .80$)^c	Minorities Exiting the VR Program^d <i>An asterisk indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority populations exiting program.</i>
New Hampshire	0.970	146
New Jersey	0.896	5,828
New Mexico	0.883	3,281
New York	0.904	19,518
North Carolina	0.986	13,790
North Dakota	0.599	393
Northern Mariana Islands	0.871	73*
Ohio	0.818	7,013
Oklahoma	0.967	3,557
Oregon	0.911	1,421
Pennsylvania	0.937	5,771
Puerto Rico	1.119	7,010
Rhode Island	0.906	459
South Carolina	0.965	9,082
South Dakota	0.833	485
Tennessee	0.907	2,418
Texas	1.023	21,606
Utah	0.925	1,475
Vermont	0.871	144
Virginia	1.080	87*
Virgin Islands	0.986	3,901
Washington	0.911	1,990
West Virginia	0.846	401
Wisconsin	0.786	2,765
Wyoming	0.934	205

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
U.S. Total	2005	2,603,845,000	206,695	188,353	91.13
	2004	2,552,362,000	213,432	193,695	90.75
	Percentage Change	2.02	-3.16	-2.76	
Total – General/ Combined Agencies ^e	2005	2,404,009,702	199,607	181,345	90.85
	2004	2,357,122,214	205,970	186,301	90.45
	Percentage Change	1.99	-3.09	-2.66	
Total – Agencies for the Blind ^f	2005	199,835,298	7,088	7,008	98.87
	2004	195,239,786	7,462	7,394	99.09
	Percentage Change	2.35	-5.01	-5.22	
General or Combined Agencies					
Alabama	2005	55,445,837	7,717	6,937	89.89
	2004	54,054,418	7,710	6,891	89.38
	Percentage Change	2.57	0.09	0.67	
Alaska	2005	8,679,483	526	439	83.46
	2004	8,602,430	524	437	83.40
	Percentage Change	0.90	0.38	0.46	
American Samoa	2005	867,728	23	23	100.00
	2004	738,967	18	17	94.44
	Percentage Change	17.42	27.78	35.29	

^a The term "state" includes, in addition to each of the states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the *Rehabilitation Act*, Section 7(32).

^b Total number of individuals with disabilities exiting the VR program securing employment during current performance period.

^c Significant disabilities are severe physical and mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

^d *Percentage* means the number of employment outcomes of individuals with significant disabilities divided by the number of employment outcomes.

^e General agencies serve persons with various disabilities other than blindness or other visual impairments. Combined agencies serve all individuals with disabilities including persons who are blind or visually impaired.

^f Separate agencies in 24 states provide specialized services to blind and visually impaired persons.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. 2005. *Case Service Report (RSA 911)*. Selected fiscal years. Washington, D.C.

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
Arizona	2005	40,862,175	1,900	1,822	95.89
	2004	48,460,233	1,688	1,541	91.29
	Percentage Change	-15.68	12.56	18.23	
Arkansas	2005	29,691,981	2,353	2,110	89.67
	2004	29,718,062	2,440	2,141	87.75
	Percentage Change	0.09	3.57	1.45	
California	2005	248,655,290	13,803	13,777	99.81
	2004	247,893,144	13,643	13,564	99.42
	Percentage Change	0.31	1.17	1.57	
Colorado	2005	28,243,537	1,936	1,819	93.96
	2004	26,164,691	1,625	1,405	86.46
	Percentage Change	7.95	19.14	29.47	
Connecticut	2005	16,005,885	1,218	1,218	100.00
	2004	15,947,288	1,364	1,364	100.00
	Percentage Change	0.37	-10.70	-10.70	
Delaware	2005	7,377,561	835	559	66.95
	2004	7,322,306	796	551	69.22
	Percentage Change	0.75	4.90	1.45	
District of Columbia	2005	11,989,800	736	732	99.46
	2004	12,090,518	734	680	92.64
	Percentage Change	-0.83	0.27	7.65	
Florida	2005	115,632,314	9,840	7,484	76.06
	2004	104,412,011	9,123	7,014	76.88
	Percentage Change	10.75	7.86	6.70	
Georgia	2005	77,939,250	4,828	3,795	78.60
	2004	76,059,977	4,586	3,557	77.56
	Percentage Change	2.47	5.28	6.69	
Guam	2005	2,052,208	18	18	100.00
	2004	1,700,000	13	13	100.00
	Percentage Change	20.72	38.46	38.46	
Hawaii	2005	10,447,079	695	580	83.45
	2004	10,211,708	738	578	78.32
	Percentage Change	2.30	-5.83	0.35	
Idaho	2005	12,515,781	1,907	1,852	97.12
	2004	11,984,177	1,777	1,722	96.90
	Percentage Change	4.44	7.32	7.55	

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
Illinois	2005	95,138,073	5,906	5,906	100.00
	2004	94,793,657	8,401	8,401	100.00
	Percentage Change	0.36	-29.70	-29.70	
Indiana	2005	61,487,904	5,961	4,164	69.85
	2004	60,435,379	5,021	4,634	92.29
	Percentage Change	1.74	18.72	-10.14	
Iowa	2005	23,332,421	2,121	1,926	90.81
	2004	21,702,431	2,113	1,871	88.55
	Percentage Change	7.51	0.38	2.94	
Kansas	2005	25,388,051	1,756	1,684	95.90
	2004	24,992,359	1,703	1,668	97.94
	Percentage Change	1.58	3.11	0.96	
Kentucky	2005	41,546,115	4,995	4,989	99.88
	2004	41,222,634	4,808	4,790	99.63
	Percentage Change	0.78	3.89	4.15	
Louisiana	2005	56,119,794	1,704	1,703	99.94
	2004	44,123,155	1,735	1,734	99.94
	Percentage Change	27.19	-1.79	-1.79	
Maine	2005	11,821,428	655	653	99.69
	2004	11,712,249	745	744	99.87
	Percentage Change	0.93	-12.08	-12.23	
Maryland	2005	37,912,602	3,005	3,005	100.00
	2004	38,305,525	2,962	2,959	99.90
	Percentage Change	-1.03	1.45	1.55	
Massachusetts	2005	37,047,616	3,400	3,400	100.00
	2004	38,488,010	3,093	3,093	100.00
	Percentage Change	-3.74	9.93	9.93	
Michigan	2005	77,904,846	7,537	6,839	90.74
	2004	78,004,122	7,103	6,372	89.71
	Percentage Change	-0.13	6.11	7.33	
Minnesota	2005	33,052,862	2,219	2,219	100.00
	2004	33,320,563	2,820	2,820	100.00
	Percentage Change	-0.80	-21.31	-21.31	
Mississippi	2005	46,409,766	4,457	4,445	99.73
	2004	39,128,158	4,455	4,408	98.95
	Percentage Change	18.61	0.04	0.84	

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
Missouri	2005	49,484,452	3,950	3,714	94.03
	2004	49,457,670	5,259	4,478	85.15
	Percentage Change	0.05	-24.89	-17.06	
Montana	2005	10,436,312	899	734	81.65
	2004	10,226,796	892	729	81.73
	Percentage Change	2.05	0.78	0.69	
Nebraska	2005	13,943,911	1,418	1,418	100.00
	2004	13,952,091	1,266	1,266	100.00
	Percentage Change	-0.06	12.01	12.01	
Nevada	2005	13,580,711	1,032	695	67.34
	2004	12,920,230	968	927	95.76
	Percentage Change	5.11	6.61	-25.03	
New Hampshire	2005	9,803,448	1,379	1,336	96.88
	2004	10,120,131	1,245	1,178	94.62
	Percentage Change	-3.13	10.76	13.41	
New Jersey	2005	41,891,883	4,177	3,890	93.13
	2004	41,725,897	3,901	3,565	91.39
	Percentage Change	0.40	7.08	9.12	
New Mexico	2005	17,641,062	1,705	1,588	93.14
	2004	17,259,672	1,513	1,383	91.41
	Percentage Change	2.21	12.69	14.82	
New York	2005	114,193,377	13,292	12,924	97.23
	2004	113,557,118	13,826	13,383	96.80
	Percentage Change	0.56	-3.86	-3.43	
North Carolina	2005	68,932,927	8,742	5,403	61.81
	2004	67,517,040	9,019	5,491	60.88
	Percentage Change	2.10	-3.07	-1.60	
North Dakota	2005	8,679,483	929	792	85.25
	2004	8,511,207	796	679	85.30
	Percentage Change	1.98	16.71	16.64	
Northern Mariana Islands	2005	999,872	40	28	70.00
	2004	959,804	32	28	87.50
	Percentage Change	4.17	25.00	0.00	
Ohio	2005	111,586,551	8,221	8,220	99.99
	2004	111,423,253	8,088	8,088	100.00
	Percentage Change	0.15	1.64	1.63	

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
Oklahoma	2005	39,104,131	2,105	2,012	95.58
	2004	38,442,555	2,009	1,827	90.94
	Percentage Change	1.72	4.78	10.13	
Oregon	2005	27,898,425	2,871	2,637	91.85
	2004	27,284,442	2,725	2,600	95.41
	Percentage Change	2.25	5.36	1.42	
Pennsylvania	2005	115,157,515	10,897	10,889	99.93
	2004	115,424,463	11,067	11,056	99.90
	Percentage Change	-0.23	-1.54	-1.51	
Puerto Rico	2005	66,279,553	2,767	2,115	76.44
	2004	61,124,201	2,412	1,754	72.72
	Percentage Change	8.43	14.72	20.58	
Rhode Island	2005	9,895,114	700	700	100.00
	2004	9,730,057	635	635	100.00
	Percentage Change	1.70	10.24	10.24	
South Carolina	2005	39,017,747	8,563	8,059	94.11
	2004	39,142,095	8,940	8,278	92.60
	Percentage Change	-0.32	-4.22	-2.65	
South Dakota	2005	6,943,586	830	777	93.61
	2004	6,920,610	775	714	92.13
	Percentage Change	0.33	7.10	8.82	
Tennessee	2005	60,699,149	3,382	2,974	87.94
	2004	60,634,388	3,773	3,298	87.41
	Percentage Change	0.11	-10.36	-9.82	
Texas	2005	156,872,878	13,791	11,294	81.89
	2004	152,099,004	18,965	14,830	78.20
	Percentage Change	3.14	-27.28	-23.84	
Utah	2005	24,526,633	3,109	2,947	94.79
	2004	23,887,248	2,817	2,584	91.73
	Percentage Change	2.68	10.37	14.05	
Vermont	2005	7,637,945	1,420	1,403	98.80
	2004	7,580,141	1,336	1,328	99.40
	Percentage Change	0.76	6.29	5.65	
Virginia	2005	1,861,075	26	21	80.77
	2004	1,889,392	25	20	80.00
	Percentage Change	-1.50	4.00	5.00	

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities^d
Virgin Islands	2005	50,980,939	3,612	3,415	94.55
	2004	51,570,117	3,935	3,662	93.06
	Percentage Change	-1.14	-8.21	-6.74	
Washington	2005	38,642,787	1,737	1,734	99.83
	2004	38,890,809	2,107	2,099	99.62
	Percentage Change	-0.64	-17.56	-17.39	
West Virginia	2005	24,171,790	2,218	2,045	92.20
	2004	24,381,098	2,106	1,929	91.60
	Percentage Change	-0.86	5.32	6.01	
Wisconsin	2005	52,012,086	3,080	3,002	97.47
	2004	51,503,742	3,293	3,177	96.48
	Percentage Change	0.99	-6.47	-5.51	
Wyoming	2005	7,566,973	664	481	72.44
	2004	7,398,771	507	346	68.24
	Percentage Change	2.27	30.97	39.02	
Agencies for the Blind					
Arkansas	2005	4,037,619	344	344	100.00
	2004	3,967,030	338	338	100.00
	Percentage Change	1.78	1.78	1.78	
Connecticut	2005	2,824,568	148	148	100.00
	2004	2,814,228	145	145	100.00
	Percentage Change	0.37	2.07	2.07	
Delaware	2005	1,301,922	9	9	100.00
	2004	1,292,171	12	12	100.00
	Percentage Change	0.75	-25.00	-25.00	
Florida	2005	23,683,727	632	617	97.63
	2004	21,497,154	644	636	98.76
	Percentage Change	10.17	-1.86	-2.99	
Idaho	2005	1,694,452	59	58	98.31
	2004	1,846,452	72	71	98.61
	Percentage Change	-8.23	-18.06	-18.31	
Iowa	2005	6,287,764	128	128	100.00
	2004	5,569,334	137	137	100.00
	Percentage Change	12.90	-6.57	-6.57	

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
Kentucky	2005	6,741,932	416	416	100.00
	2004	7,129,266	412	412	100.00
	Percentage Change	-5.43	0.97	0.97	
Maine	2005	2,683,391	203	199	98.03
	2004	2,931,275	133	131	98.50
	Percentage Change	-8.46	52.63	51.91	
Massachusetts	2005	6,537,814	201	201	100.00
	2004	6,715,237	193	193	100.00
	Percentage Change	-2.64	4.15	4.15	
Michigan	2005	11,329,806	295	295	100.00
	2004	10,500,562	253	253	100.00
	Percentage Change	7.90	16.60	16.60	
Minnesota	2005	7,255,507	128	125	97.66
	2004	7,314,271	109	109	100.00
	Percentage Change	-0.80	17.43	14.68	
Missouri	2005	7,370,509	242	242	100.00
	2004	7,247,855	239	239	100.00
	Percentage Change	1.69	1.26	1.26	
Nebraska	2005	2,557,759	82	82	100.00
	2004	2,508,172	82	82	100.00
	Percentage Change	1.98	0.00	0.00	
New Jersey	2005	10,472,971	273	269	98.53
	2004	9,806,474	263	250	95.06
	Percentage Change	6.80	3.80	7.60	
New Mexico	2005	4,004,413	47	46	97.87
	2004	4,217,840	40	40	100.00
	Percentage Change	-5.06	17.50	15.00	
New York	2005	21,751,119	948	948	100.00
	2004	21,629,927	1,414	1,414	100.00
	Percentage Change	0.56	-32.96	-32.96	
North Carolina	2005	13,621,477	700	666	95.14
	2004	13,341,691	700	677	96.71
	Percentage Change	2.10	0.00	-1.62	
Oregon	2005	3,985,489	111	111	100.00
	2004	3,897,777	109	109	100.00
	Percentage Change	2.25	1.83	1.83	

Table C. Amount and Percentage Change of Grant Awards to State^a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies, Number and Percentage Change of Employment Outcome and Percentage of Those With Significant Disabilities Who Have Employment Outcomes, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (Continued)

Agency	Fiscal Year and Percentage Change Between Years 2004 and 2005	Amount of Grant Award (\$) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^b and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^c and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^d
South Carolina	2005	5,848,784	282	272	96.45
	2004	5,892,706	287	271	94.43
	Percentage Change	-0.75	-1.74	0.37	
South Dakota	2005	1,735,897	87	84	96.55
	2004	1,730,150	76	75	98.68
	Percentage Change	0.33	14.47	12.00	
Texas	2005	39,158,313	1,383	1,381	99.86
	2004	38,325,197	1,354	1,354	100.00
	Percentage Change	2.17	2.14	1.99	
Vermont	2005	1,041,538	101	101	100.00
	2004	1,033,656	88	87	98.86
	Percentage Change	0.76	14.77	16.09	
Virginia	2005	7,617,841	140	138	98.57
	2004	7,700,299	232	230	99.14
	Percentage Change	-1.07	-39.66	-40.00	
Washington	2005	6,290,686	129	128	99.22
	2004	6,331,062	130	129	99.23
	Percentage Change	-0.64	-0.77	-0.78	

Our mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

www.ed.gov