DBVI State Rehabilitation Council Minutes – December 15, 2022

Present: Heather Allen, Sherrie Brunelle, Jerry Doody, Martha Frank, Tom Frank, Shelby Glass, Karen Gravlin, Harriet Hall, Fred Jones, Rose Lucenti, Kaelyn Modrak, Charlie Murphy, Hannah Peach, Steve Pouliot, Olga Pschorr, John Spinney

Adjustment to agenda: State Rehabilitation Council agrees to move policy and procedures review to February meeting.

Rose Lucenti motions to accept minutes from the full council meeting held on October 27, 2022. Martha Frank seconds, and the motion carries.

Kaelyn Modrak and Hannah Peach seek specific recommendations and input from the council for two winter sessions: Creating virtual support for client sessions and job clubs for individuals 25 to 55 years old.

Kaelyn and Hannah will be piloting in two virtual sessions in January and early February from 6:00 to 7:00pm. One session will focus on financial management and benefits. Professionals in the field will join to discuss with the group, and participants will walk away with resources and information.

The second session will focus on Assistive Technology tools that can be used in work setting and will offer the opportunity to chat with assistive technology specialists.

LEAP proposed using the virtual format within these sessions. Individuals will have the opportunity to review successes and challenges, gather feedback from peers and learn from each other and experts in the field. The sessions offer support for individuals seeking more connection in the virtual space.

**SRC member recommendations:**

* Recommendation for cross promotion with the Vermont Council of the Blind seminars that offer financial, socialization, supporting healthy young adults content. Thursday night assistive technology sessions could be incorporated and shared as resources in the second session (submitted by Jerry Doody).
* Include social security fact sheets developed by Noelle form HireAbility and incorporate into the sessions (submitted by Martha Frank).
* Recommendation how to use zoom and teams effectively could be a specific component (submitted by Tom Frank).
* State Rehabilitation Council recommends to move forward with the 6:00 to 7:00pm time frame and use of Eventbrite.
* Karen Gravlin obtains approval from Kaelyn and Hannah to promote the events on ABLE website.
* Shelby Glass recommends getting the word out through national and Vermont podcasts where possible.
* Sessions will promote mentoring that develops naturally through the connections experienced and is a signature feature of LEAP programs.
* State Rehabilitation council looks forward to offering additional input as the virtual sessions move forward.

SRC Council member updates:

Karen Gravlin, Director of the ABLE library highlights outreach to younger patrons through recent presentations to UVM students. For the first time, the National Library Service is presenting a summer reading program, supporting smaller libraries to “stop the summer slide.” The focus is to keep youth reading and staying engaged in learning throughout the summer for patrons of all ages. Karen will keep the council posted on updates for the Braille eReader as available. Karen agrees to connect with Kaelyn Modrak and youth within the LEAP Program as part of ABLE outreach.

Jerry Doody, Vermont Council of the Blind/Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired update. Shopping event in November was well attended. Membership drive is in January. A day trip will be planned in the fall. Annual meeting is in April.

John Spinney, Agency of Education, a lot of projects are currently happening. John confirms that all special education directors have information about the ABLE library.

Martha Frank, Vermont Family Network (VFN) is thrilled to have Dr. Jacqueline Kelleher join the team as the new Executive Director. VFN is looking to hire one family support consultant and one family engagement coordinator. Details on the positions can be found on the VFN website.

VFN will host a webinar on January 19th that highlights the DBVI LEAP model. The event is posted on the VFN website. A panel of our LEAP students will join us to tell their own stories and speak to the relationships and learning they gained from their LEAP experiences.

VFN will host “Services for children, what can VABVI provide for my child?” on February 8th from 10:00 to 11:00 with Stephanie Bissonette, the VABVI Director of Children Services. In addition to overseeing the children services department, she supervises the 15 Teachers for the Visually Impaired throughout the state.

Sherrie Brunelle, Client Assistance Program. CAP is piloting virtual clinics on a quarterly basis. Consumers can participate in half hour sessions. Individual consumers can make an appointment, and the roll out of this initiative is slow and steady. CAP is revising policy and procedures on self-employment in the general VR program and participates in self-employment five-state initiative.

Charlie Murphy, Vermont Center for Independent Living is getting ready for Disability Awareness Day in February 16th in coordination with VCDR. The theme this year is “Open to Change, Open to All,” and the February event will be held on Zoom.

Fred Jones, DBVI will continue the policy discussion in February. All council members can contact Fred for additional information.

Harriet facilitates parking lot discussion of Zoom versus Microsoft Teams platform. Laura Siegel has promoted access to Zoom licenses within DAIL in order to improve virtual accessibility for Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and DeafBlind participants. The zoom platform is available for SRC full council meetings as needed.

Sherrie Brunelle makes the motion to adjourn the SRC Council meeting. Jerry seconds the motion. Council adjourns.