



ADVANCING
DISABILITY INCLUSION
& WORKFORCE
INNOVATION

Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

Careers and Business Relations News Brief

June 2, 2024



CSAVR Careers and *Business Relations News Briefs* is a regular series covering The National Employment Team (NET) activities, business relations initiatives, media stories, business research initiatives, webinars, reports, conferences, and employment activities of interest to the membership.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

June marks the official start of summer, and the month is full of all kinds of holidays. Whether you're observing Pride Month, Juneteenth, Flag Day, Father's Day, or all four, there are plenty of ways to celebrate in June.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. National Updates

- a. Commissioner Allen Recognizes National Mental Health Month

2. NET Updates

- a. Trends in VR's Business Relations
- b. Microsoft CEO Video Message
- c. Nursing Education for Students with Disabilities
- d. Careers in STEM
- e. ACCESS Board Recruitment
- f. Amazon Accessibility and Careers
- g. Presidential Leadership Scholars Opportunity
- h. Windmills
 - i. Virginia Trains State and Community Partners
 - ii. Cross State Collaboration Training Business

3. TAP Updates

- a. Statistics for May
- b. Training and Development

4. Informational Sessions

- a. TranslateLive
- b. Employment and the Gig Economy

5. Articles and Features of Interest

- a. Caroline Casey – Building Accessible Workplaces
 - b. ACLU – Communication Access for the Deaf
 - c. COVID and ADHD
 - d. MSN Features
 - i. How to Build an Inclusive Workplace for People With Disabilities ([msn.com](#) [[msn.com](#)])
 - ii. How Neurodiverse Talent Can Boost Your Business and the Broader Community ([msn.com](#) [[msn.com](#)])
 - iii. 27 Eye-Opening Quotes From People With Disabilities ([msn.com](#) [[msn.com](#)])
 - iv. Neurodiversity isn't an obstacle in business, it's an intrinsic driver of success ([msn.com](#) [[msn.com](#)])
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NATIONAL UPDATES

Commissioner Allen Recognizes Mental Health Awareness Month: The Rehabilitation Services Administration published a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL 24-03\) \[rsa.ed.gov\]](#) from Commissioner Allen in recognition of *Mental Health Awareness Month* and to highlight the importance of mental health and the power of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program to help individuals with mental health conditions live fulfilling and meaningful lives.

Commissioner Allen also highlights mental health resources from a range of Federal government agencies and encourages the VR agencies to support participants as they navigate mental health-related barriers and seek competitive integrated employment and integration into the community.

NET UPDATES

Trends in Business Relations: It is exciting to see the increase in the business-to-business referrals to the VR- NET, including large/small businesses and government employees. There is also increasing cross-state work, thank you for your support and the work of the NET points of contact as well as the business relations teams at the state and local level.

[Microsoft CEO Video Message \[youtube.com\]](#)

Nursing Education: New guide for [students with disabilities on choosing a career in nursing \[nursingeducation.org\]](#)

Careers in STEM: Thank you to the Michigan Team for sharing this opportunity! Careers in STEM: an upcoming virtual session on June 10, 2024 (1-2:30) hosted by the national Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. This discussion will focus on ableism and inclusivity in STEM fields and careers:

[Disrupting Ableism and Advancing STEM A Year of Reflections and Actions | National Academies \[nationalacademies.org\]](#)

ACCESS Board Supervisory IT Program Manager: [USAJOBS - Job Announcement \[usajobs.gov\]](#)

[Amazon Accessibility \[aws.amazon.com\]](#)

[Presidential Leadership Scholars - Apply by July 14th \[presidentialleadershipscholars.org\]](#)

Virginia VR Staff Provide Windmills Training to Partners: VA-DARS included a requirement in the Combined State Plan for state and community partners to improve service and instruction for individuals with disabilities. All provider staff members should be aware of how to greet and serve all individuals from “welcome.” This includes accessible websites; front desk interactions; test accommodations upon disclosure of a disability; reasonable accommodations, assistive technology, and universal design practices for instruction and participation; and information referrals for services from other agencies and accommodation requests.

As part of their efforts to scale up inclusion and accessibility for students and individuals with disabilities, DARS staff have provided Windmills training to state workforce staff and adult education providers. The presentations have been a welcoming offering for non-educators and even educators who do not have any special education background or who have not thought about disability beyond diagnoses. The topics are timely, the events are interactive and prompt reflection, and our practitioners are learning alongside their workforce partners from other programs and other regions in the commonwealth.

NET POC Multi-state Collaboration: Inger assisted David Leon VA DARS NET POC and Matt Herron with pulling NET Representatives from Kentucky and Tennessee together to discuss strategies for collaboration on providing Windmills Training to a business partner that has a foot print in each of the states mentioned above. This was the first of several meetings necessary to provide a training that is consistent with the business request to train their hiring team as well as front line management and assistant managers. The business has locations in Georgia, Alabama as well as Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee. More will be shared as the collaboration moves forward and we would like to thank the VR Directors and NET Points of Contact in these states for their support of building effective relationships and collaboration across the footprint of the business.

TAP UPDATES

May 2024 – Stats: 611,776 Jobs Posted, 21,325 Jobs Viewed, 160 Job Applications.

New Candidates May 2024

State	New Candidate	Applications
Michigan (G)	53	17
Florida (B)	23	14
California	15	18
South Carolina (G)	10	2
Missouri (G)	5	1
Illinois	5	8

Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP): We are excited to see the increase request from states to better utilize TAP. Inger is taking the lead on developing utilization strategies, assisting with clean-up and staff training. The portal was built by the CSAVR-NET in collaboration with Mike Corso at disABLEDpersons with input from our customers (businesses, candidates and VR Agencies). It was designed to provide career opportunities to individuals with disabilities, create talent pipelines for our business partners, and to provide real time labor market information to our SVRA staff. The other value-added features to this portal is that it has built in support for our dual-customers the candidate, our VR staff, partner agencies as well as business partners who can run reports that support the awesome work they are doing. This portal offers additional returns on investment for our federal contracting business partners who have access to the system as it allows them to run data reports required by the OFCCP. If you would like additional information, please contact Kathy West-Evans Director of Business Relations or Inger Neal Business Relations Consultant.

INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

TranslateLive, Date: Jun 4, 2024, Time: 10:00 a.m. Pacific/11:00 a.m. Mountain/12:00 noon Central/1:00 PM EST

Join us for our FREE webinar, "From Barriers to Breakthroughs: Leveraging AI for Accessible Communication in Workforce Development & Adult Education," hosted by Timothy J Blonsky, Chair of Idaho's State Rehabilitation Council and a Workforce Development Consultant

Meet the expert panel:

- Peter Hayes and Jennifer Quigley from TranslateLive
- Laura Dutch from Valleho Adult School
- Lauren Phipps of Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas-American Job Center Network

In this webinar, these experienced pros will expertly navigate you through:

- How AI technology removes language barriers, fostering seamless communication with all clients.
- The benefits of AI for both staff and consumers in your programs.
- Real-world examples of how agencies are using AI to achieve results!

[Register or get more info \[translatelive.com\]](https://translatelive.com)

[Employment and The Gig Economy \[ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com\]](https://ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com) June 6, 2024 (National Center on Self-Employment, Business Ownership, and Telecommuting)

Target Audience: VR administrators, VR counselors, service providers, individuals with disabilities, and family members.

ARTICLES AND FEATURES OF INTEREST

[Caroline Casey: Building Accessible Workplaces \[forbes.com\]](#)

[ACLU – Communication Access for Deaf \[aclu.org\]](#)

[COVID – ADHD \[ncbi.nlm.nih.gov\]](#)

**[How to Build an Inclusive Workplace for People With Disabilities \(msn.com\)](#)
[\[msn.com\]](#)**

[How Neurodiverse Talent Can Boost Your Business and the Broader Community \(msn.com\) \[msn.com\]](#)

[27 Eye-Opening Quotes From People With Disabilities \(msn.com\) \[msn.com\]](#)

[Neurodiversity isn't an obstacle in business, it's an intrinsic driver of success \(msn.com\) \[msn.com\]](#)

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Kathy or Inger.