CSAVR Spring Conference

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>>SPEAKER: Teresa, can you hear me?

>>: Folks, we're going to get started. It's our final session.

Thank you, so much for, number one, sticking around. We know that many folks are going to want to get on the road, airlines and things like that. Thank you for sticking around to be a part of this morning's session with RSA. I want to say to Carol and to the team, we do appreciate you all each year taking time to take to the conferences, share give us updates and keep us informed, take dialogue and to help us do the work we're doing. I appreciate you being here and in good presence as well. I want to thank you for that. Just so we can get started I'll turn it over to Carol.

Can you hear me? Thank you.

>>CAROL DOBAK: Thank you for a successful can do. I enjoyed being present here Monday morning and hearing of all very exciting and interesting innovative ways in which all of you are working with individuals with disabilities to achieve high quality competitive integrative employment.

Business service representatives represents a lot of hard work on parts of the agencies and all that you do every day to assist people with disabilities to achieve, as I said, high quality competitive integrated employment. Thank you for all of that.

I'll spend a few minutes talking about how we here at RSA came to be presenting to you on this particular topic. This session is trends in the VR program post WIOA: A shift in focus and performance?

I said question mark because that's very important to the context of this presentation. It is a presentation that is meant to explore trends in the VR program using data that we have reported by all of you through the RSA 911. It represents a journey, and I just give you a little bit background where this journey began. Um, I and other leaders represented here on the stage from RSA participate quarterly as many of you know in the CSAVR executive committee conference calls and meetings. And we went through a number of topics in that January meeting and Joe Xavier at the end, I think rather incidentally said: Carol, do you have anything you would like to say to us before we conclude? And I said: Introduction, yeah. We do actually.

What I would add there is a discussion of some of the data we had been noting which you'll heartbeat throughout the presentation. You know, I just ask people to think about that. Come up with maybe some of their own ideas as to why the data looks the way it does right now, and, um, we, through that call very briefly, heard some very thoughtful responses from a number of people and I suggested at the end of the call that this would be a continuing conversation, a continuing interaction and partnership. With CSAVR to further explore what the data can tell us right now about the VR program. So after that we got a request from the executive committee through CSAVR as possible topic. You'll hear some of the data, pre and post WIOA data both programmatic and fiscal that Chris Pope, David Steel will deliver to you. Roseanne Ashby and Susan Mitchell will engage in discussion with all of you.

Our slides are actually up on the screen now. So thank you, everyone for taking care of that for us. So, um, super. Suzanne and Roseanne will engage with you some questions that you might want to ask yourselves as to what this data, national level data might say so you about your agency's data and performance. Then, um, you'll hear from Mary Lovely and Corinne Weidenthal, who is our newest RSA manager. They'll talk to you about grant investments including the one attack, et cetera and how they can support all of you moving forward. At the end of that we'll talk about what I view as a strong, um, thinking initiative. Rethinking initiative. Yes, we are rethinking our work at RSA and how we work with you. I would like to, at the end, role out along with Steve wood son and Carol, initiative we put together, again, to continue this conversation. With that I'll turn over to Chris, okay. Great. By the way, I would like to introduce Chris post-op for all of you who may not know. He is chief. Thank you for your presentation.

[Applause.]

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: I spent the weekend with my four-year-old niece and I was telling her about my presentation and new job and she said: Are you talking about technology? And I said, yes. She said: I should tell the audience the following joke. [Laughter.] About technology. If you want a bluetooth, eat a Blackberry [Laughter.]

Complements of my four-year-old niece. This is a overview session we'll start talking about programmatic data followed by David Steel's conversation with data and couple of conferences with --

The first set of data comes from the RSA 113 which is known as the quarterly accumulative case load report. As you know RSA discontinued the 113 effective end of January 31st, 2019. So we will not have RSA 113 data for fiscal year 19, but we do have it for the ten previous fiscal years. It's the first set we'll use.

That data provides us information about the number of applicants and eligible individuals and the number of eligible individuals who received the VR services under their IP E.

The second data source we'll use is from the RSA 911 case service report. This is also based on the past ten federal fiscal years. I have a bullet in here that I'm not going to read, but if you remember the history of the 911, it is now, on a program year basis. So to calculate federal fiscal year for 2017 and 2018, it's a congress radiation of a few different quarters and we explain that there.

With the 911 we'll present data employment outcomes, rate and individuals who exited with different outcomes. Wages across the board and media wages for individuals under 25 and those over 25. We're also using the RSA 911 for program year 2017 to present some data related to preemployment transition services. The number of students with disabilities who have reported by VR agencies to RSA as being a student with a disability. Then some data related [phone dings] to those students who received preemployment transition services in those four quarters.

This is related to the number of individuals who have applied to the VR program over a period. You'll notice that in federal fiscal year 2010 just over 700,000 individuals applied to the program. In 2018, 528,000 individuals applied to the program.

That represents a 25% decrease over the past 8 years. Roseanne.

>>ROSEANNE ASHBY: Thanks, Chris. Again, we see this decline from 2010 to 2018 nationally and, of course, we've seen the decline as we came out visiting some of the state VR agencies. If this is the case in your agency I'll share a few thoughts, some things you might think about as you analyze this.

Think about how you might reverse this trend. One of the first things we might want to think about is outreach. What are you doing in terms of outreach activities? Who are you reaching out to in terms of consumer organizations, community rehab schools? How is that happening in terms of referrals, are referrals being handled expeditiously to previous undue delays and dropout of applicants? People don't want to wait in a referral setting. They want to be Abe to apply right away. What can you do to kind of expedite that process? Have source referrals changeover the years. If so is that something you need to address in some way.

Another factor to think about is the economy. Maybe your economy is good. Maybe people are finding employment without engaging in the VR process. If so, if that's the case, what steps can you take to engage individuals with disabilities? One that I think occurs to us is that, you know, the whole focus on careers rather than jobs would be one way that VR could really add value to an individual with a disability, who might be able to find a job, but not necessarily, you know, have the training and the resources to really engage in a long-term career that maximizes their potential.

Order of selection is another factory factor, does the number of closures effect the number of applicants particularly in those agencies where they've had an order categories close for a number of years. That can effect the referral sources and the number of applicants.

Change that agency structure or placement. Do individuals know where to apply for VR services? How is the VR agency informing individuals of the disability services of the changes of the structure or how to apply for services? How is that happening, the communication?

Um, another factor is availability of other programs. Are individuals accessing other workforce partners and programs that may be responding quicker to the individual and meeting their needs more quickly. If so, what you do about that?

Finally, are there policy, regulatory or statutory changes that effect who is seeking services from the VR agency and how can those be addressed to increase the number of applicants?

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thanks Roseanne. Historical trends related to the number of individuals eligible for VR service. Have a are to the last slide we've notice add national downward trend in that data which would make sense. Fewer people applying the fewer people determined eligible. As demonstrated on this graphic [indicating] you'll see in FY10 just about 693,000 individuals with disabilities were determined eligible for VR services.

In the last federal fiscal year 2018, just about 485,000 individuals were determined eligible. And like the individuals applying representing a 25% downward trend this data subject substantiates a 30% decrease [phone rings] over the past eight years.

>>ROSEANNE ASHBY: What are the possible number of decline in the number of individuals eligible for the VR program? Of course, if the number of applicants are declining, we would expect perhaps a similar decline in the number of eligible individuals.

One statistic I want to share with you is that nationally, 59 of the 79 VR agencies in program year 2017, substantially met the 60-day timeframe from application to eligibility determination. What that also means then is that 20 agencies did not substantially meet that requirement. That's about a quarter of the agencies.

So, um, this requirement, of course, has been in the law since 1992. We see, um, many audits identify this as an issue. So it is one that if you are one of those agencies struggling to meet this requirement, you need to think about what you might do to, you know, address it. What barriers are you finding to expeditious eligibility determination? Are you maximizing the use of existing data to determine eligibility? Uhm, are applicants on SSI or SSDI being determined eligible expeditiously? These individuals are presumed eligible, so their process should be fairly quick.

Are you using trial work periods appropriately to help determine eligibility for individuals with significant disabilities, that, you know, you have concerns about whether or not they can benefit from the program?

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thanks Roseanne. The final set up for RSA data we'd like to show is the number of individuals who received VR services. In other words, they were determined eligible, received an IPE and the VR agency provided some service to them. This chart represents what we're seeing over the past eight years in terms of those statistics. As you will see the number of individuals who were determined eligible and received one VR service. The most significant decrease from year-to-year was 13th to. You'll see the drop in the middle and that decrease is 6%. The percentages behind these accumulative figures here show that in 2010, where just about the highest, 69% individuals who were determined eligible received VR services. However, in the final year 2018, 52% were determined eligible received VR services. In other words, almost half individuals determined eligible in 2018 isn't receive VR service. Roseanne.

>>ROSEANNE ASHBY: Okay. So what could account for this decline? Obviously, this data is data that we are concerned about. Is there an increase in the number of individuals dropping out after the IPE is assigned, but before receiving services? If that's the case, what is happening? Why are they dropping out? Are there delays in the receipt of services such that they get discouraged and dropout at that point?

Are there sufficient providers of services and sufficient choice of providers? Are people satisfied with what they're being offered in their IPE?

Are there undue delays providing the services, and if so what accounts for these delays, but this is definitely, again, something that [phone dings] we found, we have a lot of concern about. Certainly if this is happening in your state, you need to try think about ways to address this.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thanks Roseanne. The next set of data that Susan will explain order of selection. Not from RSA 13, but data RSA collected over eight years. I'll hand things over to Suzanne to explain that.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: Thank you Chris, I know that a number of times a week I'm asked the question: How many states are on a an order of selection? It comes from CSAVR, comes from various state agencies. This morning it came from Carlos S. who I met in the lobby. And one of his first questions to me was: How many states are on order ever selection now?

I know it's been something that we've been monitoring both through state plans and through information that's supplied to us through our state teams working with states as they are implementing order of selection.

So, you know, across the years, it has gone up and down, but let's look at it post WIOA. Federal fiscal year 2015, 36 of the 80 VR agencies had an order of selection. 16, 35 had an order of selection.

In '17, 37 of 79 VR agencies had an order of selection.

In '18, 40 of 79 agencies had an order of selection.

In 19, as of March 1st, 41 of 78 VR agencies had an order of selection. Having an order of selection doesn't necessarily mean that categories are closed so we want to give you a little bit of information about those agencies over the last year from February 2018, to march of 2019. The number of VR agencies with no categories open doubled from four agencies to eight agencies. That's a pretty significant number.

The number of VR agencies that had one or more categories closed, increased from 21 agencies to 33 agencies. So we are seeing an upward tick in the number of agencies closing categories and implementing their order of selection.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thanks Susan. We'll shift gears here and talk about RSA data and focus on outcomes. What happens after people receive the VR services from state agencies.

Before flipping to employment rate I want to provide the caveat and disclaimer that employment rate or rehabilitation rate is no longer one of the WIOA performance indicators or the common performance measures. However, this data might be interesting to state VR agencies to think about performance in terms of whether or not individuals are employed at the time they exit the VR program.

So here is the employment rate slide for all individuals over the past fiscal years. Um, you'll notice here that [indicating] in 2010 we range from a low of about 52% to a high of about 57% in 2016. It drops from 16 to 17 to just under 50%.

Further dropped from 17 to 18 by a couple of percentage points. So as substantiated here in this cliff around FY '16 to '18 we've seen a 9% increase over that two-year rate in employment rate.

The flex slide is outcomes. For all individuals served by the VR program. Suzanne and I will talk about this data more. It corresponds directly to the bereaves slide related to employment rate. These two lines here represent [indicating] how we calculate the employment rate.

So the yellow line is the number of individuals who exited with competitive integrated employment or supportive employment outcome. In the purplish line represents the number of individuals who exited without employment.

You'll notice here for the first time in federal fiscal year 2016, there were more individuals exiting without employment an individuals exiting with some type of employment outcome.

Suzanne.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: We might want to think about some things as we look at this. It is interesting that the intersection there that takes place has impacted the employment rate. While, as Chris said, we're not using the employment rate as a measure anymore, it is pretty significant to see that the number of individuals who were exiting without employment, has exceeded the number who are exiting with employment.

That's something to think about. So some things that we want to think about was: Why are the number of individuals exiting without employment after receiving VR services? Why is that increasing? Are there sufficient services to help an individual achieve the employment goal? Are we providing sufficient services?

Is the economy, again, a factor? Are we really looking at fields that are representative of the demands in the economy? And working with our individuals to determine their employment goals.

Are individuals receiving the necessary training, education and services, to maximize their employment opportunities? And those staying interested in being involved in the VR program.

Are individuals provided all necessary supports to succeed? We can ask, um, is benefits counseling being provided to individuals who are in the VR system? And the impact of, what, on their benefits, of what work might mean?

What is the level and success of the VR agencies engagement with employers? Are you engaging actively with employers to find those opportunities? I know I sat in the employment committee the other day and there's some very good things going on throughout the country, that state VR agencies are doing to increase engagement with employers to improve the opportunity for employment outcomes.

Our customized employment and supported employment being fully used to assist individuals with disabilities. Chris.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Before flipping to the next slide which is a break down by age, those under 25 and over 25, I'll explain that this yellow line here [indicating] is reflected on the next slide. If you take the two subsets and add them together. We'll show that here in a minute. I just wanted to explain it. This yellow line carries over because this is all individuals who exited with some employment outcome in the next slide is the same thing, which shows the individuals under the anal of 25 who exited with an employment outcome. And those older than 25 who exited with an employment outcome.

If you take the red and blue lines and put them on top of each other you get the total number which was reflected previous slide. Suzanne will provide more context about this data.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: If we look at youth 25 and under who are exiting. In FY2010, I think it was about 33% of all those individuals. If you look in the federal fiscal years 2014-to 18, you will see that it is about 36%, so it has gone up slightly over the years in terms of number of youth who are exiting with employment outcome.

The percentage of adults receiving employment outcomes doesn't appear to have substantially changed, based on this closed case data from the 911 that we're featuring here the federal fiscal year.

However, if we look at our program year data for 2017, it is interesting because we see that about 49% of the individuals that are being served are youth. That's about 454,472 individuals that make up that 49% served. We are seeing perhaps -- although, we don't have the data to support this -- we are seeing what we believe is an increase in the number of youth who are being served.

Um, based on this, I think what we can expect in this chart is to see an increase in the percentage of youth who are exiting with employment in the coming years. The number of participants, age 14-24 in program year '17 who exited with competitive integrated supported employment was 55,088 individuals.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thanks Suzanne. The next slide we'll bring up is related to WIOA performance accountability indicator related to medium wages. As you know one of the indicators is participants who exited with employment. Their median wages in the second quarter after exit.

The data we'll present here are their median wages at the time of exit, so after they have exited the program. This is not second quarter data, because we don't have all of that yet, of course, for the past eight fiscal years.

This chart here shows median wages for all individuals who exited with any type of employment outcome. Supported employment over the past eight federal fiscal years. You'll notice here that from 2010-2018 we've seen $1.75 increase. The most substantial jump comes from 2016-2018 where we had a $9.50 median. And 2018 shows that anyone who exited with any type of outcome is $10.75.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: We would encourage you to look at your state's minimum wane. Of course, there's a lot of variability in minimum wage. Look at that as compared to the wages of individuals exiting your program. In terms of various occupations, look at how the individual's exiting your program, how their wages compare to the median wages of others in your state who enter those same occupations. You're going to see more this year than last even. We have more information in our monitoring tables related to the standard occupational codes. And, um, we encourage you to use that information, um, and just generally when we look at wages, the question that we is ask is: Do these data reflect our commitment to maximize quality employment opportunities?

If the data does not reflect that commitment, then, what can we do to change that? What challenges are there and how can we address those challenges?

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: The next slide similar to when we broke out in employment outcomes in 25 older and younger does that for these median wages this. Slide that Roseanne will talk about in a moment, explains that what the individuals under 25, their median wages. And older 25. So if you take these and combine them together you'll get all individuals median wages. Roseanne.

>>ROSEANNE ASHBY: For youth was approximately 1.50 cents less than for adults, but beginning in FY15 it was reduced to about a dollar. So that's a positive trend. For both populations, those under 25 and 25 and older, the median wage has increased. You can see that on this slide. [Indicating.]

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thanks Roseanne. We'll switch gears a little bit here and I mentioned we have some program year 2017 data related to the number of students with disabilities reported and whether or not they received preemployment transition services. An individual potentially eligible or who had applied to the program.

This next slide shows the total number of students with disabilities reported over program year 2017. Of course, we have the quarterly data for this now. As you know not all students with disabilities must receive a preemployment transition service, but you must be a student with a disability to receive preemployment transition service. So you'll see hear about a 32% increase over that program year beginning with about 343,000 students reported in Q1 of program years 2017 which began on July 1st, 2017, to just over 500,000. 5,003,000 students reported. This is actually six quarters. It's the four quarters of 2017 and the first quarters of 2018.

We hit 503,000 students who reported on the RSA 9 is 1. This doesn't account whether they received employment pancreas service. We'll share data with you next.

This slide that Roseanne will talk about with me, shows those who were reported and whether or not they received a preemployment transition service. So that yellow bar graph was the yellow line on the previous slide. You'll see that the yellow line is increasing over the six quarters from July 1st, 2017, into the fall of 2018.

You'll see here that -- Roseanne will talk about this -- the number of disability students who received disability employment services is a fraction of those services.

>>ROSEANNE ASHBY: Basically there's variability among the quarters, the percentage of students with disabilities who received preemployment transition services, the average percentage is about 23% of those individuals who were reported as being students.

And so the question that occurs to us is: What accounts for the large percentage of students who are not receiving preemployment transition services? What kinds of services are they receiving? Is there a way to reach out to them and offer preemployment transition services if that would be appropriate? That would be our question here.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: On the next slide I'll flip to is that we're taking these bluish bar graphs here and breaking them out to the number of students who applied for VR services and received services. This slide [indicating] shows who applied to the program as a percentage of those who received those services. You'll notice that about half of students with disabilities, who received preemployment transition services applied to the VR program over these six quarters.

Switching gears a little bit here and throwing it over to sue Van to talk about what this slide shows. This is the individuals exiting the VR program at various stages of the VR process. This is accumulative data for program year 2017.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: Thank you, Chris. If you look at the graph, approximately 11% of individuals exited after application, but before eligibility determination, and approximately 20% of individuals exited after eligibility, but prior to assigned IPE. Just as an aside, we get this if he question as well: A number of you are concerned meeting the IPE timeframe.

Ten of the 79 VR agencies in program year 17 substantial met the 90-day timeframe for the development of IPE. We don't have data specifically on the IPE extensions that may have been granted, but it is worth considering when you think ten of 79 VR agencies meet the timeframe, and there may be questions you might ask around that as to what can improve that.

Approximately 33% of individuals exited after an I PE E, without an employment outcome. In program year '17, 31% of individuals exited after an IPE and competitive integrated employment if you look at those figures and this represents what Chris talked about previously with or without employment. If you look at those you want to note that approximately 1/3 of individuals exited before receiving services.

Again, this is aggregate data. Your agency may want to think about this in terms of your own agency and where you fit into this picture. Again, when we look at a third of individuals exiting before services, it's worth asking some questions about why that may be occurring.

>>: Can you define what substantially met means? Because we use that term widely on eligibility.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: What is the definition more or less of substantial met for IPE and eligibility timeliness.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: There's not a statutory definition for what that means, but in RSA we have traditionally looked at that a is around 90%.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Just like RSA collects information about the stages at which people exit the VR program, we also collect information about why they exited the VR program or more or less their reasons for exit. Suzanne will talk about this next slide: Reasons for exits for PY2017.

We had just under 500,000 individuals exiting the VR program. Suzanne.

>>SUZANNE MITCHELL: If we translate that into percentages, 28.3% of individuals were no longer interested in receiving services or further services from the VR program.

22.4% of individuals were unable to be located or unable to locate or to be contacted.

So if you put those two percentages together, over half of the individuals who exited did so for these two reasons. This is what is reported to us.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: So that's sort of our overview of the past eight years of programmatic data. We'll switch gears, handing things over to David Steel to talk about fiscal trends over the past several years.

>>DAVID STEEL: Thank you pleasure to be here today. With Chris starting off with his four-year-old joke, my wife has just completed her certificate for special education to become a teacher. Pediatrics physician and wanted to become a preschool education teacher. She was completing her internship or that she had to do -- student teaching is what it's called. She got up from the floor and -- ouch, my knee hurt I'm old. A kid came up and said Ms. Steel you're not old. Old is when you sit at home all day and you watch TV and you're grumpy. [Laughter.] I thought that's a much better definition of age. So she will remember that.

Is you sit at home all day and you watch TV and you're grumpy. [Laughter.] Anyway it's a pleasure to be here today.

We'll talk about some of the fiscal data in looking at it after the performance data so that you can get a better idea, I think of the picture that the two may present together.

First, is a look at VR federal allocations. This slide shows the total amount of federal funds allocated [phone dings] to the program since 2010. The total amounts include any amounts -- general trends increasing amount of funds on a year-to-year basis.

Since 2015, you will notice [indicating] when WIOA, the federal amount going into the VR program increased by $200 million. Which is quite significant. That includes sequestration. We have been fortunate with that.

And the increases to the VR budget being mandatory program sequestration has resulted in less reduction than received by the portion that increase we're receiving. So compared to other federal programs we've been fortunate through this process to see our funding continue to increase.

As a reminder too, any increase to this also increases preemployment transition services.

For example, a $500 million in additional VR appropriations -- $500 million would mean that 75 has to be reserved for preemployment transition services. So any increase in this proportionally has to be -- 15% has to be reserved from that.

-- [indiscernible] -- you're required to reserve of that and also the total amount increases because that 15% and the climb as you have an increase annually and the total federal appropriations. I want to skip ahead a couple of slides. By looking at also the total non-federal share in the VR program.

Here you'll see the total amount reported on -- federal funds that exist and have since 2010. You'll notice that there has been a substantial increase of $50 million since 2015 in state funds going into the VR program. Combined with the federal, you're looking at $250 million, about half of the 500 million we talked about with the 15%, that's been added into the VR program.

That's substantial sum of money. That's been added to the VR program since 2010. Uh-oh, I did something wrong. That was a blank.

So it may be important to consider the extent to which an inverse relationship might exist between VR funding and performance. It was increased applicants, increased outcomes and individuals. How long does this apparent hold true in if you pulled this in from AARA funding you would see an increase in -- match free. A lot of those plans said we'll have our infrastructure and do this and more efficient serving more individuals. The data doesn't bear that out. That half a billions in funding that went into the system, if you look at the data -- it's important to look at what increasing funds can -- what that means to the program and what that means to the outcomes looking at both performance and fiscal data together to determine what that picture might look like.

Maintenance of effort penalties. You see the amount of money increasing [phone dings] you would expect to see that. As the state money increased that means that more states are able to meet their requirements from two years prior not VR program.

Interesting thing about maintenance of effort slide is that the penalties slide -- is the variability. A lot of times this relates directly to real opt. Because these funds that are made with penalties are real opt. Funds. You'll notice that 72-point it million. In 2012 it was 4 3.6 million. In 2014, it was 14 million. 2016, 26 million. And 2018, if you look down there it was 6.5 million. There's just no way.

You would expect to see the same trend coming outline and we've received more as more state incomes are put back into the program -- state funds -- you would see an increase amount of penalties along with that. That's consistent with what we expect to see. Funds relinquished in reallotment.

It was a unique set of circumstances, economic circumstances that existed. The influx of the R A money like a snake eating an egg. It takes a while to go through it, digest it and process it. That money going through the VR system -- represented [indicating] you can see the real anomaly of that reallotment prior 202010, the VR program almost always had real money than made available. It was rare that we said every state got what they requested.

2010, economic circumstances in 2015 -- you see that there was a huge amount of overage and reallotment where there was given up in reallotment than requested.

2015 [phone dings] you can see how dramatically that changed. We're now back to what existed before -- the sense of VR.

That's one of the reasons we work with states telling them about not putting permanent fixed funding or long-term funding or recurring funding on real allotment funds -- year-to-year they change and we never know what they'll be or what individual states might be eligible for.

VR funds unexpended at closeout."

VR programs have returned $28 million to government -- unused in VR funding. Since 2016, 2017, we returned more than any time in VR's history, unused founding federal government.

If you know, you looked at these unexpended funds, if they were put up for reallotment, everybody would have got what they wanted. This money of its matched and available. Other agencies were to match these funds, but instead go back to the treasury unused.

Next picture [indicating] shows you the states in 2017 with unexpended VR funds. The color gradation shows you red being the most money returned to the federal government with the different colors showing you down to the pink showing the least amount of money.

The interesting thing is that some of the states represented here got money in reallotment that was used in the end. Not only returned money that was unused or not during reallotment -- looking at some as high as 10a-16, $20 million that were not used that could have been glued other programs, but states that went unused returned because it wasn't used after they had received it. Two issues to look at there.

One is how states determine giving up money during reallotment can be used for other VR programs they can match. Also looking at when they get reallotment funds they can use them and not let them be returned to the treasury unused.

It's another one of those pictures when you present the budget picture and performance picture, you can start to look at it and say: How do we put this together to form a whole? We talked about this earlier with a non-federal share.

Federal program income decreased in the past couple of years [indicating.] Looking at the total federal program across all VR agencies. It's difficult to say the amount of this that would be resulting in impact on the VR program because so much significant portion of this is transferred other programs under the Rehab Act. That it would be difficult to ascertain exactly what the impact of this was on VR directly.

It does represent a decreasing amount. You can see since 2013, we see -- an increase come into the program.

So there's a summary. The federal allocation of the VR program has increased by approximately $200 million since 2015. "[Reading]...VR purposes."

Okay. That's it for me.

>>MARY LOVELY: As many of you know I'm the acting director of the training and service programs division RSA since Tom Finch's requirement at the beginning of this requirement on a year I'm at this moment in my usual role which is the training programs unit in RSA. So my comments combine those of the training unit along with the division wide comments.

Uhm, I'm very pleased to announce that we have after a number of years finally been able to hire a unit chief for the service programs unit which is responsible for the American Indian vocational rehabilitation program and the Randolph Shepherd Program. Sitting to any left is Corinne Weidenthal. You will hear from her.

I have announcements related to her program. I'll topically my name them and let her talk about them in detail. I don't want to steal her thunder.

In in addition, Corinne was one of the leads on the promise grants disability innovation fund during the time when there was a lot of unused allotment funds. She has a lot of knowledge about promise and as a result about the programs, in particular transition, with the VR programs. So that's where she comes to us from.

Um, we are working together along with Carol and the rest of the RSA managers on rethinking the work of the division, looking at the workload of the staff, moving people around as we see necessary to support the programs within the division, and that includes supporting the IAVRS Program and Shepherd Program. On that you'll hear more from Corinne.

All of the activities that we do in the training service programs division, help us to partner with the State VR agencies in a productive and meaningful way. We support all of the discretionary grants in RSA with the exception set aside for the WIOA training and assistance support. All of these programs work with the state VR agencies. So everything if we do some way or another supports the work of the state VR agencies.

We'll continue to analyze the staff workloads in the division. As we are in this period of time over the next two years where we have discretionary grants ending their five-year cycles and new discretionary grants that will be competed. So we may make additional shifts in project responsibilities or where people are -- so we can best manage the work of the division.

Speaking of our grant investments we're currently working with the department, the various offices in the department as well as O MB to reach convents on our grant priorities. As you have probably noticed we don't have any grant priorities on the street. We're hoping they'll start to hit the streets soon.

We are also planning competitions, thinking ahead for the FY2020 cycles and beginning to work on those. Unfortunately, because they're not yet public information, I can't talk specifically about them. And I regret that. I was hoping to be able to provide more specifics, but at this point we can't. Um, one thing that state VR agencies will be interested in knowing about with respect to our rehabilitation long-term training program, is we have received approval from the office of management budget -- on our information collections to collect information.

That new system is going to be an electronic system that is managed by a contractor called: The pay back information management system.

And it will allow for more timely data reporting, because it can be reported at any time rather than just once per year. The universities that have the long-term training grants will report on their scholars during the life of the grant. Once a scholar graduates and after the grant performance period, the scholars will be reporting their employment, um, and their contact information directly into the system. Employers will be validating their employment outcomes, um, directly into the system, and that will -- we believe will relieve a lot of burden back and forth that has historically happening. So you should see that as soon as the system's record notice is published. We'll begin Duluth you as employers may be able to go in and validate that any individual who you hired, who was a scholar, is in that employment.

Um, we have a lot of successes in our various programs. I would like to focus on just a few. I'll focus on those during this presentation that come from TA Centers. Our WINTAC, which is the biggest center has 44 agencies. Four intensive TA agreements.

That number changes and goes up and down to abilities depending on what intensive TA agreements, where they are in their cycles of the some end and new ones begin. That's where we were weeks ago when I pulled together this data.

Uhm, the youth TAC is actively involved with six agreements, five of which are joined with the WINTAC. It's nice to see that joint effort and nice see that some of these are finally rolling very quickly and that they are also doing a lot of other TA activities, producing products, webinars, that are being helpful to the field.

In addition to their 12 targeted communities that are well established, they are working with the partners, the other partners that they're dealing with. At this point they have seven fully engaged and working on getting the others up and running. They are also having a lot of success and promise with these targeted communities, um, finally they're at the beginning to complete their capstone projects or getting ready to enter their capstone projects depending where they are in the cycle. We're starting to see and I believe you've heard from some of them on their capstone projects. This is exciting for us because it means that their capstone projects are benefiting directly your agencies, because that's what they were intended to do.

Um, so I'm excited about that. The last thing that we have going back to the grant competitions that we have coming up is -- I want to encourage you and VR councilors at your agencies and other VR professionals to serve as on our grants. We need individuals who understand our system peer reviewers. Understand our grant programs and purpose seniors if you or your staff are able to do that, it means that the grants we review will have the best qualified reviewers available. I encourage you to think about that, think about the staff, encourage them to serve as peer reviewers because our grants are only as good as the applications they write and the reviewers who are reviewing them.

Uhm, we will find the -- we put out the call for peer reviewers back in February. But the NCRT has reposted it. If you go to their website -- it's right at the first page when you log in. So that's sort of my appeal to you. I'm now going to turn over to Corinne Weidenthal so she can talk about things that have happened since she came on board. Corinne.

>>CORINNE WEIDENTHAL: Thank you, Mary, nothing like being last before lunch. Thank you. It's great to be here. I just want to say that I'm looking forward to meeting you, please introduce yourselves to me. I'm very personable, I want to hear about the great work that all of you are doing.

I'm new to RSA, but not new to OSERS. I was at special ed programs 12 years prior to moving. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you.

Uhm, so in OSEP, I was on the transition post secondary team. I am not new post secondary world. Administering part D under IDEA.

When I came over now I can see what happens with the transition cliff. Although, the cliff isn't as steep as it was thanks preemployment transition services and it is exciting to see what's happening in that world for high school kids before transitioning to post-secondary world.

American Indian Rehabilitation Program, I'll talk about first.

We have two new staff that rounds out for program officers in the AIVR program administering about 88 awards. [Phone Rings.]

 they'll be in DC for project director's meeting in August. We are planning on having a grant competition this year with the last one being in 2016. This is a talking point from my staff. Excuse me, if you already know this, but I understand and as you're aware it's the responsibility of state VR agencies to develop collaborative -- within their respective states. What is contained in those agreements depends on the negotiation between the state VR agencies and the AIVR programs. Consideration may be the sharing of resource, joint meetings with the purpose of cross-training, cultural and sharing cases.

So I would love to hear what is happening with your collaboration, what with the I RSA programs. Who is not familiar with that program? [Laughter.] Thanks Jesse over there who provided some talking points on what it is. And I think that was mostly for me.

I've been with RSA since the end of January and I learned from them, as well as, I review else every day about the complexity around the Randolph Shepherd Program.

I hope you'll be able to meet our two new staff. Christine grass Man and Jim McCarthy who is also here to the left. [Indicating.] Another arbitration specialist. We're rounding that up to move before arbitration and having more of a team to help resolve these disputes.

Some of their ongoing activities -- our ongoing activities, are to conduct joint conference calls with the head of state licensing agencies and the chair of elected committee of blind vendors in each state to discuss program goals in the state.

Plan regional conferences to discuss best practices. When possible -- settle disputes before moving arbitration. Planning site visits for monitoring purposes and to revise the Standard Operating Procedures to include conflict resolution.

So that's something that we'll work towards is the conflict resolution aspect before arbitration.

Now, what I know really about is promise. That's promoting the readiness of minors in -- [indiscernible] -- it's dollars well spent. I can tell you clearly that. It's OSERS funded administered by OSEP, with our involvement. OSEP, Health of Human Services and Social Security Administration. So it's been a true collaboration with those offices. SSA, administered a contract for the national evaluation.

So these are six projects and, again, you may have heard about it already. I'll give you a brief snapshot. But they are six projects located in 11 states, Joe Xavier has been the PI from California.

Three of them are administered through the -- I don't know if Meredith is here from Wisconsin. There she is. Yay!

The other VR agency was administered through Inspire, six states Utah, North Dakota, Montana, and -- anybody from there? Great. The other states are Arkansas, Maryland and New York.

They're providing intensive comprehensive transition services to 600 family and uses ages 14-16 at the time of enrollment. This is a randomized control trial design, so there were a total of, I think, 13,500 total enrollment into these programs. So 6500 were in the treatment group. We call them the promise group enhance services. No transition services were with held, of course, to the control group.

The core components formal agency level partnerships, case management, benefits counseling and literacy training, career work based, parent information training and at least one paid competitive lead paid employment experiences.

As many of you know uses with -- can open up able accounts at any time, but many of the projects focus on assisting these youth opening up able accounts. Unintended positive consequence was WIOA and preemployment transition services. Some of the state VR agencies reached out to promise staff or consultation. Because they were using everything involved in Preemployment Transition Services back when these were administered. These are awarded in 2013, but took a year for recruitment. So they had begun many of those types of services in 2014.

They're looking for good models around these Preemployment Transition Services. They used a no cost extension. Presenting at multiple conferences and submitted is 1 man strips for the double edition of the Journal of Vocational rehabilitation and career development for exceptional individuals CEC publication and more.

The national evaluators mathematic policy research, completed process analysis reports including 18 months of promise activities all reports and other briefs are posted on the NPR and SSA websites.

Uhm, a report that's not quite been released, but getting ready to be released -- I'll talk about a webinar coming up about it. They just developed an interim impact report. Mathematica.

Families are in line with the components and services required, under the promise initiative each program was affective in helping uses obtain paid work experiences and short-term jobs. The case managers are conditioned witnesses of information. Smaller case loads -- I think they're give me the tools to access services and supports in the community. Parent training and information was integral. The development of curriculum, referrals and contracts with family resource centers and PT I s. the finder for better coordination across agencies, the transition and youth with disabilities., state environments and influencing the effectiveness of federal programs and policies. And I wish Joe could come up here now. He would talk about all of this with much more passion than I am talking about it right now.

They've done an amazing job with providing services to yachts and families since 2014. There are two national presentations coming up if you would look further information. On April 11th, Mathematica will be presenting on the interim impact evaluation webinar. Again, I would look at their website -- coming DC to present the National Press Club and live streamed available webinar. They'll present to lessons learned, accomplishments, challenges, some of the systems changes that's happening in their states.

All of this can be found on the: Www.promisetacenter.org. There's a promise technical assistance center that's been provided support to us and the projects.

>>CAROL DOBAK: Thank you, Chris. I just want to say thank you for-to-my RSA team here. I hope you appreciate the information they've shared with you. I do want to say that David, based on your very unique definition of what it means to be old, from the point of view of a preschooler, I don't think anyone in this room could be considered old. Okay.

I would also like to say that in the context in some of the data that was presented to you today, I have to say that this, in no way diminishes our view of the hard work you are engaged in every day. Okay. As I said, the data is one of the ways in which we are using it as a lens explorative opportunity to rethink our work at RSA as we lead, partner and we support you VR agencies to improve employment opportunities and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

At this point, I would like to invite Steve Wooderson and Carol to come up here with me. We're going to more or less role out the way in which we're going to consider this exploration together. You know, we're engaged in many partnerships with a variety of federal agencies and other organizations within OSERS and RSA, but we in RSA view our most important partnership to be that with you the VR agencies and specifically, we conduct much of that partnership through your membership CSAVR and we're pleased to have them involved in this next initiative that we're going to describe. When it came to the time to figure out, okay, how are we going to continue the conversation about performance and how are we going to use that conversation in rethinking our work? Uhm, I reached out to both Steve and Carol and suggested a way to do that. Um, over the next remaining portion of the fiscal year, we're going to be engaging into a couple of very, um, deep dives into performance and identification of strategies that help both to, um, perhaps improve the quality of the data. Um, we're receiving the validity of that data. More importantly, or just as important and useful and valuable for all of you, to look at ways that RSA can, um -- and strategies that RSA can use to partner with you and support you in your efforts to assist individuals to achieve employment. As well as perhaps identifying ways that VR agencies may be able to engage in those efforts.

So early in June, 3rd and 4th will be the first meeting of a group of representatives from RSA, CSAVR, NCS AV, other agencies WINTAC and others to engage and look at our data and then moving into a later meeting in August 5th and 6th, right? Okay.

August 5th and 6th we'll have the next meeting and we'll begin to nail down some of what those strategies can be. This is an effort to use database and informed decision making moving forward in our rethinking. I'm very glad to have CSAVR and NCS AV and other agencies representing you and engaging in this partnership and RSA.

I would like to invite, um, Steve and Carol to say words from their perspective s.

>>: Carol: I don't know about you all, but listening to the data in that presentation, I just thought Houston we have a problem. I wrote that downright away. When Carol reached out couple months ago to talk about this idea I was grateful because I think we can do better together. So it isn't like we're going to the something about this and performance without talking to the field. Really getting the perspective from all the different agencies. So from the blind agency perspective, we have Bill Robinson, and myself representing on this group. What I like is that we'll cop up with actionable steps. I think we have smart minds in this room and in the field and we can figure this out. [Phone rings.]

I love having this opportunity and I think it shows Carol's great [phone rings] initiative on this to together make an [phone rings] impact and help you all and us all moving forward and we're marching [phone rings] towards WIOA authorization." We're coming up to the 100th anniversary and we want to go in strong.

I think the sometime right and good and I'm grateful to be a part of this opportunity.

>>STEVE: Echoing Carol's comment it's all Joe's fault, right? Carol. Opening up this dialogue and in reality you'll see reaching out so it means a lot that we're partnering with you from the CSAVR side out in McClain from Arkansas [phone rings]. We hear Alan in the back and Cheryl F. from Texas and Rachael Anderson. Is she here? There you are. Involved in this as well. Teresa and I will be participating as well.

From CSAVR's perspective, Carol this fits well into our fourth principle, where we talk about leading and engaging collaborative strategies to collectively impact the greater good.

We CSAVR, typically reach out to the Assistant Secretary touch because like he visits on Monday. We try to capture him for a few minutes after that and he was busy so we were able to talk with him yesterday. One of the things that was exciting, Carol, that came out of that conversation is that he's talking about it. So your initiative and it's exciting that the secretary is actively involves swells.

I want to Echo what Carol said, again, seeing that data this morning really brings it to lite. And the power that is there and the opportunity we have, I know that I know I've given some bad information out data wise and having that out in front of us is helpful. Can we post this information yet? Okay, so the presentation that you saw this morning, Teresa has it ready to load, good to the CSAVR website. Look under: Presentations and spring conference. It will be there.

Carol, we're excited and thank you for this opportunity.

[Applause.]

>>ROBERT DOYLE: Can we give RSA a round of applause for their presentation.

[Applause.]

I did want to say how important it is to have this data it is for us to see what's happening within the programs and the transit helps us to go back and work within our agencies. RSA is available to take questions at this time. So I want to see. We have a mic on this side. [Indicating to the right.] Does anybody have questions? All the way in the back on the right.

>>: Can you hear me? Yes. I am Kristin Virginia General. In terms of data presented earlier this morning, I'm wondering whether, um, there's been any attention to the changes in the economy? I think a lot of the information that you see is a reflection of the fact that we were in a recession in 2010 and we have come out of a recession, come out strong.

Some VR folks don't need us. It's like any other workforce program when the economy is good and the labor markets are tightly, people can get jobs without getting workforce services. We've had major changes in our data in the refute past. One of the things hear about, but is an issue is data quality. Completeness, accuracy and -- excuse me? Reliability. Those are all aspects of significant factors in the data you're seeing. Rather than saying that this is the performance, I'm wondering how you all plan to look at other information that might help explain these raw numbers?

>>: Feel free to come up to the mic stand if you want ask a question.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thank you southeaster In[Name]. What is exciting about this is that this is the first set of data that will inform the broader discussions, we hope to have in June and August where we will pull in additional data points. Those are all on the table: Employment rate, economy and other factors that are contributing to this. So your point about the validity and the reliability of the data we have, that's a concern for RSA. We are committed to providing Technical Assistance about that in a lot of ways through onsite monitoring, RSA checks in 911 and when requested. And a lot of other things. So it's at the forefront of our thinking and we are open to suggestions 911. Of what might help you when thinking about providing accurate and reliable information on the RSA 911. We want to be responsive to your needs. I'll email you.

>>: My name is Dwayne maize I'm the new director for the State of Alaska appointed first week of January. I'll start with that. For the last 12 years I had oversight of the long-term support services division in the state Medicaid world. Prior to that, worked for 17 years and the division starting on the frontline and I mentioned this the other day as a Rehabilitation Counselor and then moving into management and so forth. I walked away for a while and came back.

I spent a lot of time going around the state talking to the staff. Just some soundbites. By the way, I thought you guys did a great job. You had my attention. So kudos to you.

Complexity of cases was the number one thing that I heard from the staff. So as I was going office to office sitting down with the counselors, they were telling me that the cases have really become quite complex. Multiple disabilities, maybe criminal records or something like that. So they brought that up. So I remember back in the day being a counselor in the 1980s and 1990s and I had individuals that were deaf, hard of hearing, or other type of disabilities, but they brought that up. I thought I would share that with you.

Interestingly to know that in Alaska 70% of the people that are incarcerated, have disabilities. I thought that was alarming. So that concerns me.

The increased reporting requirements I mentioned that the other day. I get the value of data, but sometimes I think we need to slow down and realize: Are we asking more so that the other issue that came up from the counselor is that -- there was a day where the reporting requirements may be up to 300. They're glued to their computer and not able to do the affective one-on-one guidance and counseling, so when I look at back on my time being able to get out in the community partnership employers, and doing what I can to support the employers if I place somebody in that position, I think when you've lost some of that because of the additional reporting requirements, that's a concern as well.

Last, I have reached out to the 11 tribal VR programs. I think we need to have a strong partnership, because Alaska has a rural component to it, significant. One of the things they mentioned to me is that when they do the -- reply for their grants that it continues to be flat funded. As costs go up anyone inflation, and you have staff there 10-20 years, their costs go up as well. I wonder if there's been any discussion about increasing those discretionary grants to offset the inflation. Thank you.

>>MARY LOVELY: In response to the question about the AI VRS funding, that's a formula that's based on the state -- the Title I program receives the AI VRS program is a set aside by formula. So we have a limited amount of discretion raising and logo that. We have done that throughout the years. But we can't just say, you know, we're going to increase it beyond what that could be stat tutorial we're not allowed to do that. But as the VR program increases in dollars, the Indians increase proportionally.

>>ROBERT DOYLE: Here on the right.

>>: I'm from Massachusetts and certainly the data is sobering. We're not leaving here totally inspired because of the data, but I don't think it is shocking. It's not a shocking picture. What it indicates, clearly, is the importance of change and change management and agility. I need to ask what RSA will be doing about agility. That's one example. Prior approval is not an agile process.

So, again, if you're asking us to do change management, which I know people in this room are committed in doing, how can you help us around the agility issue of RSA?

[Applause.]

>>: We have received further flexibility through CSAVR and CSAV individual agencies. We have heard you loud and clear and we are in the process of, um, addressing that issue for you. Um, ourselves are not always pleased with the pace at which the development of policy, Technical Assistance precedes at the federal level. You did hear Johnny Assistant Secretary Collett speaking the other morning about the way in which the department overall is looking at clearance processes. As we undertake, rethinking initiatives across the department.

Um, please hear us, we are working in that issue. We ourselves are interested in what the, um, rethinking along the lines of prior approval could mean, not only for all of you, but also for RSA in making that process much more expeditious for everyone concerned. Okay.

>>: A kneel Lewis for the blind and chair of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Counselor. I had a couple of questions.

Related to interpolation of the data.

Reliability of it. Just out of courtesy I was wondering in looking at the average wage increase purely -- [indiscernible] -- payments. Within the evaluation of the data to see if that increase was a result of someone with lower wages that would traditionally introduced diminished. I would be curious about that.

Related to the program data, and working with rehab partners, talking with the counselors, they're becoming more and more case managers than rehabilitation counselors and again I recognize the importance of the data. I would be curious when you were talking about the agencies that meet the 60-day application criteria, 90-day planned development criteria, have you verified that there's a direct correlation between those agencies, benchmarks and increased outcomes? Curious about that.

Then the last piece I have is some of the questions that were asked about how to interpret the data, whether they were in an area that were not satisfied with the service provision and is that why they exited out of the program before eligibility or plan development? Have you married any of that data with the consumer surveys that they put together? It would be nice to see that -- survey activity is put to good use.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: In terms of the median wage data your hypothetical might be right, that the increase of, I think it was a dollar 75 over time, the biggest jump was from 2016 to '18 which coincided with the outcomes under the VR program. So the data we presented is the trends. It doesn't explain all of the reasons why and we want to hear from all of you. That might be one of the reasons. Suzanne or Roseanne do you want to talk about the eligibility question or...

>>ROSEANNE ASHBY: Okay. I think, you know, you brought up an interesting question. I think the reason that we brought this data forward obviously, these are statutory requirements, but more important than that, we don't want people leaving the system because they're not getting access to services. Really, I think that was the point of some of this more than anything.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Finally related to your suggestion about using the customer satisfaction surveys I think that's an excellent idea of the I think the state rehabilitation councils would appreciate plug. I've seen a couple from NCSRC who met the prior weekend -- I think they would be with you in that effort.

>>: Thank you.

>>: Hello, I'm Chris McFaye and I'm men minute general counselor ten years field manager position and now administrative role.

I do have a question, but instantly want to start and share a tiny bit about Minnesota general and what happens during July 2016 with the role out of section 511 and WIOA. We had just under 16,000 people earning subminimum wages in our state. We recognize that The State has had a long-standing way of serving individuals in sheltered workshops, so we, my colleague and I, really led the effort around developing the career -- referral process in Minnesota with those 12,000 people. 12,000 people in our state, adults 25 and older, are working in minimum wages and we have with the section 511 for uses, our transition counselors working very hard to go down -- meeting with different set of students, different hallways and meeting with individuals and taking applications and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. Many of them with intellectually disabilities. In many cases, not really knowing what is possible for employment. There be utilizing customized employment as one of the ways engaging and determining a goal.

With that said, we are doing a lot of work serving a new population in many ways. We have nearly neck and neck percentages in Minnesota general serving primary disability and now, with intellectually disabilities for a number of years.

One of my concerns in leading the business engagement efforts is that, our talent is different. It has changed. In how we engage with business and how we deliver talent, while we're looking and finding some exciting developments [phone dings] in how we determine and help people discover their gifts and talents and contribute to business, I am concerned about how we are going to be reviewed and looked at in terms of our numbers and in terms of our outcomes. Thinking about the number of hours that individuals work. I just want to say quickly with customized employment we had 38% of people following the discovery process wanting to move into competitive integrated employment. Certainly they had an informed choice we supported whatever decision they made. Of those individuals 33%, less than 10% of them worked in child set -- were more than ten hours a week. All minimum wane or higher so that's a win. Can you share with me specifically, because I'm really worried about this -- how will we be gained or reviewed just knowing that the path relation has changed WIOA and especially 511 gave a charge to the public VR agency to meet with and work with individuals with the most significant disabilities? I think our staff have come along with that and champions of that. Unfortunately, we are -- I'm concerned about the reporting and the data that you will be reporting to you in years to come and how we're able to deliver to business. Thank you.

>>: Thank you for your comments and we recognize the requirements that under section 511 have placed on our agencies and resources. Also, we recognize the fact that particularly those states that have had to close categories under their order of selection, that the population that they're working most directly with maybe those with the most significant disabilities [phone dings].

The act did provide for some additional requirements under supported employment, as you mentioned also talked about customized employment as alternatives, in terms of how you're going to be viewed with your databased on what you're able to achieve, I think we all have to go back to: What is so important in this program. That is that the services and goals are individualized. We had to look at an individual's capabilities, interests, abilities, informed choice, and awful those things, as we determine what is a successful employment outcome for an individual.

In answer to your question and how you will be judged, you may be setting some benchmarks within your agency, but we would always want to work with an individual to maximize their employment, whatever that may be.

Again, keeping in mind that this is an individualized process. And an individualized program for people. We will not be placing a value judgment on those things for you, but again, that's a good discussion to have particularly in a monitoring situation about those variables that can play a part in the look of our data.

Again, I just want to make the point with regard to this data. I've heard a couple of people make remarks about it being sobering. But, again, this is what is reported to us. So as Chris and Carol and others having said we want to look at: Is this accurate data? Reliable or valid? How can we help the agencies in reporting the picture of their VR program most accurately to us, so that that can translate into a national picture for all of us as well.

>>ROBERT DOYLE: Folks, we are getting short on time. One more question and two more things to do before wrapping up.

>>: Thank you. I'm Mitchell and labor economist for -- institutes for reform. I've worked with several states on the 911 data. It's definitely sobering to see the data presented and I'm sure individual characteristics vary significantly and the people we serve and outcomes are different. The data we didn't present is the quality of the services. The number of services that received and actually change over time significantly as well especially recently. We know that VR serving individuals providing more services for each individual, um, to meeting their needs. They're also serving more and more individuals with, you know, multiple or more significant disabilities that's hard to serve. So I think those factors would like to see -- take into account when you present this information. My question is actually different.

We know there are discussions about how the future looks like for people with disabilities with the technology change. You know, AI and other relations and discussions and a lot of the agencies in DOE. I'm wondering what's your view about how AI and other relations may change the future of these fields? If you have any considerations about how the technology may effect the, for instance, case management system that we're using right now that require significant amount of labor efforts for the counselors to enter data, to process data? That's definitely not the future. We know there are technologies that can help optimize the process and we know that there are companies out there to try to support the agencies in different ways. So I'm curious about your view and what we can do as researchers, economists to help the agency to achieve the goal. Thank you.

>>ROBERT DOYLE: Thank you.

>>CHRISTOPHER POPE: Thank you to your point about the services that people with disabilities receive. Some of that data was recently available in the 2010 statewide annual reports on the website. You'll find services provided to individuals broken out between career services and training services, and the amount of funds that were spent on the services. That might be something you could consider looking into. Also when RSA is monitoring in this upcoming fiscal year, that's a large parts of the data we look at what services people provide that help tell that broader picture. I'm looking to my colleagues if they want to chime in, but I will speak to your point about automating the reporting of data you're certainly right, there are systems in place that can help automate that. State -- matching. State longitudinal data if it's available. I'm smiling at her in the back because we talked about this recently. Those sort of popular data sources should be parts of the 911 reporting process. That's my two cents there.

If we have an automation or AI perspective I'm looking at you Carol, but I'm not sure if we do. Bob: Again, I want to thank you all for the questions and thank RSA for you all being here available for us as well today. Being part of the solution. I like the slide on rethinking how we're doing things of the as you challenge us acetate agencies impact and outcomes will challenge you and thinking about your policies and those outcomes. We did get an opportunity to show a video on The Hill visit the other day representative -- of Rhode Island. I think we have that queued and we'll invite Joe Xavier to remark after that concludes.

[Video not captioned.]

>>: I would like to offer myosin sere and humble gratitude vocational rehabilitation. Presenting me with it distinguished service award. As a proud uncle I'm a young man of autism and member of congress moved to disabilities since the age of 16. I consider it a privilege to fight for the rights of people with disabilities every day. So many individuals within the disability community have a desire and capability to work. Their talents must be allowed to thrive in competitive integrated settings with appropriate settings and supports. Great strides have been made to include individuals with disabilities in the workforce and I want to thank each of you for that progress.

The vocational rehabilitation services that you provide are for individuals with disabilities, tools to choose their own goals and payoff their own path. Thanks to your efforts businesses across the country are recognizing that our economy can repair countless awards by employing people with disabilities. Despite the head way we've made the unemployment rate for those with disabilities remain significantly higher than for those without.

So our work isn't done. And we must continue to find new ways to -- employment. I believe passionately that people with disabilities represent one of the American America's great untapped --

[Video not captioned.]

That doesn't just improve business outcomes, but improves our communities as a whole. Thank you, again, for this award and thank you for your collective commitment for diversity and inclusion for all.

[Applause.]

>>SPEAKER: Robert asked me if I wanted to go before or after the video I made the wrong choice. First of all, let's give our colleagues from RSA a round of applause for the time being here.

[Applause.]

So I also want to welcome our colleagues from NCS A B, they joined us for this session and their conference begins this afternoon and we'll continue throughout. You know I'm a huge believer that there's no downside to a good conversation and no progress without a conversation, as you heard this morning, this is the start of a conversation. One that we must have not just here, but across the country at the state, at the local level. Let not lose site that have. Keep that conversation going. Robert, I want to thank you for your service -- you're not moving on and keep supporting both organizations as you have done. I want to thank you for that service your mentorship and support over the last two or three years we've worked together. Of course, the time as president, certainly, cannot be done without the support -- and I say this over again -- Steve, the CSAVR team, but the membership. This is a membership organization and it is our collective impact, that will make a difference in our communities. I've been honored to be the president and serve and certainly will continue to support this organization as I move into the immediate past president. I know I still have a quarter to go.

But starting in July, welcome. I am looking forward to your leadership. I'll be there to support you in every way I can. For the member, on behalf of all individuals with disabilities across this country and the territories, thank you for BA what you're doing and more importantly, not just what you are doing, what you're going to be doing as you continue to advance independence, employment equality for people with disabilities.

God speed, travel safe and see everybody down the road.

[Applause.]

[Realtime event is concluded by:

Shanti Lira, Realtime Stenographer.]

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