



Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

CSAVR National News Brief

March 18, 2023

CSAVR National News Brief is a regular series covering national news, research initiatives, webinars, conferences, and national advocacy activities of interest to member state VR agencies.

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NATIONAL NEWS

CSAVR is making history with your help and that of the TACs, RSA, and NCSAB. We are posed in April to have the biggest conference in our history. Due to this, we outgrew the meeting space and with no alternative other than to cap registration on Friday. As you can imagine, this was a difficult decision but necessary. If your agency is one that is planning to attend but still waiting on approval, please contact Theresa Hamrick thamrick@csavr.org directly to get on a waiting list should there be cancellations. BUT DON'T FORGET – you can still register for virtual pre-conference sessions. [See more about those sessions below.](#)

This coming Wednesday, March 22, 2023 is National Rehabilitation Counselor Appreciation Day. Please take the time to recognize all the great work your counselors do and thank you. I will be sending out a message from myself and

CSAVR. In the meantime, the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification ([CRCC](#)) has put together a [toolkit](#) to thank counselors. You may find some good ideas here for recognizing your counselors. Even if you do not take any ideas from the toolkit, remember to thank your VR Counselors next Wednesday! For those of you who can travel to some of your offices on Wednesday or met virtually with them, I am sure they will appreciate hearing from you.

This week is [Multiple Sclerosis \(MS\) Awareness Week \[click.icptrack.com\]](#). MS is a disease of the central nervous system that impacts the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves. People living with MS can experience mobility issues, pain, fatigue, and vision issues. MS can also cause mood changes and issues with memory and cognition. Medications, physical and occupational therapy, and assistive technology can help people with MS to work full time and fully participate in their communities.

DIRECTOR NEWS

Lea Dias has been appointed acting Director of HI-C. She will be in this role until a permanent replacement is selected to replace Maureen Bates who has retired from the agency.

CSAVR NEWS

Mathematica and RSA have invited me to join a technical working group (TWG) for the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment (SWTCIE) national evaluation for the Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) program. Myself and other TWG members will aid in the design and execution of the evaluation. The TWG will provide insights that hopefully will enhance the quality of the SWTCIE national evaluation. I hope to be a voice for the field and compliment the work being done by our members who have SWTCIE grants and our SWTCIE COP facilitated by John.

CSAVR SPRING 2023 VIRTUAL SESSIONS

We are excited with our virtual sessions kicking off this coming week. [Still need to register...you have time!](#)

We have two great ones to kick it off:

Field Session #1 Monday March 20 130-3p eastern

Listening to our Customers: Setting the standard for customer service

Field Session #2 Thursday March 23 130-3p eastern

Embracing the Possibilities: Creating a culture for customer-centric spending for field staff.

We look forward to seeing you all in the ether this week. Enjoy!

RSA & WIOA NEWS

RSA is seeking to fill the following two fiscal positions which are eligible for remote work status and the posting is *Open 03/07/2023 to 03/21/2023*

Financial Management Specialist, GS-501-14 (MP)

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Department of Education

Location Negotiable After Selection

- Permanent • Full-time
- Vacancy #OSERS-2023-0004

Open 03/07/2023 to 03/21/2023

Financial Management Specialist, GS-501-14 (DE)

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Department of Education

Location Negotiable After Selection

- Permanent • Full-time
- Vacancy #OSERS-2023-0005

Our program needs good folks knowledgeable about VR program, agencies, and fiscal to fill these positions. Please assist in getting the announcements into the hands of some great candidates!

Join RSA and its Federal partners from the Employment and Training Administration and Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education for a technical assistance webinar: [Co-Enrollment Across WIOA Core Programs: Requirements, Promising Practices, and Resources](#) on March 28, 2023 at 2:00PM Eastern. WIOA requires States to report the number of participants who are enrolled in more than one core program (title I, title II, title III, and title IV) in their annual performance reports. This webinar will review the data collection and performance reporting requirements under WIOA and share best practices to collect and report co-enrollment of participants across the six core programs.

Register for the webinar on [WorkforceGPS](#) and email RSAData@ed.gov with any questions.

REPORTS, TRAINING, NEWSLETTERS AND CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

NCRTM has issued its March newsletter Issue 76 [featuring: Remembering and celebrating Judy Heumann, RSA announces a joint webinar on co-enrollment, a Wells Fargo Scholarship for Individuals with Disabilities, Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation self-employment toolkit, and more!](#)

The [Great Lakes ADA Regional Center](#) will host a webinar, [The Intersection of Women and Disability](#), March 21st, 2 – 3:30 pm ET. Presenters will share their lived experiences of intersectionality as women of color, veterans, advocates, and small business owners with layered disabilities. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions after the presentation. Registration is free and required. Continuing education credits are available upon request.

Join Mathematica on **Wednesday, March 22, 2023, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. ET** for the second [Minority Youth and Centers for Independent Living \(MY-CIL\)](#) project webinar. This event is free and open to everyone. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the webinar.

This MY-CIL webinar will highlight findings from three focus groups held with out-of-school youth from minority backgrounds. Youth participants and CIL staff will discuss recommendations and strategies for improving CIL services for youth with disabilities from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds.

The [Southeast ADA Regional Center](#) will host a webinar, [ADA Title II: Program Access and Structural Accessibility](#), March 23rd, 10 – 11 am, ET. The third episode in the 4th Thursday ADA Talk Series 2023, this session focuses on Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), specifically on program access and structural accessibility in state and local government services. Registration is free and required.

Our friends at GWU are holding their 23rd Annual Rehabilitation Counseling Symposium **Friday, March 24, 2023 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET**(This will be a virtual Symposium). All are welcome to attend. Please direct questions to Nichole Tichy @ nbean2@gwu.edu

The NIDILRR-funded [Field Initiated Project on Contingent Employment of Individuals with Disabilities \(FIP-CIE\)](#) will host a virtual summit, [Disability, Entrepreneurship, and the Gig Economy: A Research Summit](#), March 30th, 10 am – 5 pm ET. Researchers from FIP-CIE will present their findings from a multi-year research project. The summit includes a keynote address, three reaction panels featuring thought leaders in disability employment, and a closing session focused on next steps. Registration is free and required. This summit is co-hosted by RESNA and is open to members and nonmembers

The [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics \(StatsRRTC\)](#) posted a [recording of the Release of the Annual Disability Statistics Collection](#). During the event, experts in disability statistics provided, described, and discussed the latest collection of disability statistics. This collection makes finding and using disability statistics easier for individuals working on legislative and other matters relating to persons with disabilities. Slides, recordings, and other materials may be found on the recording's webpage.

The [Mid-Atlantic ADA Regional Center](#) will host a webinar, [Managing Risk and Other Legal Requirements for Businesses under the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) Title III](#), March 22nd, 2 – 3:30 pm ET. Presenters will share why it is important to manage, measure, and remediate risks within the ADA program, while remaining compliant with other regulations. In addition, presenters will use case studies of ADA accommodations to discuss best practices. Registration is free and required

On April 19, 2023 at 1 pm ET, here is a new webinar series: *A Conversation with ABLE Savings Plans*. This series will be live Questions & Answers covering all things ABLE:

- Eligibility, Enrollment, and Account Management
- Contributions and Withdrawals
- Qualified Expenses
- Impact on means-tested disability benefits

- Post-death treatment of ABLE accounts

The [State Child Abuse & Neglect Policies Database](#) website now contains updated state statutes from 2021 regarding child abuse and neglect definitions from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. **Explore the 2021 state statutes here.**

The [Enhancing Community Participation Outcomes Among Young Adults with Serious Mental Illnesses Through Peer-Delivered Decision Support](#) seeks young adults with serious mental illnesses for a study about their decision making needs related to community participation. Participants must be between the ages of 18 and 30 who are experiencing a serious mental illness. Participants must be able to provide informed consent and not limited in their ability to make decisions due to being involved in a court system, being in a supervised living situation, or having a legal guardian. Participants who meet with researchers for a 1-hour interview, virtually or in person, will receive a \$25 gift card for their time. For more information or to volunteer, contact research staff at 215/204-1699 or elizabeth.thomas@temple.edu.

The [Center for Research, Training and Dissemination of Family Support for People with Disabilities Across the Life Course](#) seeks participants for the [Caregiver Advocacy Program](#). The program is a virtual workshop that empowers unpaid family caregivers to learn about caregiving-related policies, and understand how to use their experiences to tell their story and advocate for change. Multiple sessions will be offered throughout the year. Participants must be caregivers who are interested in becoming involved in advocacy and learning how to tell their story. For more information or for disability-related accommodations, contact caregiving@pitt.edu.

The [National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research](#) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will host a workshop, [Ableism in Medicine and Clinical Research](#), April 27th and 28th, via NIH Videocast. The workshop seeks to raise awareness of ableism, or prejudice and discrimination aimed at people with disabilities, in both clinical care and the biomedical and behavioral research fields and to identify research opportunities to mitigate the effect of ableism. The workshop is open to the public, including researchers, clinicians, and people with lived experience of disability and caregiving. The workshop is hosted in collaboration with the Trans-

NIH Medical Rehabilitation Coordinating Committee. Free registration will open soon.

The [Thresholds Health Literacy and Wellness Promotion Center](#) published the [Thresholds 2023 Health Literacy Calendar](#) (PDF). The calendar focuses on health literacy and health activities, highlights areas where the social determinants of health can have an impact, notes health disparities that affect the mental health community, and is mindful of the intersection of health and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The calendar includes health and wellness tips and QR codes that link users to information about featured health topics, awareness campaigns, and easy-to-use health literacy materials.

The [Boston-Harvard Burn Injury Model System Center](#), [Spaulding Harvard Traumatic Brain Injury \(TBI\) Model System Center](#), and [Spaulding New England Regional Spinal Cord Injury \(SCI\) Model System Center](#) announced the launch of the [Finding Strength podcast](#). The new monthly podcast brings people with lived experience in SCI, TBI, and burn injury together with researchers and clinicians to discuss groundbreaking research and how it applies to everyday life. The first two episodes focus on brain injury as a chronic condition

From July 15 to July 28, 2023, Howard University and Mathematica will bring together graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and beginning faculty interested in computational social science for a no-cost, virtual summer institute. Participation is restricted to master's students, doctoral candidates, postdoctoral researchers, and untenured faculty who have received their Ph.D. within the last seven years. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and fields of study, especially applicants from groups currently under-represented in computational social science. [Apply \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#) by 11:59 p.m. ET on March 31.

TAC NEWS

TAC QM has added a new member to their team. Welcome **Patricia Henke** who will be working on VRTAC-QM as well as the SWTCIE grants. She brings nearly 30 years of experience working in vocational rehabilitation including 16 years with the Colorado Division of VR where among other duties she served as a manager of supported and customized employment, a rehabilitation supervisor and a VRC. Welcome, Patricia. We look forward to working with you.

SARA: Technology Solutions States Have Proven to Work -Alaska VR and SARA

Joining Carol Pankow in the studio today are Cody Dixon, Director of Operations SARAWorks, and Susan Baker, Program Coordinator II, Alaska VR. SARA provides a solution to VR programs with a client engagement and communications system that automatically gathers needed information at the right time from consumers and providers without staff intervention. SARA uses artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing and complements CMS functionality. Alaska VR has been an early adapter from SARA's first introduction. Susan tells us how Alaska VR utilizes SARA daily, and Cody brings us up to date with all the latest integrations and new states coming on board with SARA.

[Listen Here \[managerminutevrtac-qw.libsyn.com\]](https://managerminutevrtac-qw.libsyn.com)

COVID NEWS

COVID-19: Factors predicting depressive symptoms in people aging with long-term physical disabilities. *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*. NARIC Accession Number: J90112.

New to the NARIC collection, this NIDILRR-funded study identified the factors associated with depressive symptoms and explored their relative importance in predicting depressive symptoms in people with long-term physical disabilities (PwLTPD) early in the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Results from data collected from adults with disabilities living in the community showed that anxiety was the most important predictor of depressive symptoms. Higher levels of anxiety, loneliness, and financial stress; prior diagnosis of depression; and non-Black race predicted a higher level of depressive symptoms in PwLTPD during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors recommended that occupational therapy practitioners should strategically acknowledge predictors of depression that cannot be modified and actively address those that can be modified through evidence-based interventions to improve depressive symptoms in PwLTPD. [Access the full abstract and ordering information in REHABDATA.](#)

This is an unmonitored email account. Please direct any questions to:
info@csavr.org