



ADVANCING
DISABILITY INCLUSION
& WORKFORCE
INNOVATION

Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

Careers and Business Relations News Brief

December 17, 2023



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

Announcements: As 2023 quickly draws to a close, we want to thank you all for your support and wish you the very best in the New Year. Whether you celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, Boxing Day or Kwanzaa, enjoy your time with family and friends. ***The CSAVR team will be out of the office December 23 – January 2nd.*** The office will also be closed on January 15th in honor of the Martin Luther King Holiday. Please feel free to text if you have an urgent need. Happy New Year!

HIGHLIGHTS

1. [National Updates](#)

- a. CSAVR Fall Conference

2. [NET Updates and Career Opportunities](#)

- a. NET Hosts Federal Partner Information Sessions

- b. Walmart – Sensory Friendly Hours
- c. Update on NET Partnership with Boeing
- d. TAC-QE and NET Partner on Learning Communities Survey
- e. North Dakota Request – Customer Survey with Business/Employers
- f. Windmills Train the Trainer Sessions – January and March 2024

3. TAP Updates

- a. Overall Data
- b. Training – VR staff and Business

4. Articles and Events of Interest

- a. Business Support for Social Security Reform
- b. DEI&A Strategies: Building a Culture of Disability Inclusion
- c. SHRM Resources and Updates
- d. Apple Highlights Speech Accessibility Feature
- e. Filomen M. D’Agostino Greenberg Music School (Blind/Vision Loss)

NATIONAL UPDATE

CSAVR 2024 Winter Executive Committee Meeting

January 8-9, 2024

CSAVR 2024 Spring Conference

April 6 - April 10, 2024

Bethesda, MD

CSAVR 2024 Fall Conference will be held in Seattle starting with the pre-conference sessions the weekend of October 19/20, 2024, and running through Wednesday the 23rd followed by the NCSAB Conference. Updates on the conference, including the agenda and link to the hotel, will be posted on the CSAVR Webpage under Events: <https://www.csavr.org/events> [csavr.org]

NET UPDATES AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

NET Training Sessions to be posted to the CSAVR YesLMS site. The virtual training sessions with **Homeland Security – Customs and Border Protection** as well as the **National Park Service** were held last week. Both sessions were captioned and interpreted. The recordings and accessible PPTs will be posted to the CSAVR-NET site on YesLMS. Thank you again to the Michigan team for their support hosting the NPS session!

NOTE: The NPS also shared a resource addressing **Federal Hiring for People with Criminal Records**. This has been shared with the NET. If you have any questions, please contact Kathy.

Sensory-Friendly Hours Return to Walmart-Everyday - Our partners at Walmart are excited to let you know about [Sensory-Friendly Hours at Walmart \[corporate.walmart.com\]](https://corporate.walmart.com)! This means from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. local time, **every day of the week**, we're making Walmart stores a little easier on the senses.

- Where possible, we're dimming the lights, setting TV monitors to a static image and turning off the overhead radio.
- When we say all our stores, we mean it! Sensory hours are happening across the country – and in Puerto Rico, too.
- Why? We piloted the program during back-to-school season, and customers and associates told us to keep doing it!

We believe everyone should feel like they belong at their local Walmart.

Boeing Update - The NET relationship with Boeing continues to grow. Inger is currently working with the NET points of contact in key locations to continue to build the national partnership with Boeing. The team is currently facilitating Windmills Training for the Boeing locations in Dallas & San Antonio, TX and Mesa AZ. Inger has met with our NET POC's in those states, Boeing Leadership, and the local Business Relations staff to work out schedules, dates and times for the trainings.

As we continue to build out national partnerships across the footprint of businesses we utilize a range of strategies, business services and tools, such as Windmills training. This strategy is reflective of the work done through the Dual Customer Approach. Just as VRCs develop IPEs (Individual Plans for Employment), the NET and VR's Business Consultants are working with business customers to build Individual Plans for Business (IPB). As a core practice, the NET develops these IPBs by first listening to and learning from the business, building trust and developing a plan of action that will not only meet the needs of the business but also achieve our ultimate goal building a talent pipeline that offers career opportunities to VR candidates.

TAC-QE NET Communities of Practice Survey - The VRTAC-QE has asked the CSAVR-NET to lead a national Learning Community (LC) focused on developing a VR Business Relations Blueprint. The LC was established in May 2023 with a targeted completion date of April 2024. 18 VR professionals were selected from applicants representing a cross-section of State VR agencies (SVRAs). They are collaborating on three respective work groups. The work groups objectives are aligned with the CSAVR objectives. The work groups are:

1. Leadership/Structure

2. Effective Policies/Best Practices

3. Branding/Messaging

The output of this LC will help inform and shape the effective delivery of services to business and enhance quality employment outcomes under the dual customer approach. The LC will generate a report to the CSAVR Career and Business Relations Committee for distribution to CSAVR and NET members.

The Learning Communities has requested information from the NET Points of Contact by January 2nd. The results will be compiled into a report that will provide SVRA directors and NET points of contact with a snapshot of the status, structure, operational approach, and branding of SVRA business service units across the country.

For additional information contact Harley Engelman, the CSAVR-NET Contractor to the TAC-QE: harley@theengelmangroup.com .

North Dakota has requested information from the NET members regarding the use and structure of Customer Surveys with Business. ND is planning to implement an employer survey and would appreciate information from states who are already conducting surveys. A summary of the feedback will also be shared with NET members.

Windmills - The January train the trainer is full, and the session has been closed with 88 trainees registered for the virtual training. Based on the additional requests, we have tentatively scheduled the next Windmills Train the Trainer for March 19/21 and 26/28. More details to come!

We appreciate the support and the number of staff trained through the CSAVR-NET partnership with Milt Wright & Associates. Our field staff continue to find professional growth and development from attending Windmills Training and providing a tool that they can use when they are providing effective business services and resources not only to our businesses but community partners and various other organizations such as SHRM.

TAP UPDATES

38,050 candidates with disabilities have posted resumes. 400,000 jobs streaming. Our partner Mike Corso and Kathy have been meeting with new business customers, Pfizer will be joining the TAP platform at the first of the year. There has also been a meeting with one of the largest staff agencies in the world as well as new national partners. More to come on that development.

On the invitation of Robert Doyle, Director of Florida Blind and Charles Triplett, Training Coordinator, Inger attended in person their Annual Statewide Training Conference. She worked with our partner Mike Corso at disABLEDpersons, to train on utilization of the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP). AS a result of the training Inger received a request from our NET POC, Kiyanna Williams, to offer a more in dept virtual training for their Business Unit Staff.

ARTICLES AND EVENTS OF INTEREST

[Business Support for Social Security Reform \[cnbc.com\]](#)

[DEI&A Strategies: Building a Culture of Disability Inclusion \[fastcompany.com\]](#)

[Society for Human Resources \(SHRM\) Resources \[shrm.org\]](#) and [Workforce Development Legislation \[shrm.org\]](#)

[Apple Celebrates Disability Autonomy – Speech Accessibility Feature \[apple.com\]](#)

The Filomen M. D’Agostino Greenberg Music School (FMDG Music School), founded in 1913, is committed to helping people pursue their study of music while addressing the challenges posed by vision loss. The school serves as a resource to music educators and performers nationwide as one of the leading providers of large print and braille music.

<https://fmdgmusicschool.org/> [fmdgmusicschool.org]

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