

Transition Bulletin - Summer Issue

To Coordinate... To Enhance... To Serve...Through Communication

SECURE YOUR SPOT FOR THE FOURTH ANNUAL MICHIGAN REHABILITATION SERVICES (MRS) SUMMER TRANSITION TRAINING

By Cynthia Wright, MRS Consultant

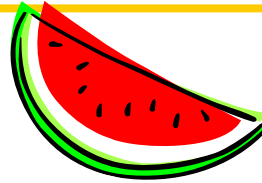
On Tuesday, August 6th MRS will be conducting the fourth annual Summer Transition Training at Lansing Community College – West Campus. The design team has been meeting to plan a day that is informative and also provides opportunities for MRS counselors and managers to network.

The MRS customer base is one-third Transition Youth (TY) and Young Adults (YA). Over one hundred Interagency Cash Transfer Agreements (ICTAs) exist to serve this population. Over the past five years, MRS employment outcomes for TY and YA have been on the rise. One of the goals of the Summer Transition Training is to continue on this improvement trend.

The morning of the training is reserved for general sessions showcasing presentations and information that is relevant to all MRS staff. This year Lou Adams, MRS Acting Bureau Director, will be welcoming MRS staff and will share some of his thoughts about the future of Transition services. Su Pi, Researcher from MSU Project Excellence, will be sharing Michigan Transition for the 21st Century (MT-21) data regarding best practices for providing vocational rehabilitation services to TY. Chuck Saur, Director of the Michigan – Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP), and Dave Malott, MRS Liaison to MI-TOP, will be sharing updates from our educational partners. Also, Paul Mulka, Program Innovation/Western Division Director, will be presenting on Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) redesign.

The afternoon will offer breakout sessions so MRS staff can interact in small groups. Topics include but are not limited to:

- MRS/Michigan Transition Services Association (MTSA) Collaborative Projects presented by Jo Cherry, MTSA President, Hillsdale county team, Kent county team, Bill Colombo, Consultant, and Cynthia Wright, Consultant;
- Transition Services Provided presented by the MRS Business Network Unit (BNU) presented by Jenny Piatt, BNU Manager;
- Assistive Technology Consideration Process presented by Claudette Reid, BNU Occupational Therapist;
- MCTI PERT Program presented by Sue Zwyghuizen, MCTI Manager;
- Innovation Projects (Department of Natural Resources and Michigan State University) presented by Bill Colombo, Consultant, and Cynthia Wright, Consultant;



Inside this issue:

MRS Summer Transition Training	1
MRS & DNR Partner	2
Work-Based Learning Opportunities	2
Save The Date	4

- Better Transitioning Through Video presented by Staci Anderson, MRS Counselor, Maria Peak, Eaton ISD Transition Coordinator, and Justin Caine, Good Fruit Video;
- Ask the Policy Unit presented by Deb Wiese, MRS Policy Manager, and Winona Potter, MRS Policy Consultant; and
- Experience is the Best Teacher presented by Carla Williams, MRS Counselor, Pattie Heitchue, P & R Workforce Solutions/New Horizons, Terrence Washington, TW Options, and Paula Green-Smith, Urban Health Resources

The day will wrap-up with MRS customers telling their Transition stories. Customers will be selected that represent a recent high school graduate, a student in postsecondary training and a customer closed successfully in employment.

If you are interested in attending the training, please sign up on E-Learn. Questions about this training can be directed to Cynthia Wright wrightc1@michigan.gov.

MRS PARTNERS WITH THE DNR TO CREATE SUMMER JOBS FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

This summer 80+ students with disabilities will be gaining paid work experience by working for 8 weeks in Michigan State Parks as a result of a partnership between MRS; the Department of Natural Resources-Parks and Recreation Division (DNR-PRD); local Intermediate School Districts/ Regional Education Service Agency (ISD/RESA) and local community rehabilitation organizations.

In 2009 the MRS Northern Michigan District Office, in partnership with Traverse Bay Area ISD, utilized Program Innovation funds to create a work-based learning site at Traverse City State Park with the vision of future replication and expansion. Bill Colombo was the Traverse Bay Area MRS Transition counselor that championed these efforts. Now in his role as a statewide consultant, Bill is assisting local communities to implement the model statewide with the expansion of 13 new sites signing on for this summer. The new sites are statewide covering rural and urban areas including: Van Ripper, Brimley, Young, Interlochen, Spring Lake, South Higgins, Hartwick Pines, Ludington, Grand Haven, Ionia, Island Lake, Pinckney and Sleeper.

The expanded model is funded by the DNR-PRD contributing non-Federal funds to MRS to secure Federal matching funds. The transfer of funds flows through an ISD/RESA as an increase to an existing Interagency Cash Transfer Agreement (ICTA). At a cost of \$8,796 per site, funds support an 8 week summer paid work experience for 80+ transition youth at a Michigan State Parks. In addition, it provides for an on-site job coach during all training hours and assistance with incidental work related expenses, i.e. transportation, uniforms.

During difficult fiscal times, collaboration and innovation are more important than ever. This project is an example of both and, as a result, transition youth will benefit from real world experiences which is an evidence-based practice. As a result of this program, the students will have a much greater chance of becoming successfully employed when they exit high school.

MTSA BOARD VOTES TO CONTINUE THE COLLABORATIVE EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP WITH MRS TO SUPPORT WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

In 2012, the MTSA donated funds to MRS creating a fund source for 2 work-based learning programs. Seven teams (including partners from education,



community rehabilitation organizations and MRS) submitted projects. Ultimately Kent County and Hillsdale County were selected to proceed with programming. As a result, 35 students with disabilities have participated in work-based learning opportunities this year.

As a result of the success of the first year, the MTSA board voted to increase the donation from \$17,500 to \$25,000 creating a budget of \$92,593, which is enough funds for three work-based learning programs at \$32,407.50 per program. This is an exciting opportunity for communities that want to expand work experiences for Transition Youth.

The mission of MTSA is to provide support to its membership to assist students and young adults with disabilities as they Transition through school to achieve their post-school goals. MTSA is a well-established, statewide nonprofit organization and reaches out to those individuals and community partners involved in providing Transition services for students receiving special education services and for persons sharing concerns and interests of those students and the Association. MTSA has an independent board and subcommittees that work on specific goals each year including the MTSA yearly conference in Frankenmuth, Michigan.

With MTSA's focus on Transition youth, MTSA and MRS have an overlapping mission to ensure that individuals with disabilities have a quality life after graduating/exiting the education system. Specifically, MTSA and MRS have a common interest in the area of achieving employment outcomes for young people with disabilities.

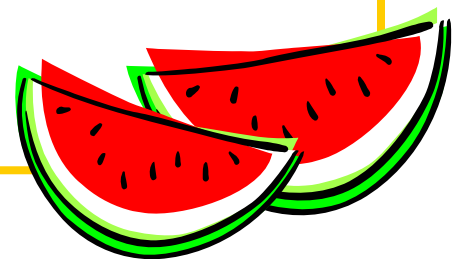
Look for the MRS/MTSA Collaborative Project Applications and supporting documents to be made available on the MTSA website at <http://michigantsa.com/>. If you are on the MRS Transition or MI-TOP group list you will be notified when the applications are available.

Recently at the MTSA Strategic Planning Session, the MTSA board voted to donate \$17,500 to MRS for the purpose of establishing a fund source where at the local level, schools and MRS can compete for funding to create innovative work-based learning opportunities for students.

Work-based learning has been chosen to be the focus of the funds because there is much research demonstrating that school-age youth with disabilities are much more likely to achieve an employment outcome if they participate in a paid or unpaid work experience while in high school. Therefore, the focus of the project is to create programs that accomplish this goal. Work-based learning is a broad continuum of services that may include career exploration opportunities, paid or unpaid work experience, summer employment, internships, etc.

Several innovations have been built into the project. For example, a team approach to project design and implementation is required, involving both educational and MRS partners. In addition, an independent panel will review proposals for project selection. The idea is that collaboration and transparency is incorporated throughout the project implementation. Another innovation is that each project that is funded will report out at the MSTTA annual conference so that all the attendees receive the benefit of learning about the project models and outcomes.

More information will be forthcoming about the process to submit proposals and when the funds will be released. Stay tuned!





SAVE THE DATE

**The 4th Annual MRS Summer
Transition Training**

Tuesday, August 6, 2013

**Lansing Community College -
West Campus
5708 Cornerstone Drive
Lansing, 48917**

PLEASE FORWARD OR PRINT TRANSITION BULLETIN

E-mail your contributions or ideas and subscription
requests for "Transition Bulletin" to
Cynthia Wright wrightc1@michigan.gov or call 517-241-3957

**Views expressed in Transition Bulletin articles are
not necessarily the views of the**