

**MICHIGAN COUNCIL FOR
REHABILITATION SERVICES (MCRS)**

ANNUAL REPORT

**FISCAL YEAR 2020
(October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020)**

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MCRS OVERVIEW

MCRS PURPOSE: The Michigan Council for Rehabilitation Services (MCRS or Council) gives advice and works in strategic partnership with Michigan's two Designated State Units (DSUs) for providing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services, the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS). MCRS members provide an external, consumer-oriented perspective when working in collaboration with BSBP and MRS to review, analyze and advise on policy and programs. The MCRS also offers customers of VR services, other citizens with disabilities, and advocates a formal and accessible mechanism to inform Michigan's VR programs of consumer feedback through public comment. The MCRS is Michigan's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), as set forth in The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), its implementing regulations, and Michigan's Executive Orders, 2012-10 and 2019-13. These documents describe the work of the Council, the required member composition for Governor appointments, and the Council's placement within the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). The appointed Council members serve as volunteers. For more details and references, please visit the MCRS website Michigan.gov/MCRS, email MCRS@michigan.gov, or call the MCRS office at 517-335-2400.

MCRS Mission: To improve public vocational rehabilitation (VR) services delivered by the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS).

MCRS Vision: BSBP and MRS will provide VR services utilizing service delivery models that are respectful, equitable and effective in achieving meaningful employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

MCRS Values:

- The right to choose is realized by access to all information.
- Work opportunities open doors to individual independence and participation in community life.
- A focus on an individual's assets and strengths leads to employment success.

- Person-centered goals, service plans and delivery systems lead to individual employment success.
- Shared roles and responsibilities improve satisfaction with the rehabilitation process.
- Collaborative partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies, and business entities are critical for VR system effectiveness.

MCRS MEMBERSHIP:

With the exception of the MRS and BSBP ex-officio members, MCRS members are appointed by the Governor for terms not to exceed three years. Members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. The composition of the Council is set forth in The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA and consists of at least 15 people who voluntarily serve to represent specific disability stakeholders from across Michigan. The MCRS member list, presented below, is inclusive of people who served in FY2020, October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020. Governor Gretchen Whitmer appointed ten new members with terms beginning on January 1, 2020. Information about FY2020 members is presented on the MCRS website.

Governor Appointed Members Serving Terms During FY2020

Current FY2020 MCRS Members

Mikyia Aaron, of Taylor, representing Business, Industry or Labor – Chair of the Bylaws Work Team

Elizabeth Kamm Abdour, of Lansing, representing Business, Industry and Labor – Bylaws Work Team

Kimberly Kennedy Barrington, of Byron Center, representing Disability Advocacy Groups - Partners Work Team

Carol Bergquist, of Escanaba, representing the American Indian 121 Vocational Rehabilitation Projects – MCRS Chair and Executive Team

Myrtel Brown, of Flint, representing Business, Industry and Labor

Lisa Cook-Gordon, of Melvin, representing Disability Advocacy Groups

Todd Culver, of East Lansing, representing Disability Advocacy Groups – Annual Report Work Team

Tiffany Guthrie, of Alma, representing the Parent and Training Information Center – Executive Team Member at Large and Partners Work Team

Elham Jahshan, of East Lansing, representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Travar Pettway, of Canton, representing Disability Advocates

Jackie Tahtinen, of Pelkie, representing Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors – MCRS Vice Chair, Executive Team and Bylaws Work Team

Janet Timbs, of Mt. Morris, representing the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education – Chair of the Partners Work Team and Bylaws Work Team

Karen Schulz, of Lansing, representing Business, Industry and Labor

David Szyldowski, of Alpena, representing Community Rehabilitation Programs – Executive Team Member at large

Vacancy, representing Current or Former Applicants for or Recipients of Public VR Services

Vacancy, representing the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

Previous FY2020 MCRS Members

Aaron Andres, of Marquette, representing the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

Sheryl Diamond, of Lansing, representing the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education – MCRS Secretary and Executive Team

Carrie Dudek, of Davison, representing Disability Advocacy Groups – MCRS Treasurer and Executive Team

Trina Edmondson, of Six Lakes, representing Disability Advocacy Groups

Brenda Henige, of East Lansing, representing Current or Former Applicants for or Recipients of Public VR Services – Executive Team Member at Large

Michael Miller, of Homer, representing Business, Industry and Labor

Jennipher Wiebold, of Kalamazoo, representing Disability Advocacy Groups

MCRS Ex-Officio Members

Tina Fullerton, State Director of Michigan Rehabilitation Services

William Robinson, State Director of Bureau of Services for Blind Persons

DSU Liaisons

Lisa Kisiel, Director of Field Services, Bureau of Services for Blind Persons

Eric Bachmann, District Manager, Michigan Rehabilitation Services

MCRS Administrative Support

Alicia Kirkey, Departmental Analyst, Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

FY2020 YEAR OF BUILDING CAPACITY

In FY2020, MCRS achieved its federal mandates by offering valuable perspectives throughout the development and review of state VR priorities, goals, policies, and procedures. Both VR agencies consistently provided requested plans, reports, data, and other relevant information. Through MCRS analysis of these documents, as well as customer and constituent interactions, members directly impacted State level VR planning and decision making. For MCRS administrative support, MRS and BSBP have provided funds to support the designated time of a departmental analyst, housed within the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), who serves as the initial contact person for the Council. The analyst assists MCRS members with various technical and clerical tasks, helps the Council comply with the Open Meetings Act, assures accessibility of documents and website, participates in quarterly business meetings and designated work team sessions, and facilitates necessary liaison communication with various State of Michigan (SOM) personnel. To date, this arrangement has been very effective. During FY2020, MCRS, MRS and BSBP benefitted from an effective working relationship that is intentionally strong, vibrant, and honors the MCRS purpose as a knowledgeable and powerful Voice of Michigan's Citizens with Disabilities, which meaningfully informs Michigan's vocational rehabilitation community.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- In December 2018, elections for MCRS officers and the executive team were held for four officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer and two “members at large” who comprised the executive team. MCRS officers were elected for two-year terms, serving during FY2019 and FY2020. The revised bylaws (anticipated adoption at the MCRS Business Meeting 02/11/2021) will guide MCRS elections also occurring during the February 2021 meeting.
- Governor Gretchen Whitmer appointed one new MCRS member in FY2019 and ten members with terms beginning on January 1, 2020. Four previously appointed MCRS members continued their terms in FY2020. Due to a high percentage of newly appointed MCRS members (11 of 15 members), the executive team decided to utilize an adhoc work team structure to immediately perform the work of the Council, rather than the past structure of two standing committees. This would allow for a diverse mix of people participating in short term focused work teams to achieve specific goals. Such teams would also offer more members leadership opportunities as ad hoc chairs, based on their interests and expertise. This structure also met the needs of the MCRS to accomplish essential tasks. The FY2020 work teams included:
 - FY2020 MCRS Annual Report - Carol Bergquist, Todd Culver, Lisa Kisiel (BSBP) and Eric Bachmann (MRS)
 - MCRS Response to the VR Section of Michigan’s Unified State Plan – Carol Bergquist, Jackie Tahtinen, Lisa Kisiel (BSBP), Bill Colombo (MRS)
 - Bylaws – Mikyia Aaron, Elizabeth Kamm Abdnour, Janet Timbs, Jackie Tahtinen, Bill Robinson (BSBP)
 - Partnerships – Janet Timbs, Tiffany Guthrie, Lisa Cook Gordon, Kimberly Barrington Kennedy
- The appointment of eleven new MCRS members resulted in a need for professional learning opportunities to gain knowledge about the role and function of a State Rehabilitation Council, the requirements of the

Federal - State public VR system, and the provision of VR services through Michigan's two Designated State Units, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP). Learning opportunities included national and state level VR conferences, presentations by experts during MCRS business meetings, professional development sessions of specific topics, and training and technical assistance through the National Association of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC). Examples of the MCRS professional learning opportunities are interspersed throughout this report.

- Two MCRS members participated in re:con, Michigan's premier statewide VR conference in November 2019, and three members attended the Incompass, Michigan's VR Leadership Conference in June 2020. Both conferences were opportunities to learn about Michigan's VR community, statewide, and national issues. Participants and presenters represented a variety of federal and state agencies, local organizations, people with disabilities, experts in various aspects of vocational rehabilitation, and numerous advocacy groups. MCRS members hosted an informational booth at the re:con conference, which offered engaging interaction with Michigan's public and private VR communities, people with disabilities, and advocates from across Michigan.
- The MCRS chairperson and vice chairperson are active with the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC). They participate in monthly national conference calls to learn about SRC requirements, discuss how other SRC's operate and implement the federal mandates, and learn about current VR issues. The NCSRC website is also a valuable source of current SRC training and technical assistance information, which MCRS utilized for member orientation.
- Staff in various roles with each DSU were readily available to meet the training and technical assistance requests of MCRS members. Some examples include: technical assistance offered by both MRS and BSBP on policy updates, WIOA, the VR process, monitoring progress, and measuring outcomes of serving students with disabilities through pre-employment transition services.

The following section summarizes the MCRS' activities and accomplishments for each required State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) federal mandate during FY2020.

1. *WORK IN PARTNERSHIP with the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), the public VR agencies in Michigan regarding essential planning, policy development and service delivery intended to result in meeting the employment potential of Michigan citizens with disabilities.*

- The MCRS vice chairperson is an active participant in all MRS policy cadre meetings. All members are advised about the key topic for cadre meetings and may attend virtually based on their interest and availability. Results of the policy cadre meetings held each quarter are discussed during executive team meetings and with the full Council during the MCRS quarterly meetings.
- Several MCRS members were active participants in Michigan's 2020 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Committee, including the MRS and BSBP State Directors (ex-officio members), the BSBP liaison, the MCRS chair and three MCRS appointed members representing the Michigan Department of Education, Disability Rights Michigan (formerly Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service) – Client Assistance Program, and Incompass Michigan. Additionally, CSNA researchers gathered the perspective of other MCRS members through expert interviews. Recently released to the public, the 2020 CSNA Report will be the focus of the professional learning session of the MCRS February 2021 business meeting. A CSNA work team will be established.
- MCRS members participated in BSBP's 2019 Achievement Honor Roll Awards on October 11, which empowered customers through recognition of their exemplary goal accomplishments in employment and/or independent living after vision loss. Honorees were nominated by BSBP staff for attaining independence through utilizing the diverse set of quality services offered by BSBP. Talking with honorees, and hearing about their struggles and successes resulted in a memorable program.

- The MCRS chairperson participated in several MRS meetings regarding rate restructuring. As a corrective action to a 2017 RSA 107 monitoring finding, Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG) was contracted by the MRS to conduct a rate study and calculate statewide service rates for providers contracted or authorized by MRS to provide vocational rehabilitative (VR) services. This action ensures set fees for purchased VR services, including pre-employment transition services, are based on reasonable costs established by the agency, as required by 34 C.F.R. § 361.50(c)(1). Stakeholder and provider participation have, and will continue to be, integral throughout the initiative.
 - On October 17, 2019, MCRS members assisted MRS staff in facilitating the powerful Champion Awards ceremony, which honored the successful outcomes of several MRS customers and business partners throughout Michigan. The MCRS chair served as the MC of this amazingly positive ceremony.
 - Two members participated in BSBP's 50-year anniversary celebration for the BSBP training center in Kalamazoo and three members participated the MCTI's 75-year celebration held in Plainwell.
 - Four MCRS members were scheduled to participate in the three national conference sequence of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC), the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), and the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB), in Bethesda during April 2020. However, all three conferences were cancelled, due to COVID-19 restrictions.
2. *REVIEW AND ANALYZE program effectiveness, create and analyze consumer satisfaction materials, render concerns and recommendations to BSBP and MRS derived from performance standards, measurements of rehabilitation services, and public input.*
- Across several business meetings, MCRS members along with MRS and BSBP staff discussed the importance of gathering customer satisfaction information. MRS completes a comprehensive statewide Customer Satisfaction Survey each year, with information gathered at

two milestones, at plan and at exit. The survey process is conducted by Michigan State University's Project Excellence. MCRS received the MRS 2019 Customer Satisfaction Report and Sukyeong Pi, Ph.D., Project Excellence Research Director, presented a 3-year overview at the MCRS August 2020 business meeting. MCRS is establishing a work team process to further review the customer satisfaction data and its implications for possible policy or process change.

- BSBP uses a variety of methods to capture customer satisfaction embedded throughout their service delivery system. BSBP staff is interested in working with MCRS in exploring innovative, accessible and engaging ways of capturing satisfaction data.
3. *ADVISE the governor and state agencies on the performance of vocational rehabilitation in Michigan regarding eligibility, program effectiveness and effect on individuals with disabilities. This includes preparation and distribution of this annual report.*
- The vice chair is a member of the MRS policy cadre. At each business meeting she presents information about the topics of recent meetings and the focus of the upcoming cadre meetings. These discussions are interactive with MRS staff present and MCRS members. Members have an open invitation to join any cadre meeting of interest. All meetings are accessible through statewide virtual meetings.
 - BSBP reviews, updates and creates policy on a regular basis at specific meetings scheduled for that purpose. MCRS members are invited to participate at each level of policy consideration. Input is also solicited from members at quarterly business meetings.
 - MRS and BSBP state directors serve as ex-officio members of the MCRS. Directors actively participate in the business meetings by providing an overview of the VR process and outcome statistics and a discussion of current or emerging issues. Invited expert staff also offer their perspective and everyone has the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations.

- Each director appointed a key administrator who serves as that DSU's liaison to the MCRS. Liaisons are directly involved with the executive team on an on-going basis and provide timely access to data and other information. When requested, liaisons readily participate in discussions with the MCRS executive team and work teams between business meetings.
 - MCRS business meetings offer the opportunity for all members to access information, participate in open Q&A with DSU staff, and offer their personal perspectives and those of the constituent groups they represent. Throughout FY2020, requested information has been provided by each DSU in a timely manner.
 - MCRS chairperson and vice chairperson worked with MRS and BSBP liaisons and ex-officio members to complete the MCRS FY2019 Annual Report, which was submitted to RSA by the December 30, 2019 due date.
4. *COORDINATE the work of the SRC with the activities of other Michigan statewide disability-related councils. This includes establishing and maintaining a positive working relationship with the State Independent Living Council (SILC).*
- The chairperson of the SILC was appointed to the MCRS in August 2019 by Governor Whitmer. In FY2020, the SILC was reorganized by executive order and a new chairperson was elected by their members. She has agreed to represent the SILC on the MCRS and will be formally appointed by the Governor with her term beginning January 1, 2021.
 - The MCRS chairperson and vice chairperson participated in the SILC's virtual presentation of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) on December 9, 2019.
 - Other disability roles represented by MCRS member's include Special Education, Michigan's Parent Training Center, Centers for Independent Living, Community Rehabilitation Organizations, Incompass Michigan, the Client Assistance Program (CAP), and Native American VR.

- One of the MCRS priorities for FY2020 was to learn about other disability-related councils in Michigan and establish partnerships to achieve common goals for Michigan citizens with disabilities. Members established a partners work team that began reaching out to potential partners, including the SILC, the Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Michigan Interagency Transition Team (MITT).
5. *CONDUCT BUSINESS OPERATIONS to assure that the Council holds four Business Meetings each year, with an Agenda that includes transparency for operations, education about the VR programs and dedicated time for the public to make comment.*
- MCRS conducted four required quarterly business meetings in FY2020. Based on the travel convenience of the majority of MCRS members, in-person meetings were held in the Lansing area on November 14, 2019 and February 13, 2020. Due to COVID – 19 closures and restrictions, virtual meetings were held utilizing Microsoft Teams on May 14, 2020 and August 13, 2020. The business meeting format includes a morning business meeting with a comprehensive update of the current status of MRS and BSBP by their respective state directors, followed by an interactive Q&A. Afternoon professional learning sessions covered a variety of topics:
 - **November 14, 2019** - MCRS Member Work Session – Reviewed committee structure and/or use of work teams. Established work teams for (1) MCRS Response to Unified State Plan, (2) FY2019 Annual and (3) Revision to MCRS Bylaws.
 - **February 13, 2020** – (1) Overview of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) – Sigrid Adams (MRS), (2) Overview of Bureau of Services for Blind Persons – Bill Robinson, Director of BSBP, (3) MRS Strategic Plan and Performance Accountability – Bill Colombo (MRS).
 - **May 14, 2020** – Voices of MCRS Members: Impact of COVID-19 on People with Disabilities; Sharing our Perspective – Interactive Discussion.

- **August 13, 2020** – MRS Customer Satisfaction Survey Process and Summary Report – Sukyeong Pi, Ph.D. – Project Excellence, Michigan State University; and BSBP’s Customer Satisfaction Process and Outcomes – Lisa Kisiel, BSBP Director of Field Services and DSU Liaison.
- The MCRS executive team, MRS and BSBP liaisons and ex officio members designed a series of professional learning experiences to provide members with a working knowledge of the federal - state VR system, to ensure the Council’s compliant implementation of the SRC federal mandates. Three sessions were held in FY2020, the first during the February 13, 2020 meeting (listed above). This meeting was the initial gathering with the ten newly appointed members. Two separate 2-hour virtual sessions covered additional MCRS details and Open Meetings Act (OMA), and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and meeting facilitation.
 - **July 21, 2020** – (1) MCRS Mission, Roles of Elected Position and Structure – Carol Bergquist, Ph.D. MCRS Chairperson and Jackie Tahtinen, MSRC Vice Chairperson; (2) What is Vocational Rehabilitation? and (3) MCRS Mission as it Relates to the SRC Federal Mandates – DSU Liaisons Lisa Kisiel, BSBP Director of Field Services and Eric Bachmann, MRS District Manager.
 - **July 29, 2020** – (1) MCRS Meeting Protocols – Carol Bergquist, Ph.D., MRCs Chairperson; (2) MCRS Website, State of Michigan (SOM) Guidelines and Support and the MCRS Communication and IT Systems – Jonathon Bischoff, Department Specialist, MRS; (3) Michigan’s Open Meetings Act and (4) Freedom of Information Act – Tom Quasarano, Assistant Attorney General; and (5) Robert’s Rules of Order – Julie Pioch, District Director, MSU Extension Office.

FY2020: YEAR OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The lives of Michigan's citizens, including individuals with disabilities who are customers of the VR system, have been dramatically disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Valued services to support this vulnerable population, connecting individuals with disabilities to employment opportunities, have

been significantly impacted as well. In response to a combination of executive orders from Michigan's Governor's office, guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other reliable sources of public health subject matter expertise, many VR customers were unable to connect with in-person services, in the best interests of the health and safety of persons served and the staff who support them.

Facing uncertainty in the transition into 2021, this impact is likely to continue into next year, affecting the number of customers supported through the VR system and outcomes achieved as a result. It is likely that additional emphasis on the potential for remote service delivery through virtual platforms will also continue, to maintain these vital connections. The work of MCRS will adapt as well, not only in conducting the business of the Council remotely as conditions dictate, but in adjusting the lens through which the SRC fulfills its mandate to support improvement of public VR services delivered by BSBP and MRS, opening doors to individual independence and participation in community life.

DESIGNATED STATE UNITS SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following two sections display summary statistics from Michigan's two Designated State Units (DSU's) housed within the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO):

- Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)

The two DSU's provide State Vocational Rehabilitation Services which are administered under the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. The vocational rehabilitation (VR) program is designed to provide VR services for individuals with disabilities, consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice, so that they may prepare for and engage in competitive integrated employment, achieve economic self-sufficiency and live independently. While the two DSU's both serve individuals with disabilities within the State of Michigan they serve different populations:

- BSBP clients are blind citizens of the state. Eligibility can vary based on program requirements, but all clients must have blindness as their primary disability impeding them from employment or living independently.

- MRS' eligible individuals are those who have a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment, who can benefit from VR services for employment, and who require VR services.

Both agencies are primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program of the State agency (DLEO), as mandated under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and its implementing regulations under 34 CFR § 361.

PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of states and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce development system's six core programs. Vocational rehabilitation performance accountability indicators include:

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skill Gains*
- Effectiveness in serving employers

*All of the above performance indicators are in a benchmarking phase except for measurable skills gains.

BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR BLIND PERSONS (BSBP)

BSBP Mission: The mission of the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons is to provide opportunities to individuals who are blind or visually impaired to achieve employment, and/or achieve maximum and meaningful independence in life through comprehensive rehabilitative services.

BSBP Vision: It is the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons vision to help Michigan become a better State for blind and visually impaired persons to be equal contributing citizens that enjoy all the advantages of a full, independent life.

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) managed a substantial interruption of in-person services critical to providing the comprehensive rehabilitative services to blind or visually impaired persons. Out of concern for the safety of BSBP professionals and customers, in-person services were discontinued March 2020. The shift to telework by BSBP professionals required solving immediate logistical issues related to communications and connectivity to the state network which was quickly resolved by management working with Employment and Training Division personnel and the Department of Technology Management and Budget. Both BSBP Field Services Division (FSD) and Training Center (BSBPTC) began contacting customers, making well check calls, and redefining day-to-day business. The Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) and other national resources provided guidance on serving customers virtually. BSBP's Pre-ets unit contributed to the national dialogue on how to serve students virtually and a reference tool they developed was featured on a national Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) membership call. The BSBPTC collaborated with FSD and the Pre-ets unit and developed targeted virtual online curricula. As a model of how best to work together during a crisis, BSBP and MRS collaborated through weekly virtual meetings to share best practices and work through the difficult challenges that continue even today.

BSBP FY2020 Performance Highlights

As in the prior year, BSBP Director initiatives continue to provide a framework for a culture of continuous improvement and accountability. These initiatives include:

- Fiscal Responsibility
- Transformational Service Models and Processes
- Modernization
- Next generation leadership

Fiscal Responsibility

BSBP's VR grant award increased by 2% in FY2020. The Independent Living Older Blind (ILOB) grant award decreased by 1.4% in FY2020. Both the VR and ILOB awards are formula grants, however the ILOB award is fixed and has not been increased since 2000 while the VR award is adjusted for CPI and other factors. The Supported Employment grants totaling

\$61,040 were partially relinquished and returned to the US Treasury due to the complicated matching formula and requirements of these grants. BSBP was fully matched for FY2020 and was also awarded additional VR federal funds through the RSA re-allotment process.

FY 2020 Federal Awards

Grant	Dollar Amount
VR Grant	\$17,268,588
Re-allotment Award	\$ 1,900,000
Total VR Grants	\$19,168,588
Pre-ETS Reserve (Total VR Grants X 15%)	\$ 2,875,288
Supported Employment - Adult	\$ 30,520
Supported Employment - Youth	\$ 30,520
IL Older Blind	\$ 993,509
IL Part B	\$ 192,063

Transformational Service Models and Processes

- BSBP’s FSD rehabilitation professionals and BSBPTC worked together to design virtual programs to address the pre-employment transition needs of secondary and post-secondary students. Services delivered virtually included self-advocacy, Camp Transition Zone, Post-Secondary Readiness, Counseling on Post-Secondary Education, Job Seeking Skills, STEM Camp, and Transitions in Training (TNT).
- FSD facilitated panel discussions and one-on-one virtual counseling and teaching opportunities. These virtual offerings not only enhance BSBP’s ability to provide services statewide today but also will be retained to enhance future statewide services as in-person services resume.
- Field Services continued the investment in Customized Employment (CE). The CE service delivery model represents a transformational employment model that focuses on competitive integrated employment of the most significantly disabled. The initial CE pilot was launched in the eastern part of the State and continues to move forward with the launch of pilot II in the west and central part of the State. BSBP and MRS worked jointly on this project receiving technical assistance from

the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Workforce Innovation and Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC). The CE pilots received the support of the Employment First stakeholders' group, nationally recognized consultants Griffin Hammis and Associates (GHA) and our valued provider network including representation from Incompass Michigan. The coordination of CE and the 2 pilots were recognized nationally highlighting the strategic partnership of BSBP and MRS in bringing this service delivery model to the State with intention and a goal of sustainability.

- Field Services believes that a solid Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) developed with consumer informed choice leads to sustainable employment outcomes. Field Services:
 - A. Developed a training tool for counselors which reviews and provides guidance on the essential elements of the IPE to support IPE development that leads to Competitive Integrated Employment in demand-driven jobs and careers.
 - B. Continued emphasis and training to ensure linking IPEs and post-secondary training to Labor Market Information (LMI) provided by workforce partners.
 - C. Continued to promote the use of The Career Index Plus, an online automated tool for consumer job exploration that allows for counselor participation and collaboration.
- BSBP continues to review and evaluate policies, procedures, and processes to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery. A notable policy and procedure change that was finalized, which solicited the input of consumer groups and the MCRS, is the Post-Secondary policy. BSBP supports post-secondary training for eligible VR participants which includes college sponsorships tied to LMI. For FY2020, BSBP expended approximately \$1.7 million dollars in support of post-secondary trainings. Although many students attended training virtually, the commitment to continuity of their education and training that leads to quality employment outcomes continued.
- The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation Services Administration agency (RSA) through its monitoring of BSBP identified rate methodology and a review of established rates and services listed in the BSBP fee for

service schedule. Working with federal partners, Field Service management took a deep dive into methodology and rates for fee for services as well as a look at a comprehensive fee for service tool for BSBP. RSA approved the revised fee for service schedule, comprehensive services list and methodology as part of BSBP's corrective action plan. The updated Purchase Services policy and procedure is a direct result.

Key FSD Metrics

- BSBP's FSD worked with RSA on implementation of a corrective action plan to accomplish a standard of excellence for determining timely eligibility and timely design of IPE's at 90% or better rate of timeliness. BSBP's corrective action plan in these areas was completed by July 1, 2020.
- VR served 854 consumers in FY2020 versus 984 consumers in FY2019, a 13% decrease year over year which illustrates the challenges of FY2020.
- VR placed 62 individuals in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) versus 90 individual placements in CIE in FY2019, a 31% decrease year over year, again illustrating the challenges of FY2020. The median hourly wage was \$12.39
- Approximately 416 students received pre-employment transition services during FY2020 versus 510 in FY2019, a decrease of 18.4%. The momentum of in-person services and programs ground to a screeching halt as schools closed and, even upon re-opening, limited access to students. Pre-ets eligible students (VR) and potentially eligible students (prior to application) continue to increase as a percentage of counselors' caseloads.
- Vocational goals of BSBP clients included but were not limited to the following industry groups:
 - Automotive Industry
 - Banking
 - Customer Service
 - Education
 - Farmers and Ranchers

- Food Services
 - Healthcare
 - Information Technology
 - Professional Trades
 - Retail Trade
 - Social Services
- BSBP Blind Rehabilitation Instructors (BRIs) served more than 520 individuals requiring independent living skills versus 628 in the prior year, a decrease of 20%. Independent living skills training promotes independent living in the community as well as workplace readiness skills. Adjustment to blindness training requires in-person services in order to be effective. BRI's provided virtual and vended services to the extent available.

Other Notable Accomplishments

- BSBP and MCRS worked together to complete the BSBP portion of the Program Year 2020-2023 Unified State Plan that was submitted on July 1, 2020 including the facilitation of public hearings.
- BSBP Training Center celebrated its 50th anniversary.
- BSBP along with several partners celebrated the 30th anniversary of the ADA and the 100th anniversary of the VR program.

Group Services

- The Business Enterprise Program (BEP), the federal and state Randolph-Sheppard program, provides blind persons the opportunity to operate a food service business in state and federal buildings and state rest areas. The facilities include vending routes, vending machines, snack bars and cafeterias. The BEP program continued to operate in the community despite the risk presented by the virus. As an essential service, BEP provided truckers and critical infrastructure workers with an opportunity for snacks, coffee and pop. State employees teleworking resulted in many empty state office buildings which has adversely affected both the income of the BEP operators and the program. System-wide sales were down significantly in FY2020. Fortunately, innovation in cashless payments and telemetry provided by modern vending machines proved invaluable in managing

through challenging times. The BSBP BEP team innovatively created a virtual training program combined with in-person on the job training with current BEP operators for five candidates that will soon bid on sites in FY2021.

BEP BY THE NUMBERS			
Chart: 4 Columns/5 Rows			
	FY 20	FY 19	% CHANGE
GROSS SALES PROGRAM TOTAL	\$7,099,802	\$10,083,597	-29%
AVERAGE OPERATOR INCOME	\$54,180	\$100,158	-46%
MEDIAN OPERATOR INCOME	\$36,012.00	\$54,449	-34%
NUMBER OF OPERATORS	42	43	-.02%
NUMBER OF SITES	147	139	.06%

- The BSBP Training Center located in Kalamazoo is a 24/7 residential adjustment to blindness vocational rehabilitation training center. It served 156 participants in FY2020 of whom 69 were referrals from VR, 19 were referrals from IL and 68 were referrals from pre-ets. In-person services were significantly impacted and, as previously mentioned, the Training Center team immediately went to work to design virtual offerings once in-person services ceased. The Training Center designed more than 28 virtual offerings for adults and pre-employment transition students collaborating with FSD. The Training Center staff donated perishable and PPE items with an estimated value of \$1,539 to support the community in response to the pandemic early on. Training Center support staff partnered with the Braille and Talking Book Library to fill gaps in services as needed. Highlights of the Training Center include:

Pre-Employment Transition Services Programming

Most programming was provided virtually:

- Post-Secondary Readiness Program
- Pre-ETS Individual Courses: Advocacy, Counseling on Post-Secondary Education, and Job Seeking Skills
- Financial Literacy
- Camp Transition Zone - TC Staff Assisted
- S.T.E.M. Camp
- Survivor- A workplace and post-secondary readiness camp

Events

- Two - 2 Day Community Partner Trainings: 15 staff from 9 agencies
- Virtual Mini-Adjustment to Blindness instruction to IL and VR referrals
- The Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) circulates specially formatted books to over 10,000 Michigan residents who cannot read standard print material due to a visual, physical, or reading disability. BTBL delivered over 850,000 audio books on digital cartridges and sent 1,698 volumes of braille books to consumers in FY20.

Modernization

- BSBP acquired the inSights Data Analytics platform from Libera, Inc. This platform integrates seamlessly with the electronic case management system known as System 7. The data analytics platform will provide dashboards that can be filtered by time periods or caseload (counselor, office, region, statewide). The expected go-live date is January 2021.
- BTBL successfully transitioned to its new library software system called WebREADS. The software went live March 2020. It has been helpful in the facilitation of telework for the reader advisors. The WebREADS project allows BTBL to send book cartridges containing multiple (up to 30) books identified by patron requests, favorite subjects and favorite authors list, in addition to realizing a cost savings based on fewer lost cartridges throughout the year.

Next Generation Leadership

BSBP continues to invest in training, mentorship, and credentialing of its workforce.

During FY 2020, BSBP team members received training in the following:

- Implicit bias training sponsored by the state to address diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Implicit bias training was recognized as important to serving disabled populations by BSBP as another tool to embrace in service delivery and employer engagement.
- Microsoft (MS) One Drive – a cloud-based secure file storage adopted for state employee use by the State of Michigan for sharing and accessing files electronically. The move to a remote work model accelerated the need to roll-out training on the use of MS One Drive to enhance remote work.
- Microsoft (MS) TEAMS - an internet communication and video conferencing platform adopted by the State of Michigan that facilitated BSBP's delivery of virtual services and virtual counseling as well as other efficiencies including integration with MS Outlook calendars and sharing of information to targeted audiences.
- Customized Employment - a promising service delivery model beyond customized employment using a discovery model to assist consumers in informed choice and match vocational goals with their unique skills and interests.

Despite a hiring freeze, BSBP backfilled or added the following positions during FY 2020:

- BSBP Training Center Director
- Rehabilitation Counselor – East Region

At the end of FY 2020, BSBP had 11 open positions.

BSBP Contact Information

BSBP Web Page: www.michigan.gov/bsbp

Toll Free voice: 1-800-292-4200

Toll Free TTY: Dial 711 and provide the relay operator with the Toll-Free number 1-888-864-1212

MICHIGAN REHABILITATION SERVICES (MRS)

MRS Mission: Develop customized workforce solutions for businesses and individuals with disabilities.

MRS Vision: A diverse and inclusive workforce that unites businesses and individuals with disabilities toward a common good.

MRS Strategic Plan Summary

- Promote the integration of individuals with disabilities and business as our dual customer.
- Advance the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to students and youth with disabilities.
- Maximize opportunities for all individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment.
- Collaborate and align with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core and other strategic partners.
- Leverage the use of data and analytics to drive innovation, continuous improvement, and measure success.

MRS Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Performance Highlights

- 38,496 customers served
 - Nearly 9,000 Prior to Application (PTA) and potentially eligible students with disabilities received Pre-employment transition services
 - 29,538 individuals with disabilities received vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, of which more than 25,000 were significantly or most significantly disabled
 - 4,866 Michigan residents with disabilities exited employed from VR services in FY20
- The average wage was \$16 per hour for those customers who exited VR service employed, ranging from a high of \$128.21 per hour to minimum wage, for those who exited VR services employed.
- More than 830 businesses received services, largely via tele- and remote-based service delivery.
- Approximately \$500,000 saved by the business community for technical guidance and support services rendered by MRS.

Innovation and Special Programs Division

The Innovation Unit develops, supports, and executes bureau priorities. The following include performance highlights from FY20:

- MRS and DNR partnered for the fifth year to provide work-based learning experiences at 14 state parks in Michigan. This program provides students with disabilities paid work experience from June to August to build confidence through valuable real-world training. Students focused on developing essential employability skills, like problem solving or teamwork, and performing basic maintenance duties around the parks. In addition, these experiences provide students with marketable, transferrable skills to acquire competitive integrated employment. Through an Inter-agency Agreement (IA), MRS and DNR provided work experiences for 49 students with disabilities in FY20 and partnered with 8 schools.
- Innovation and Special Programs oversaw 70 Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), contracts, and grants that enhanced agency collaboration, resources, and services for agency customers. Additionally, the division oversaw 156 interagency cash transfer agreements.
- Project SEARCH, an internationally recognized work-based learning and internship program for high school students, saw 16 businesses around the state provide work-based learning opportunities at their locations. Approximately 117 students with disabilities participated in three ten-week internships, which helped them to develop social and employment skills for in-demand occupations. The program worked through school closures and completed; however, students were unable to complete their last ten-week rotation of internship due to safety precautions.
- Contributed to and facilitated on behalf of MRS: Unified State Plan development, Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, Federal monitoring coordination and corrective actions, submission of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) performance indicator reporting, Customized Employment initiative and special projects/initiatives.

- Provided consultation and support regarding subject-matter expertise in the areas of School-to-Work Transition, Section 511 Sub-Minimum Wage, Competitive Integrated Employment, Federal match requirements, Centers for Independent Living, Community Rehabilitation Organizations, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and program evaluation.
- MRS and MDHHS Juvenile Justice partnered for the fourth year to deliver an evidence-based service delivery model aimed at reducing rates of recidivism and increased education and employment outcomes for adjudicated youth returning to the community. Currently, MRS counselors provide pre-employment transition services and vocational rehabilitation services in the following residential treatment facilities:
 - Bay Pines
 - Shawono
- In February 2019, a comprehensive Benefits Counseling Pilot was launched between MRS and Centers for Independent Living/Disability Networks in the Flint, Kalamazoo, and Grand Rapids areas. The goal of the pilot was to educate and assist MRS customers receiving Social Security Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits to make informed decisions about how work may impact their benefits. The pilot provided benefits counseling to 310 individuals serving approximately 42% of the MRS VR SSI/SSDI customers in the pilot areas. The pilot was evaluated using pre- and post-tests as well as customer satisfaction surveys with assistance from Project Excellence. Partial results are available and show knowledge of work rules and work incentives increased overall after receiving benefits counseling.
- In FY20, Project Excellence in partnership with MRS completed the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). The CSNA identified several populations with disabilities as underserved. These included students and youth with disabilities, SSA beneficiaries, racial/ethnic groups, individuals with autism, individuals with mental illness, individuals with intellectual disabilities, supported employment customers, and customers who are long-term unemployed. Based on these results, MRS is making a targeted effort to address the specific needs of underserved individuals by developing strategies that

increase services, enhance access to those services, and promote opportunities for competitive integrated employment outcomes.

- MRS and Michigan State University's (MSU) Collaborative Careers Project is a model to support joint customers of MRS and MSU. This partnership creates opportunities to assist students earn credentials to obtain high-quality employment through an ICTA.
- Lead and supported MRS in the Employment First initiative, which included but wasn't limited to partnerships with: Bureau of Services for Blind Persons, Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council), Michigan Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration (BHDDA), Community Mental Health, and Community Rehabilitation Program (CRPs). Customized Employment pilots were initiated in MRS' Southeast Michigan, Mid-Michigan, and West Michigan districts. The pilot programs included eight CRPs and a total of 24 customers from both MRS and BSBP. All CRPs completed five days of Customized Employment Training with one-on-one mentoring, which will be ongoing through FY21. The training included fidelity scoring to ensure adherence to the model that yielded the best services to customers seeking employment.
 - In addition to the Customized Employment pilot, the Employment First initiative brought in technical assistance (TA) from TransCen, offering and extending supports to partners such as BSBP, DD Council, Michigan Department of Education (MDE), and Community Mental Health leadership. The TA support across partners supported a Seamless Transition model across the state. Five sites are receiving TA in implementing the model with two of the sites completing the program and maintaining employment assistance for students with the most significant disabilities.
- In partnership with MDE, the Michigan Interagency Transition Team (MITT) is co-chaired by the MRS Innovation and Special Programs. This team's focus is to align supports and services across Michigan agencies/departments for a seamless transition of students with disabilities from the k-12 education system to employment, including requisite training and/or credentialing.
- On July 1, 2020, MRS and BSBP transitioned to the federal program year goal for measurable skill gains (MSG). MRS and BSBP have

been benchmarking the WIOA performance indicators for the last two federal program years. MSG data dashboards have been developed and enhanced, which allow MRS to pull real-time data on the performance indicators. This information provides MRS the ability to identify opportunities for improvement and additional support to achieve success for this indicator. This data is also being used to make informed decisions, including program enhancements and program development that deliver high quality services leading to employment outcomes.

- The Innovation unit monitors and oversees the contract with Project Excellence at MSU for program evaluation. The areas focused on FY20 included: the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, analysis and review of the RSA-911 data (5 briefs), customer service at exit and at plan, Business Network Division business satisfaction survey, transition (pre-employment transition services), benefits planning, and program evaluation tool for districts to improve programs and service delivery.
- MRS has a technical assistance agreement with Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center. The Innovation Unit monitors and leads the project with collaboration from other units in the agency. The areas of technical assistance and support included: pre-employment transition services, competitive integrated employment, workforce integration, common performance measures, Career Index Plus (Labor Market Information), and CAVE training.
- The Innovation Unit leads the collaborative Performance Accountability Work Team, which focuses on the agency's implementation of the common performance measures under WIOA. Through this team, Measurable Skills Gain and Credential Attainment policy and training were developed and implemented statewide. The trainings provided by the Staff Development Unit, the Aware Unit, and Innovation Unit staff afforded statewide in-person and webinar trainings. The team also focused on areas that effect the WIOA performance indicators, including reason for exit and characteristics at plan.
- The Innovation Unit continued participation in the National Credential Attainment Cohort. Michigan, with representation from Titles I, II, III and IV, is one of nine states that were selected to participate in a

National cohort on Credential Attainment. The state team participated in a series of virtual cohort sessions, which provided comment from experts in the field, engagement with peers, and exploration of new and existing strategies. The outcomes produced by the cohort will lead to enhancing each state's efforts to determine which degrees, certificates, certifications, and licenses qualify as credentials using the parameters established in federal guidance.

Business Network Division (BND)

- BND implements a single point of contact system for VR based on the current prosperity regions in order to assist businesses who have a multi-county footprint. The approach is based on the VR-National Employment Team (NET) model. This process streamlines services and recruitment for businesses of every size, including the development of individualized business service plans utilizing the Business Solutions Professional (BSP) methodology.
- Engages in ongoing education with our workforce partners and American Job Centers' (MiWorks!) front-line staff as well as presence in the MiWorks! offices have allowed for expedient VR services to both potential customers and businesses including co-enrollment opportunities.
- The BND has an occupational therapy team providing wrap-around support services state-wide to dual customers, often related to reasonable accommodations, prevention strategies, job analyses, return-to-work/retention, and worksite evaluations.
- MRS utilizes the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) to increase national VR presence that links businesses with talent across the country. This online job portal provides an increased exposure of qualified clients with disability-friendly businesses across the country in various industries looking to hire.
- MRS Business Relations Consultants are subject-matter experts and engage in business outreach as well as resource development with colleges, universities, MiWorks! (AJCs), Michigan Industry Liaison Group, employer organizations, federal partners (EEOC, OFCCP,

ODEP), Michigan Diversity Council, Centers for Independent Living, and other ancillary organizations.

Top Five Industry Sectors Served by MRS in FY20 Include

- Manufacturing
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Retail Trade
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

Top Requested Services from Businesses in FY20

- Disability Awareness/Sensitivity Training/Consultation
- Accommodation/ADA Services for Retention, Including Worksite Evaluation
- Employee Recruitment
- Resource and Asset Development Outside of Agency's Scope of Services/Expertise Referral
- ADA Training/Consultation for Retention

Key Highlights from FY20

- VR support services helped businesses return workers in accordance with their safe start plans and/or transition workers to telework and mobile employment. Additionally, MRS worked in concert with other Employment & Training and LEO entities to streamline necessary supports to soften the overall economic impact caused by the pandemic. New partnerships were developed, and existing resource networks strengthened to expedite recovery action for people and business. For example, MRS partnered with MiWorks! in facilitating virtual job fairs in multiple regions of the state to increase opportunities for Michiganders seeking to re-enter the workforce.
- Shifted training and recruitment to virtual platforms, working collaboratively with MiWorks! on virtual job fairs held in regions around the state as well as in-services for business partners
- Collaboration was made with Workforce Development and the Pure Michigan Talent Connect team for higher agency visibility, outreach, and connection with job seekers and the business community

- The following are two of many business highlights from FY20:
 - Cisco
 - The Exceptional Academy is a joint effort between the Living and Learning Enrichment Center, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Michigan Career and Technical Institute, the Cisco Networking Academy. The program had 9 graduates with 7 obtaining their CCNA certification related to cybersecurity. Business played a significant role through financial contributions and internship sites. Key business partners included Masco, Flagstar Bank, Comerica, and Plante & Moran respectively.
 - Hewlett Packard
 - Customer & Business Success Story: Ethan Idzior - Saginaw, Michigan

MRS customer, Ethan Idzior, along with his Mother and representatives from MRS, Hewlett Packard, and Provail had the opportunity to highlight the success of individuals who are neurodiverse through the power of partnerships and family at the 19th annual Northeast Disability Conference (virtual) hosted by the University of Scranton on October 6, 2020. There were 854 attendees representing 39 states including the countries of Mexico, Canada, UK, and Argentina.

The panel discussion emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between state (VR), community rehabilitation organizations, and the business community. These partnerships help drive comprehensive training opportunities for individuals with disabilities while meeting the needs of employers.

Of the applicants from the State of Michigan, Ethan was chosen to participate in the Spectrum Success Internship two years in a row. Due to COVID-19, this Summer's Internship was virtual. Ethan expects to graduate from Michigan Technological University in Spring 2021. However, he already has recruiters reaching out to him with employment opportunities, because of his experiences at Hewlett Packard.

His Mom shared, “the entire process has made a huge impact on a person like Ethan who just wants to be understood and accepted for his amazing talents. His family, friends, and support team would love to see experiences like this happen in more states, providing people on the spectrum the chance to shine is not just a win for them, but also for the companies willing to invest in them”.

Ethan Idizor Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzPvDczSWzA>

Michigan Career and Technical Institute

Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) is a post-secondary, federally accredited, nationally certified residential facility that provides specialized vocational training and comprehensive rehabilitation services to help Michigan residents with disabilities prepare for competitive employment and self-sufficiency. Services include:

- **Career Readiness Center:** comprised of two programs - Career Assessment Services and Step-Up. These programs work together to offer a variety of assessments, structured remediation programs, and classes to prepare students to enter a career and technical education (CTE) training program that matches their skills and interests.
- **Vocational Training:** Automotive, Cabinetmaking, C.N.A., Culinary, Custodial, Electronics, Graphic Communications, Grounds Maintenance, Machine Technology, Office Automation, Pharmacy, Retail Marking, and Weatherization.
- **Job Placement Services:** Placement services are available to our students for as long as these services are needed. MCTI prides itself on the extensive services offered to help students find the right job, which include but are not limited to: application preparation, resume development, practice interviews, job seeking skills classes, follow-up services and assistance with job retention.

Program Effectiveness

- MCTI is one of only eight state operated comprehensive rehabilitation training centers in the United States and is a member of the National

Consortium of State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers (NC-SOCRC).

- MCTI is recognized as a post-secondary educational provider by the U.S. Department of Education. It operates under the auspices of the Michigan Department of Health Human Services and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS).
- MCTI has been fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and the Council on Occupational Education (COE).

Key Results 2019-2020 MCTI Year

During the year, MCTI closed campus after the first three weeks of its summer term and did not return students to campus until October 12, 2020. Despite this, MCTI still demonstrated some key accomplishments.

- 173 Graduates
- 85% Graduation Rate
- 82% Employment Rate
- 99% Classroom Retention Rate
- 765 Non-Duplicated Enrollment for CRC and Trade Training

MCTI 75th Celebration

MCTI celebrated both National Disability Employment Month and the school's 75th Anniversary on October 21, 2019. The event recognized an outstanding business partner, the WestRock Company, and an outstanding graduate of MCTI, Xavier DeGroat. It was 75 years ago that WK Kellogg dedicated this site to be used for the physical and vocational rehabilitation for WWII Veterans and Michigan citizens with disabilities. MCTI continues to be a national leader in vocational rehabilitation and technical training, changing with the times. Seventy-five years ago, MCTI focused on individuals with physical disabilities. Today, MCTI focuses on young people transitioning out of high school with the average age of those enrolled being 19-year-olds with barriers to learning. Despite changes over time, MCTI has maintained an emphasis and focus on customers, helping to minimize barriers and increase the credentials and skills that are valued by business and industry.

Representative Julie Calley presented MCTI with a tribute, celebrating the 75th Anniversary, which was signed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, Senator John Bizon and Representative Julie Calley.

MCTI Innovation and Expansion

- **CCNA - Cisco Certified Network Associate Training:** MCTI helped develop the Exceptional Academy in Northville during 2020. The Exceptional Academy is a joint effort between the [Living and Learning Enrichment Center](#) (a nonprofit that helps teens and adults with autism and related challenges), MRS, MCTI, the [Cisco Networking Academy](#), along with consulting support from Patrick Romzek (program designer and retired Cisco executive). MCTI helped establish the program using MCTI's campus and community-based programming model and obtained an MRS innovation grant to fund the 40 week, 30 hours per week program. Additionally, MCTI assisted with pre-program assessments to help ensure the success of program participants. The program saw nine graduates with seven obtaining their CCNA certification.
- **Manufacturing Skills Institute (MSI):** MCTI is now approved to launch additional training in manufacturing as an authorized center for MSI, which is just one of fifteen national certifications recognized by the National Manufacturers Association (NMA). Via MSI, MCTI will be providing students two certifications: Manufacturing Specialist (MS), and Manufacturing Technician 1 (MT1). The MS certification uniquely qualifies recipients for entry-level production and assembly positions, which are the perfect starting point to advance into Registered Apprenticeships for Industrial Manufacturing Technician!
- **Distance Evaluation Offered Through MCTI:** MCTI served more than 150 students through its Distance Learning Evaluation since March 2020. It is expected that the Distance Learning Evaluation will continue seeing growth. In October, MCTI will begin a pilot project offering Distance Evaluation Services to MRS District Offices. Flint, Northern Michigan, Pontiac, and Wayne Districts have been selected to participate in the pilot. MCTI anticipates rolling out this process to the rest of the Field sometime in December. Rehabilitation counselors will be able to refer any MRS participant for a basic assessment of an individual's aptitudes, reading and math skills, learning/working styles,

and work temperaments. MCTI uses a learning management system (LMS) called Moodle to deliver all the assessments. An estimated 160 students are already scheduled to participate in Distance Evaluation for the 2020-2021 school year.

- **MCTI to Offer Pharmacy Tech through Distance Learning:** MCTI was able to transition and deliver the Pharmacy Tech program through Distance Learning. Another virtual program was scheduled to start November 16, 2020.
- **Certified Nursing Assistant (C.N.A.)**
 - **Community Programs:** Since 2014 MCTI has delivered a total of 42 Certified Nursing Assistant training sessions across the state, graduating 395 individuals with an 80% placement rate. (Benton Harbor, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Detroit)
 - **On Campus Programs:** The on-campus C.N.A program began in 2004. The program has graduated 877 participants with an approximate 89% placement rate.
 - **Collaborative Partners:** One of the key components to the success of MCTI's expansion programs is collaboration with community partners. This critical element is one of the guiding principles for the department. The following are the partners that assisted with the CNA project:
 - Michigan Works! Southwest
 - West Michigan Works!
 - Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren (Kinexus)
 - Northside Association for Community Development
 - The Kalamazoo Promise
 - YOU/Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services
 - City of Kalamazoo, Shared Prosperity, and the Foundation for Excellence
 - Bronson Healthcare Group
 - Department of Health and Human Resources
- **MCTI and Apprenticeship Opportunities**
 - Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) has received \$19M funding for Apprenticeships.
 - MCTI piloted the first CNA Apprenticeships in partnership with Advantage Living and the Apprenticeship Institute.

- MCTI is a partner in the MI-YARN grant, which is committed to 124 apprentices in the next four years.
- MRS/MCTI are a required partner in all future Apprenticeship RFP's.
- The two largest referral sources for MCTI Apprenticeship opportunities includes Macomb and Oakland counties. The average student age in the program is 19.
 - MCTI maintains collaboration with the Oakland and Macomb ISD's, which may lead to establishing School to Registered Apprenticeships and building a pipeline of qualified talent.

MRS Contact Information

MRS web page: www.michigan.gov/MRS

Toll-free voice: 800-605-6722

Toll-free TTY: dial 711 and providing the relay operator with the toll-free number 800-605-6722

Email: MRS-CustomerAssistance@michigan.gov