

The Georgia State Rehabilitation Council
SFY 2008 Annual Report, July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

The Georgia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) reflects a cross section of the state's citizenry who have a stake in the vocational rehabilitation process, and bring expertise to the council from myriad perspectives. The council works jointly with state officials to develop VR goals and priorities and review them annually. To accomplish this effort, the SRC aims to build partnerships among people and organizations that participate in realizing the mission and vision of the organization; to forge a spirit of trust and cooperation among all partners; to reach out to people with disabilities and employers throughout the state to create a true spirit of inclusion; and to be receptive to the concerns and issues raised by people with disabilities, employers, and other concerned individuals so that its work can be a catalyst for positive change.

The mission of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is to work in partnership with the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL)/Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program to prepare Georgians with disabilities to enter, return to, and/or advance into competitive employment, and to promote their hiring.

The vision of the SRC is to advocate for VR to be the premier organization that assists people with disabilities to maximize their work potential and level of independence, and to ensure that each person with a disability will have the opportunity to guide his/her own education and career path.

The philosophy of the SRC notes that its members believe that all people deserve the best the council has to offer; therefore, the council strives to actively value Meaningful Work, Inclusion, Informed Choice, Self Determination, Trust and Integrity, Positive and Effective Change, and Purposeful Collaboration

This is a Letter from the SRC Chairperson:

I am pleased to present the Georgia State Rehabilitation Council annual report for SFY 2008, and on behalf of the Council members, I am equally pleased to report that this Georgia SRC had a successful first year. The Council's actions achieved a balance between support for current critical decisions and thoughtful analysis about future issues.

If last year was one of transition for the newly-configured Council, then this year was one of education. Council members learned about one another; they learned about the Council's responsibilities; and they learned about the intricacies of working side-by-side with VR administration to achieve measurable outcomes for the Georgia VR program.

The Council also discovered that commitment relies on honest and forthright discussion, and that commitment can only be transformed into action by strategically aligning efforts and speaking with one voice that reflects one common purpose: to ensure that the Georgia VR program becomes the premier organization that assists people with disabilities to maximize their work potential and independence.

The chief responsibility of the Georgia SRC is to ensure the integrity of the Rehabilitation Act by supporting all efforts to put persons with disabilities to work, and by making customer focus a top priority. To fulfill this responsibility, Council members have achieved and will continue to build the kind of relationships within and outside the rehabilitation community that leads to purposeful collaboration. As a new Council operating in a time of considerable change, we will work to establish our reputation as an entity that carries out the spirit as well as the letter of the law.

The Council values its role as a voice for persons with disabilities in Georgia. As we move ahead to face new challenges and propose innovative solutions to tough problems, we will always be mindful that disability is a natural part of the human experience; it should not stand in the way of any person to achieve success in work or in life.

Sincerely, Linda Shepard, Chair

This is a letter from the Assistant Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services:

If past is prologue, then the transition experienced by the new Georgia SRC last year gave way this year to a deeper understanding of how Georgia's VR program functions on a daily basis and the Council's *modus operandi* became one of education. This was a year of learning and discovery, with a continued rigorous examination of policies and principles, challenges and conclusions, by both Council members and VR staff, as well as numerous site visits and extensive meetings with community partners.

That kernel collaboration fostered a high level of accomplishment and an "in the trenches" attitude from Council members that signaled steadfast acceptance of their advisory and policy-affirming roles. Their thoughtful input, creative energy and unselfish sharing of time and talent helped guide our work and achieve our measurable outcomes.

Such commitment will be critical in the year ahead, which promises to be a challenging one. Anecdotal evidence indicates that it is taking a longer time at an increased cost to serve those with the most significant disabilities. There is fewer staff to interact with consumers, many more of whom are seeking new training opportunities and increased post-secondary education options. And clearly we face a difficult budget year, with cuts verging on the draconian.

However, I believe the Council will continue to demonstrate its sincere advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities with fresh enthusiasm, and will use its collective energy and intellect to address whatever hardships might confront us and to help fulfill unmet needs. I am confident that this group of dedicated volunteers will do its utmost to ensure that vocational rehabilitation remains a significant force in the lives of Georgians with disabilities. I am privileged to work with them and proud to call them my colleagues.

Sincerely, Peggy D. Rosser, Assistant Commissioner for Rehabilitation Services

The next section of the Annual Report is titled By The Numbers. Numbers do not define the essence of Georgia’s vocational rehabilitation program, but they do help paint a picture of its clients. . . . of the people who are served with the resources allotted. Most importantly, each number represents an individual with a disability on a personal path of achievement.

Several charts and graphs follow. The first one is a bar graph titled VR Program Service Trends and shows three years of statistics, from SFY 2006 to SFY 2008:

	SFY 2008	SFY 2007	SFY 2006
Referrals	13,299	12,019	12,594
Applicants	12,706	11,613	12,703
Work Plans	7,273	6,969	7,691
Clients Working	5,767	5,576	6,341
Rehabilitated	4,724	4,648	4,477
Served	33,934	34,117	34,070

The second is a linear chart showing the source for new VR referrals for SFY 2008:

Educational Institutions, Elementary and Secondary	3,795	28.56%
Educational Institutions, Post Secondary	434	3.26%
Physician or other Medical Personnel or Medical Institutions	641	4.82%
Welfare Agency, State or Local Government	172	1.29%
Community Rehabilitation Programs	1,141	8.58%
Social Security Administration	305	2.29%
One-Stop Employment and Training Centers	444	3.34%
Self-Referral	3,741	28.13%
Other Sources	2,626	19.75%
TOTAL	13,299	100%

The third is a circle graph that indicates the number and percentage of VR clients served according to Race and Ethnicity for SFY 2008:

American Indian or Alaskan Native	82	0.24 %
Asian	191	0.56 %
Black or African American	15,368	45.29 %
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	26	0.08 %
Hispanic or Latino	593	1.75 %

Multi-Racial	133	0.39 %
White or Caucasian	17,541	51.69 %
TOTAL	33,934	100 %

The fourth is a circle graph that shows Employment by Occupation of Clients Closed 26 with supports for SFY 2008:

Farm/Fishing/Forestry	11	2%
Industrial/Trades/Manufacturing	56	10%
Professional/Technical/Managerial	40	7%
Miscellaneous Occupations	111	18%
Clerical/Sales	146	22%
Service Occupations	238	39%
TOTAL	602	100%

The highest average weekly salary was \$644.55; the lowest was \$208.65. The highest average hourly wage was \$16.40; the lowest was \$6.60.

The fifth is a circle graph that shows Employment by Occupation of Clients Closed 26 without supports for SFY 2008:

Farm/Fishing/Forestry	87	2%
Industrial/Trades/Manufacturing	865	22%
Professional/Technical/Managerial	477	12%
Miscellaneous Occupations	520	13%
Clerical/Sales	809	20%
Service Occupations	1,245	31%
TOTAL	4,003	100%

The highest average weekly salary was \$536.66; the lowest was \$250.44. The highest average hourly wage was \$14.20; the lowest was \$7.44.

The sixth is a linear chart indicating the number and percentage of VR clients served according to age and gender for SFY 2008:

	Served	Percentage	Female	Female Percentage	Male	Male Percentage
Under 18	1,930	5.69%	770	2.27%	1,160	3.42%
18-24	15,329	45.17%	6,090	17.95%	9,239	27.23%
25-30	3,194	9.41%	1,202	3.54%	1,992	5.87%
31-39	3,692	10.88%	1,590	4.69%	2,102	6.19%
40-54	7,399	21.80%	3,553	10.47%	3,846	11.33%
55 +	2,390	7.04%	1,225	3.61%	1,165	3.43%
TOTAL	33,934	100%	14,430	42.52%	19,504	57.48%

The seventh is a circle graph showing the number and percentage of VR clients served by disability category for SFY 2008:

Visual Impairments	1,429	4%
Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing	2,042	6%
Communicative Impairments	181	<1%
Physical Disorders	7,636	23%
Cognitive Impairments	14,665	43%
Mental & Emotional (Psychosocial) Disabilities	7,159	21%
Other	822	2%
TOTAL	33,934	100%

The eighth is a circle graph that shows 110 Program Funding sources by percentages for SFY 2008:

Federal	76%
State	22%
Social Security Reimbursement	1%
Other Match	1%

The last circle graph that shows 110 Program Expenditures in millions of dollars for SFY 2008:

Services Purchased (Total)	\$40.7 million
Services Provided to Consumers by Roosevelt Warm Springs	\$8.1 million
Services Provided to Consumers by Business Enterprise Program	\$2.7 million
Services Provided to Consumers by Vocational Rehabilitation	\$40.7 million
Administrative Support	\$7.8 million

The next section is titled Programs, Initiatives and Partnerships

Several 110-funded initiatives and programs focus on specific populations and therefore extend the impact of the broader Georgia VR program. Each played a significant role in empowering consumers to achieve their employment, education and independent living goals. The following summary highlights the significant efforts of both VR staff and Council members to assist people with disabilities to employment and independence:

Transition -- Transitioning students who are goal directed toward employment, post-secondary education and independent living receive a variety of services. In SFY 2008, 82 schools systems participated in 66 VR/DOE Collaborative Agreements to enhance VR services to eligible students with disabilities. Within the transition age parameter of 16 to 21 years, 8,157 consumers were served; that translates to 24% of the total clients served by VR.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) -- The VR Program continued its contract with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) to provide assessments to Georgia TANF recipients. In FFY 2008, VR offered assessment services for 39 new TANF recipients with 12 referrals carried over from FFY 2007. Of the total 51 recipients receiving assessment services, 12 were referred to the VR Program and 20 were referred back to DFCS with recommendations for services; of the remaining individuals, nine referrals discontinued their assessments and 10 referrals were carried into FFY 2009.

Social Security Administration (SSA) Initiatives -- The SSA's Ticket to Work (TTW) program provides beneficiaries of SSI and SSDI greater choices in receiving employment, vocational, and other services they need to go to work and/or increase their earnings from work, thus reducing their dependency on cash benefits programs.

Georgia VR received 587 ticket assignments in SFY 2008. Since the TTW program began in 2002, more than 4,600 tickets were assigned to Georgia VR; 521 tickets were assigned to the other 24 Employment Networks in Georgia.

The VR program's federally funded Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) project provided direct benefits advisement and guidance to over 435 Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities in SFY 2008.

Assistive Technology (AT) -- During SFY 2008, the VR Assistive Technology unit received 1,439 client referrals from counselors, and provided 5,609 individualized AT services (devices, home and vehicle modifications, work site accommodations) in support of work goals.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP) -- The Georgia BEP provides work opportunities to persons who are blind and who want to manage small businesses, primarily in establishments in the food-service industry. In SFY 2008, there were 136 BEP sites operated by 99 licensed BEP vendors, who also employed 113 other individuals. Total sales equaled \$10,781,083 dollars and generated \$756, 588 dollars in sales tax revenue.

Excluding the BEP contracted vendors who manage the military and Department of Defense food service operations, the standard, average annual salary of a licensed BEP vendor was \$41,719. The lowest BEP-vendor salary was \$7,198; the highest was \$176,087.

Including all operating sites, BEP vendors employ more than 200 people with disabilities at their various work sites.

Roosevelt Warm Springs: Vocational Rehabilitation Unit (VRU) -- One hundred ninety seven (197) VRU students completed their academic education training in SFY 2008, and received such services as academic remediation, GED prep and testing, tech school preparation, keyboarding, and Georgia High School Graduation Testing. It is important to note that VRU academic education services remained consistent with the number of services offered to students this fiscal year, and the VRU maintained its certification from the Georgia Accreditation Commission.

There are four certificate-training programs aligned with the VRU. In SFY 2008 seven students participated in the Certified Nursing Assistant program; 13 students studied in the Basic Printing Assistant program; 17 students worked in the Forklift & Heavy Machinery category; and seven were enrolled in the Lawn Care & Maintenance area for the spring quarter.

One hundred fifty-four (154) students participated in paid Community Work Adjustment Services and one hundred nineteen (119) of those VRU students graduated work ready during SFY 2008. The Average Length of Stay for students who graduated work/school ready was 8.44 months

The VRU offers students a 24/7 dorm life experience coupled with job skills training, independent living and academic education classes. VRU students experience vocational, but also personal, social, spiritual and recreational growth during their enrollment at VRU. Attending the VRU as a student is oftentimes the first time that many of these young men and women have been away from home. VRU programs and services are designed to be as close to college life as possible. Because of this environment the students complete their programs as well-rounded young men and women. One student stated it best when he said, "RWSIR stands for Reaching Whatever Star It Requires" to become successful.

The Cave Spring Rehabilitation Center (CSRC) -- This residential rehabilitation program serves VR clients who are primarily ages 18-24, and who need targeted skills building and focused assistance regarding job readiness and employment training. While it is a comprehensive residential facility for a variety of disability populations, services to people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing are the primary emphasis.

The CSRC served 88 clients in SFY 2008. Over half the client census received either a Learner's driving permit (28) or a Driver's license (18) while at CSRC. One half (44) of the residents were involved in Community Work Adjustment outside the Center.

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) provides information, assistance, and advocacy to applicants and consumers with disabilities who are applying for and receiving services from the VR Program. The Law Offices of Martin and Jones administer CAP in a manner that informs and empowers people with disabilities to fully understand and exercise their rights to services.

One of CAP's priorities is to resolve problems to the customer's satisfaction. As a result, very few issues have to be resolved through the formal appeals process. CAP's experiences with resolving disagreements through mediation and informal negotiations have been highly successful for VR consumers. During SFY 2008, CAP:

- Responded to 1,750 requests for information and referral.
- Provided direct services to 135 individuals.
- Provided services to 133 applicants and 134 clients of the VR Program.
- Settled consumer problems through mutual agreement rather than fair hearing decisions before an administrative law judge.
- Represented three VR clients in administrative hearings.
- Represented one client in appeal in Superior Court.
- Represented one client in the Georgia Court of Appeals.

The Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc. (SILC) and eight Centers for Independent Living (CIL) across the state comprise Georgia's Independent Living Network. People with disabilities govern and staff each organization.

The SILC works with the VR Program to develop the State Plan for Independent Living, and focuses on promoting policies and practices that enable independent living for all Georgians with disabilities. The CILs assist people with all types of disabilities to set and achieve personal goals toward independence.

During SFY 2008, Georgia CILs provided a wide range of independent living services to nearly 2,500 Georgians with significant disabilities, including but not limited to: information and referral, independent living skills training, nursing home transition, home modifications, advocacy, orientation and mobility skills training, assistive technology, and computer skills training.

Additionally, the Centers for Independent Living worked with the Department of Community Health to assist people with disabilities with securing subsidized housing. As a part of the Olmstead implementation, The Department of Community Affairs set aside 100 vouchers for people with severe disabilities who were in or at risk of nursing home placement.

Muskogee Vocational Rehabilitation (MVR), the only Section 121 Program in Georgia, works to serve American Indians with disabilities to return to, train for, obtain, and maintain employment. Those identified American Indians who reside on or near Tama Reservation and have disabilities and are eligible for the program are served through the MVR project. In SFY 2008, MVR served 19 consumers (nine in school) with 100% successful closures.

MVR engages in numerous activities and planned initiatives designed to provide culturally appropriate services to American Indians with disabilities. Consumers are exposed to Wellness Circle, Herbal Healing, and Ceremonies, aspects that are vital to providing VR services to American Indians with disabilities. It allows them the opportunity to learn within their cultural setting, to build self-confidence with Tribal Elders as their mentors, to receive VR services in a manner that allows the diversity of tribal culture, and acknowledges and embraces the culture towards building a successful future.

In addition to hosting its annual Disability Awareness Day for state and local VR staff, advisory board members and business partners, MVR coordinated the Mid Year CANAR Conference in Seneca New York, in conjunction with the Seneca and Mohawk Nations, and the Annual CANAR Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

MVR will continue to perform surveys of tribal communities throughout the next grant year to determine the overall needs of the tribal population. This will assist us in determining the services needed through the vocational rehabilitation program.

The next section is titled The Key Mandates

The Rehabilitation Act defines the State Rehabilitation Council as a policy partner to the VR program. Its responsibilities center on identifying systemic issues and trends that need to be addressed to improve the quality, quantity and availability of deliverable services. The Council reviews programs, advises on policies and procedures, and analyzes service delivery methods as they relate to supporting clients in their education, training, independence and employment.

Additionally, the Council takes an active role in the development and review of state goals for the VR program, as well as for other initiatives that receive 110 funding, and participates in preparing the annual state plan and other required evaluations, assessments and reports. It also coordinates with other statewide councils, committees and advocacy organizations on disability issues and initiatives in order to eliminate duplication of efforts, to cultivate productive relationships and to promote purposeful collaboration.

The members of the Council work in strategic partnership with the Georgia VR program to make certain that Georgians with disabilities receive the services and supports they need to become productive citizens through gainful employment and self-sufficiency. Council members are dedicated and dynamic volunteers from diverse populations, representing individuals with disabilities, VR professionals, advocates, educators, business people and service providers, among others.

The next section is titled Looking Back

The SRC enjoyed a busy and productive year, working diligently to help empower Georgians with disabilities to achieve success in work and independence in their communities. Since nearly ninety percent of its members were serving in their first year, the Council devoted considerable time and disciplined action to training and orientation.

In a continuing effort to expand the Council's understanding of the needs of VR clients, members traveled to the Georgia School for the Deaf, as well as the Cave Spring Rehabilitation Center (CSRC) and the VR Unit at Roosevelt Warm Springs. The value of such site visits and meeting consumers where they live, learn, work and play cannot be overstated. It was at the CSRC, for example, that the Council learned that last year's public hearings helped influence the funding of upgrades to the facility, including the student dorms.

Council member teams also visited each VR region to be able to interact as much as possible with VR staff, and to learn first hand about their successes and challenges. Almost universally, staff expressed concern about the vacancy rate, the lengthy recruitment /hiring time to fill vacancies, compensation inequities, and the critical need to increase awareness of VR. Also universal and perhaps far more important, the Council noted that VR staff is buoyed by every client achievement reached – whether it be acquiring a new skill, finalizing a work plan, completing a successful college semester or finding employment for the first time. Moreover, the Council discovered that this simple proactive move to lend an ear, and perhaps a shoulder to lean on, laid a solid foundation for sustaining open communication.

Virtually every situation in the past year offered this new Council an unprecedented knowledge building opportunity, the most critical one perhaps being to help prepare, develop and monitor the annual State Plan. In renewing its pledge to not only support but also refine the 2008 State Plan goals and objectives, the Council reaffirmed the work of its predecessors and underscored the need to have adequate time for implementing those previous recommendations.

With an eye toward building a comprehensive knowledge base, the Council held extensive discussions with the VR leadership team and established committees that broadly reflect the state plan priorities, each with access to at least one designated GDOL/VR employee-liaison to assist with the flow of information and aid the Council's education. Committees to date are Public Relations/Human Resources, Policy /Procedure/Monitoring & Evaluation, Employer & Recruitment, Native American, Legislative, Education & Transition, and Sensory Services; pertinent activities included:

- Education & Transition – The committee worked with transition specialists from the Georgia Department of Education, the VR program and other partners to create and develop the interagency transition web site, and to plan the transition agenda for the SERID/Touch the Future and Transition Conference. Discussions began with community providers to examine how they might initiate transition services, and the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) will explore designing transition activities in selected sites as a summer youth initiative.
- Employer & Recruitment – Committee members analyzed local and national salary information for rehabilitation professionals, as well as turnover rates and trends, and met regularly with GDOL representatives in an effort to understand thoroughly the circumstances surrounding hiring issues, especially in light of the 2009 budgetary climate. The committee will continue to assist personnel officials in any way requested.

- Sensory Services – Georgia has developed an unprecedented model of service delivery for persons with sensory impairments, establishing Deaf/Deaf-Blind & Blind “regions” that are not delineated by the traditional geographic boundaries of each VR region, but rather are defined statewide. The committee will focus on ensuring that there is adequate staff to address the needs and resolve the concerns of this long-neglected population. The group will also assist staff as it considers reopening the Deaf unit at Roosevelt Warm Springs.

Other major Council accomplishments included participating in the VR policy development and review processes, especially with regard to a new Client Services Handbook. The Council created and maintains its own web site, a first for the Georgia SRC, and developed a marketing brochure, both of which will foster awareness about the SRC. In a related effort, several SRC members attended the Georgia Rehabilitation Association conference and its legislative affairs seminar, and further decided to provide an exhibit about the SRC at the SERID/Touch the Future and Transition Conference in the fall of 2008.

The SRC chair and vice chair attended the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) fall conference, the inaugural meeting of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC), and the NRA legislative and policy summit held annually in Washington, D.C., where they visited Georgia’s congressional delegation. On the home front, the Council lent support to GDOL and VR requests to legislators to secure adequate funding for VR to enhance services and employment opportunities for Georgians with disabilities.

It is noteworthy that the Council chair met with the Georgia Commissioner of Labor, and garnered his support to find opportunities for interaction and to share information with the Council. As a result, the SRC chair will be involved in helping to refine a major new service integration strategy designed to enhance customer service to vocational rehabilitation and career center job seekers, and to expand services in today’s environment of diminishing resources.

The last section of the annual report is titled Looking Ahead

Arguably, the Council’s most critical objective as it moves forward in the new year is to help create ways to maintain the vitality of the VR program. The Council is clearly engaged in a multifaceted learning process, one in which members are likely to be immersed for the remainder of their terms. Additionally, members will continue to identify and refine goals and objectives relevant to their committees, and encourage candid dialogue with the VR leadership and committee liaisons. The Council will be open to shaping new ways to use the knowledge and talent of its members to foster an ever-increasing understanding of the public VR system in Georgia, and to provide support for identified needs.

As previously noted, the Council has committed to and refined the 2008 State Plan goals and objectives, but has also added two new recommendations for SFY 2009. One aims to increase VR services to veterans, and to provide training for VR staff that focus on common disorders experienced by returning veterans, most notably traumatic brain injury and posttraumatic stress disorder.

The second recommendation places an emphasis on monitoring the effectiveness of the VR program by maintaining an open line of communication with the consumers of VR services, the employers who hire them and VR program staff. It is essential to listen to customers and to take their advice to heart. The major thrust for the second half of SFY 2009, therefore, is to work cooperatively with VR staff to develop and conduct statewide public hearings, as well as customer satisfaction surveys for both consumers and employers.

The Council strongly believes it has an obligation to assess customer satisfaction, and to evaluate how well the VR program is meeting the needs of its consumers. The survey provides an independent effort to look at how participants feel about their involvement with the Georgia VR agency, and allows the Council a means to identify best practices as well as areas where there are indications of a decline in consumer satisfaction.

While the survey design has yet to be finalized, it will be structured along traditional lines -- from design to data collection, to analysis, recommendations and follow through -- and the Council will provide input on the type of questions to be asked, the survey distribution method and the consumer/employer samples to be used.

Specific questions for the client survey are likely to be constructed to obtain information regarding the level of client participation in decision-making, the quantity and quality of interaction with VR staff, the timeliness of service provision, and satisfaction with the employment outcome. Probable questions on the employer survey may be formulated to obtain information about how employee placements are handled, the fit between the consumers' work skills and the employers' job vacancies, the performance of VR clients once employed, and the helpfulness of specific services.

The satisfaction survey is largely an individual measure. The other side of the assessment coin is the public hearing, which is in essence a gathering of interested citizens who provide their perspectives on the way VR does business. The Council must engage the community and elicit comments with regard to VR program priorities, new strategies to improve outcomes, and innovative ways to expand services without increased financial resources, among others.

The information received at the public hearings and collected through the satisfaction surveys serves much more than the basic mandated purpose according to the law. Customer observations, feelings and experiences give credibility to anecdotal comments and provide a real snapshot of the perceived effectiveness of Georgia's VR program.

Such activities are critical to the Council's effective operation, and underscore its intent to continue to lead with integrity, accountability and innovation, and to help cultivate an environment where all people have an opportunity to express their talents.

The members of the Georgia State Rehabilitation Council are:

Linda Shepard, Chairperson, Parents Educating Parents & Professionals, Inc., Douglasville

Joe Tedesco, Vice Chairperson, Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC) , Athens

James Ashworth, AirTran Airways, Atlanta

Dexter M. Brown, Bank of America, Atlanta

Cornelius L. Butler, Butler New Media, LLC, Bainbridge

Fred Cannon, AirTran Airways, Atlanta

Ashley Carraway, Georgia Client Assistance Program, Decatur

Thomas W. Dennis, Newnan

Russell C. Fleming, Georgia School of the Deaf / Cave Spring, Rome

Michael G. Hale, Synovus Financial Corporation, Bogart

Virginia C. Harris, BAIN, Inc. Center for Independent Living, Bainbridge

Charles W. Lamb, Jr., The Lamb Law Firm, P.C., Albany

Wes Massey, Commerce High School, Commerce

Walter Morris, Conley

B. Lu Nations-Miller, Ph.D., Georgia Department of Education, Atlanta

Bennie Butler Newroth, Columbus Regional Healthcare System, Inc., Columbus

Alice Ritchhart, Brunswick

Shelia H. Thomas, Easter Seals of East Georgia, Augusta

Dorie Tuggle (Retired), Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, Austell

Christina Peggy Venable, Lower Muskogee Creek Indian Tribe, Whigham

Charles F. Wells, CRC, GDOL / VR Program, Macon

Peggy D. Rosser, Assistant Commissioner, GDOL / Rehabilitation Services, Atlanta, is an ex-officio member of the council.