

# together success

## 2021 ADRS Annual Report



**Home**  
*one department*  
**School**  
*one mission*  
**Work**



# Blueprint For the 21st Century

**MISSION: TO ENABLE ALABAMA'S CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL**

**We VALUE the worth, dignity and rights of people with disabilities and we will:**

provide an easily accessible, integrated continuum of services;  
ensure quality services that are family-centered, culturally sensitive and community-based;  
promote and respect consumer choice regarding provision of services;  
advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and promote self-advocacy; include people with disabilities, their families and advocates in agency planning and policy development.

**We VALUE independence and meaningful work for people with disabilities and we will:**

educate families, children, employers, schools and the public that people with disabilities can and do work;  
advocate for quality health services and community supports that enable people with disabilities to work and/or function independently;  
develop, maintain and expand working relationships with employers;  
identify and create job opportunities that are compatible with consumer abilities; foster cross-divisional collaboration to achieve successful work outcomes.

**We VALUE all staff and their contributions in achieving our mission and we will:**

communicate openly and honestly;  
recruit, develop, retain and promote a diverse, qualified staff;  
involve staff in agency planning, policy development and performance objectives;  
recognize and reward exemplary job performance;  
provide staff opportunities for personal and professional growth.

**We VALUE leadership at all levels, and we will:**

maximize staff participation in all agency initiatives;  
create an environment which encourages and supports creativity and innovation; facilitate teamwork among all staff;  
provide support and leadership development opportunities.

**We VALUE maximum acquisition and efficient and effective management of resources and we will:**

acquire maximum resources; increase legislative support;  
develop and use appropriate technological advancements; evaluate the effective and efficient use of our resources; collaborate with organizations in the public and private sectors.

**We VALUE public support, and we will:**

educate the public about our mission, goals, services and expertise;  
secure support from business and industry, consumers of services, partners and policymakers;  
create partnerships that expand services to enhance opportunities for consumers;  
maximize staff involvement in the development of grassroots support.

**Drawn by:** Staff of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

**Description:** Mission/Values/Strategic Goals

**Date:** January 2000

# From the commissioner



Dear friends, partners and colleagues,

It's my pleasure to present to you *Together Success*, the 2021 ADRS annual report.

We are excited to again feature success stories and program highlights representing some of the 59,000-plus Alabamians with disabilities who are served through ADRS programs each year. The resilience of our consumers and staff members have been an inspiration as they overcome challenges to reach their goals.

This report is a celebration of statewide partnerships and continued dedication to adapt to changing times and accomplish our mission of helping Alabama's children and adults reach their maximum potential.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Alabama State Legislature and our many partners for another successful year. May we have many more successes in the year to come.

Sincerely,  
Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the typed name.



# Home *one department* School *one mission* Work

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# continuum of care ...



Whether the person is a child born with a disability or someone who acquires a disability later in life, the goal is the same: self-sufficiency and independence. With individualized services provided in homes, schools, the workplace, and the community, ADRS assists every person in achieving his or her maximum potential.

## alabama's early intervention system

**AEIS** coordinates services statewide for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays from birth to age 3, preparing them and their families for the transition to the state Department of Education's preschool program for 3- to 5-year-olds. Early Intervention also provides financial and technical support to dozens of community programs that provide direct service to families.



## children's rehabilitation service

**CRS** provides individualized services to children with special health care needs from birth to age 21 and their families at home, school, and in the community. In addition, Children's Rehabilitation Service provides disability services, expertise, and adaptive technology to and for local school systems: assisting teachers, school nurses, and other staff in the education of children with disabilities. The CRS Hemophilia Program serves Alabama's children and adults with this life-threatening blood disorder.



## vocational rehabilitation service

**VRS** provides rehabilitation-, education-, and employment-related services to teens and adults with disabilities. Every year, the Vocational Rehabilitation Service's Business Relations Program provides disability management and employee placement services to Alabama businesses.



## state of alabama independent living (homebound)

**SAIL** (Homebound) provides services to Alabamians who have the most significant disabilities. SAIL/Homebound staff also provide education and support services to families with children and adults with significant disabilities to make them more independent in the home, community, or workplace.



## Crossville's Kevin Kidd will represent District 4

The Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services is excited to welcome Crossville native Kevin Kidd as its District 4 representative.

ADRS commissioner Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw said Kidd, who has a hearing impairment and was a past consumer of the department's services, will be a valuable member of the board.

"Kevin comes here with a working knowledge of our programs and who we are."

Burdeshaw said Kidd already has great relationships with several ADRS employees and can relate to the journey of the department's consumers.

Kidd is a 1992 graduate of the University of Alabama. He was first introduced to ADRS when he was 16 as a student at Crossville High School. At that time, he began working with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Gwen Bradley and continued through his college years.

"She worked with me and ADRS helped me with getting my degree from the University of Alabama," he said. "Once I graduated in 1992, Jerry McCright, who was the Business Services Rep. at that time, helped me gain employment."

Kidd was employed by the Darden Rehabilitation Foundation from June of 1994 through May of 1998.

He left to join the Alabama Department of Labor, which was the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations at the time, and he has been there ever since. He currently serves as the State of Alabama Department of Labor Program



Services Manager for the Alabama Career Center System.

He has received several honors and awards through the years, including two stints on the Darden Rehabilitation Foundation Board.

Kidd was awarded the "Professional of the Year Award" from the Marshall County Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities in October 2003 and earned their "Rising Star Award" in October 2000. He was part of the team that won the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities state "Collaboration Award" in 2015. He was also recognized by the Greater Etowah Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities with a certificate of appreciation from Gov. Bob Riley in October 2005.

Kidd is a member of the Marshall County Manufacturer's Association Team and ex officio with the North Alabama Workforce Development Board. He is also a member of the North Alabama Works WOA board

and a member of Marshall County Human Resources Management, DeKalb County Human Resources group and the Albertville Chamber of Commerce.

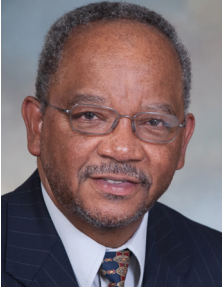
Kidd said he is excited to contribute to ADRS as a member of the board because he has always had a passion for helping people with disabilities achieve their maximum potential.

"I have been blessed in my job to help people with disabilities," he said. "We work closely with people with disabilities and ADRS in getting them employment and I really take that to heart. When I can do that and be a part of that, it is really special. It makes me feel great, because I have been in their situation and I try to be an advocate for people, especially those who are hearing impaired. Sometimes just getting information out there to people is all it takes.

"They might not know ADRS services are available. They might not know about the RAVE program (See page nine for more information about RAVE). They don't know about some of the other programs out there."

Kidd, who entered his current role in March, oversees the employment service program for the entire state. This includes the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Federal bonding program, labor certifications and federal compliance in addition to other duties.

When he is out of the office, Kidd spends time with his wife Angie and two daughters Kayla Wilks, who is a teacher, and Krimson Kidd, who is a freshman in college.



Dear friends,

It has been my pleasure to serve another year as the Board Chair of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services. I am proud to be a small part of the mission of this department that works diligently to make the lives of so many Alabamians better.

The last couple of years has been a challenge for all of us because of the effects of the COVID pandemic on our way of living. Despite these challenges, the leadership and staff of the department continues to provide excellent service to the clients they serve. The evidence of this is presented in this year's annual report.

I ask you as I always do to please join me, the rest of the board members and the recipients of services from ADRS in thanking the staff and leadership on another outstanding year, and for being on the forefront of providing services and inspiration to our families and friends.

Sincerely,

Eddie C. Williams  
Board Chairman, District 5



Michelle Glaze  
District 1



Jimmie Varnado  
District 2



Penny Foster  
District 3



Kevin Kidd  
District 4



Charles Wilkinson  
District 6



Mitch Strickland  
District 7

The Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services consists of seven members, one from each U.S. Congressional District. Board members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Alabama Senate. Alabama law requires that three members be individuals with a disability, selected from consumer disability organizations; one member be the parent of a child with a disability; and three members be from organizations of business and industry within the state.

The board's responsibilities include making rules and regulations for the provision of rehabilitation services; directing and supervising the expenditure of legislative appropriations; disseminating information concerning and promoting interest in disability and rehabilitation issues; taking appropriate action to guarantee the rights of and services to people with disabilities; and serving as the governing body of programs administered by the department.



A new NICU follow-up clinic in the Huntsville Children's Rehabilitation Service office is just another way we are excited to serve consumers.

**NEXTEK**  
*Madison County*



(From left) ADRS Business Relations Consultant Cassie Shropshire, Austin Crossley, and Nextek Senior Human Resources Director Annette Statum have proven what a wonderful partnership can accomplish when people with disabilities are given an opportunity.



# collaboration ...

**Nextek, Inc. of Madison** places a strong emphasis on the recruitment of employees with disabilities, and their efforts to open the doors of opportunity have not gone unnoticed.

In September, Nextek was recognized as the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Large Business Employer of the Year.

Nextek, a full-service electronics manufacturing services provider, partners with Vocational Rehabilitation Service professionals to screen and recruit potential applicants for its manufacturing facility and utilizes the Paid Work Experience (PWE) program when applicable.

Business Relations Consultant Cassie Shropshire said Nextek doesn't hesitate to make accommodations for employees, whether it's a potential employee or a current employee, and added that Senior Human Resources Director Annette Statum and her department have taken the lead in becoming subject matter experts when it comes to creating accommodations and educating management teams in the value and necessity of these accommodations.

Statum said they have partnered with ADRS since 2007 and have retained an employee from the initial outreach effort for almost 14 years. She said they have been very successful in finding quality workers through the Retaining a Valued Employee (RAVE) program, and are pleased with the effort put forth by those employees. The workers obtained through RAVE cases are appreciative to have opportunities, she said. They don't want to disappoint anyone and are enthusiastic about helping the business succeed.

"I believe employers are missing out if they are not willing to try the program," she said. "I think they miss some great candidates by not being a part of the program."

Austin Crossley is a perfect example. Crossley, who has now been with Nextek for almost four years, said he found it difficult to secure employment because of the stigmas surrounding someone with a disability. He came



to Nextek as an intern and quickly proved himself worthy of a permanent job. He now performs box builds and tests sensors and has the ability to switch between departments when other areas are shorthanded. He works full time while taking classes at Calhoun Community College with a concentration in mechanical engineering.

Shropshire and Statum began working together in 2014 when Statum was serving as president of the Huntsville

Area Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. They partnered for job fairs and paid work experiences and established a strong working relationship.

"Since then, every time I reach out to her and have a potential candidate, they are always open to interviewing them and seeing if that person is a good

fit," she said. "They are very eager to accommodate a person with a disability in whatever way they need to be accommodated. They have been awesome."

Shropshire said Statum and Nextek have been especially supportive of RAVE cases and have shown other businesses that ADRS is available to address any concerns or issues.

"We're trying to eliminate biases and eliminate those fears people have about people with disabilities, especially in the workplace," she said. "That's why education is so important."

*"I believe employers are missing out if they are not willing to try the program," she said. "I think they miss some great candidates by not being a part of the program."*

*- Nextek Senior HR Director Annette Statum*

## Edgar's Bakery

*Madison County*



(Above) Kevin Ball was assisted with helpful devices from ADRS Rehab Engineer Nathan Green to help him reach high places when cleaning at Edgar's Bakery. Kevin has limited mobility, and the arm brace on this device was very helpful.

# partnerships ...

**A consumer's recent journey** to employment at Edgar's Bakery in Huntsville is a shining example of what can happen when an eager business and team of Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services staffers work together.

The story behind Kevin Ball's journey to employment actually begins decades earlier. Edgar's owner Terry Smith, whose parents met at the Alabama School for the Deaf in Talladega, had an understanding of the need to offer opportunities to people with disabilities. He had discussed bringing in ADRS consumers before with Vocational Rehabilitation Service Employment Specialist Harriett Hollingsworth. She felt Kevin, who is deaf and has cerebral palsy, would be a great fit. An interview proved this to be true, and Kevin was hired soon thereafter.

There were some obstacles when Kevin had to undergo an unexpected surgery, but the Edgar's management team never gave up on him. Manager Chad Williams continued to check in on Kevin and assured everyone they had a space available when he was able to begin work.

"That was such a relief, and it meant a lot to me knowing that," Harriett said. "Life happens, and he could not predict that was going to happen."

When Kevin began work, he had some physical limitations that made cleaning difficult. Those issues were quickly rectified by ADRS Rehab Engineer Daniel

"It helps other people to see that people with disabilities just really need an opportunity," he said. "They can do just as well as anybody else if they are given the chance."

- VRS Counselor Quintin Morris

Green. Daniel created a cart for Kevin that allowed him to transport cleaning supplies and easily find anything he needed. He also customized a crutch with a brace for Kevin's arm that could help him reach higher areas of the restaurant for cleaning and dusting.

Kevin took no time in learning the new routine and becoming a huge asset to Edgar's Bakery Chad said.

Kevin built a great relationship with his coworkers as well, even inspiring the assistant manager to learn sign language for more effective communication. He and many of his coworkers also established a few signs to share information.

VRS Counselor Quentin Morris,

who previously worked with Kevin, said he is grateful for everything Edgar's Bakery has done to offer opportunity to someone with a disability.

"It helps other people to see that people with disabilities just really need an opportunity," he said. "They can do just as well as anybody else if they are given the chance."

Harriett said she looks forward to working with Edgar's Bakery moving forward.

"ADRS has a great partnership with Amanda and Chad here, so hopefully in the future we can continue hiring other consumers," she said. "They've been great, very understanding, and willing to provide deaf people with opportunities for employment."



## **A Little Something Extra Ice Cream** *DeKalb County*



“A Little Something Extra Ice Cream” CEO Hunter Norwood has provided incredible opportunities to people with disabilities through his business. For this, he earned the National Disability Employment Awareness Month Youth Leadership Award. He is pictured with Vocational Rehabilitation Service Counselor Susan Ferguson during a September visit.

# opportunities ...

Dawson resident Hunter Norwood is changing the world one scoop at a time.

Hunter, who has Down syndrome, has established his own business called "A Little Something Extra Ice Cream" and is showing the world that everyone has their own special abilities and superpowers.

When Hunter was born, his mother Michelle said they had no idea he had Down syndrome. She said encouraging words from their doctor eased insecurities and set the tone for Hunter's entire life.

"The doctor looked at us and said, 'Take this boy home and enjoy him,'" she said. "That's exactly what we have done."

Hunter participated in Hand-in-Hand through Early Intervention and then entered the school system where he expanded his vocabulary, learned sign language, social skills, and everything that other children entering school would learn. Hunter loved school, and as he moved into high school Vocational Rehabilitation Service entered the picture.

Hunter's mother Michelle said VRS helped him learn everything from transition skills to employment skills and interest inventories.

"Hunter seemed to really thrive at those things that Voc Rehab brought to the table," she said.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service Counselor Susan Ferguson said they assisted Hunter with Pre-employment transition services, financial literacy classes, and exercises in workplace



"Hunter seemed to really thrive at those things that Voc Rehab brought to the table."

- Michelle Norwood

etiquette.

Like many VRS success stories, Ferguson said a supportive family played a major role in Hunter's progress.

Because he lives in a small town and his parents both worked full time, the family decided an ice cream truck would be a great business venture for Hunter, and "A Little Something Extra Ice Cream" was born. The name refers to the extra chromosome that causes Down syndrome, and their logo includes the Down syndrome awareness ribbon.

Hunter, who serves as CEO, has thrived through the business Michelle said.

"It has been a wonderful tool to allow him to have experiences that

he might have otherwise missed out on," she said. "It has offered him an opportunity to travel the state meeting new people and having wonderful experiences."

The opportunities for growth are not limited to Hunter. Michelle said the business allows the family to share the wonderment of Down syndrome with others and offer an avenue for his peers to prove themselves in the workforce.

"They are showing the world that there is a lot of ability within any disability," she said.

Ferguson said hiring others with Down syndrome is a wonderful way for Hunter and his family to advocate for others with disabilities.

"Giving his peers and other people opportunities shows his great leadership," she said. "I am really proud of him because of the lengths he has come."

Hearing from others about how Hunter's story has inspired them and interacting with the public has been a game changer for Michelle.



Alabama's  
**EARLY INTERVENTION**  
System

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# *alabama's early intervention system*

**Early childhood development** is vital to the growth and success for all children, but those early years are especially crucial for a child with a disability or developmental delay.

Created to be a critical first step to ensuring that all children enter school equipped to learn, Alabama's Early Intervention System (AEIS) is instrumental in ensuring a lifetime of success for children with disabilities and developmental delays.

Early Intervention works collaboratively with families, community organizations, and public and private service providers to enrich a child's development through its community-based, family-centered system of support and evidence-based practices. EI also works alongside the family, coaching them to enhance their child's development and learning.

Studies indicate that 85 percent of a child's brain develops in the first three years of life, and investing in early childhood programs increases the effectiveness of public schools, develops more-educated workers, and reduces crime.

Moreover, that investment is also a good economic one, with studies showing that each dollar spent on Early Intervention saves \$7 in future costs.

With 43 programs in local communities across Alabama, Early Intervention delivers evidence-based services and support to infants and toddlers and their families in their home and community.

Because of Early Intervention, youngsters with disabilities are able to participate in an array of activities among their peers who do not have disabilities.

# AEIS *2021 highlights*

## In FY21, Alabama's Early Intervention System:

- Provided "one-on-one" coaching and mentoring to seven AEIS providers across the state on specific Autism practices as the Early Childhood Autism Work Group entered Phase II. This training allows these seven EI providers to provide ongoing consultation/training to other EI providers in the state.
- Worked with the Infant & Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA) in the development of a national position paper on strategies for serving young children with autism and their families.
- Submitted a formal request to Alabama Medicaid to continue the use of Tele-intervention (virtual) services after the pandemic ends as an additional service delivery option for families who feel safer and who benefit more from this service method.
- Once again received the highest rating of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) after submitting the Annual Performance Report (APR). The report is based on indicators and goals outlined in the Alabama State Performance Plan as required by The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). It was an indication of how AEIS improved the quality of service to infants/toddlers and their families, improved child/family outcomes, and made the program more available to the public.
- Continued to implement improvement strategies that impact infants/toddlers' social/emotional well-being and their families. As described in the AEIS State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)-  
Phase III submission to OSEP, it accomplished this through required assessments of social-emotional development, implementing evidence-based practices with fidelity, and expanding professional development.
- Continued its partnership with First 5 Alabama to equip professionals through an endorsement process. Other partners include the Alabama Departments of Mental Health (ADMH) and Early Childhood Education (DECE), the Alabama Partnership for Children, and other agencies that serve young children. Once endorsed, these professionals will work as consultants with early childhood programs serving and supporting young children with mental health concerns and their families.
- Continued to form new partnerships to meet the growing needs of infants and toddlers who are deaf and hard of hearing in collaboration with their families and caregivers. AEIS collaborates with the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Learning Committee Work Group and Hands & Voices of Alabama by participating in monthly meetings and quarterly participation with its Advisory Board.
- Continued its involvement with DECE 0-5 Grant for the second year, allowing evidence-based practice for training to continue: Routines Based Interview (RBI) for service coordinators and Routines Based Home Visiting (RBHV) for all providers.

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**“We’re there to advocate for them and help them to let us know if this is helpful.” - Carrie Waldrop**

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Being surrounded by a loving family and help from Early Intervention has Princeton Parrish on the pathway to success. Princeton has made great progress through the program.

## Princeton Parrish

### *Mobile County*

The future is bright for 2-year-old Mobile resident Princeton Parrish thanks to a wonderful, loving family and help through Early Intervention programs.

Princeton, who is currently in the care of foster parents Michelle Darrington and Tiffany Archey, has made great strides thanks to hard work and dedication on all fronts.

Michelle first came into Princeton's life as his godmother but has had custody since he was 7 months old and hopes to finalize the adoption process soon. She said they learned that he was on the autism spectrum by his first birthday and were referred to Gulf Coast Therapy.

Darrington said they were not familiar with EI programs, but they have been extremely pleased with the results.

"It has been tremendously helpful," she said.

Princeton was first evaluated in August of 2020 and entered the program in September. At that time, Early Intervention Care Coordinator Carrie Waldrop entered the picture and the family saw immediate progress. At the time, Princeton was only saying about five words, but one year into the program his vocabulary has grown to 50.

This is an especially impressive accomplishment because Princeton entered the program during COVID-19 shutdowns when services were provided virtually.

Over the next 12 months Princeton and his family participated in virtual speech therapy and special instruction twice a month until May of 2021 when special instruction moved back to in-person sessions in the

home. The family has continued with virtual speech therapy sessions because of the strong relationship they built with their provider who now works outside the county. Waldrop said they will soon begin occupational therapy as well.

Throughout the process, Princeton's family has been provided with resources to prepare them for options within the public school system. They recently discussed the Head Start program, financial resources, and a list of available daycare centers.

One of the most important elements of the process is moving at the child's pace, Waldrop said.

"We always tell the families we don't want it to be too much," she said.

"We're there to advocate and help them and for them to let us know if this is helpful. We base the services on the people. We try to accommodate the families with what works best for them."

This sets EI apart from other programs, who might have more firmly defined milestones. Waldrop said it allows them to use resources available or tell families how to access other resources to continue making progress.

Princeton, who turns 3 Jan. 8, 2022, will soon enter the school system. Darrington said she is nervous about the next step, but she feels confident that he will be on target when that day comes.

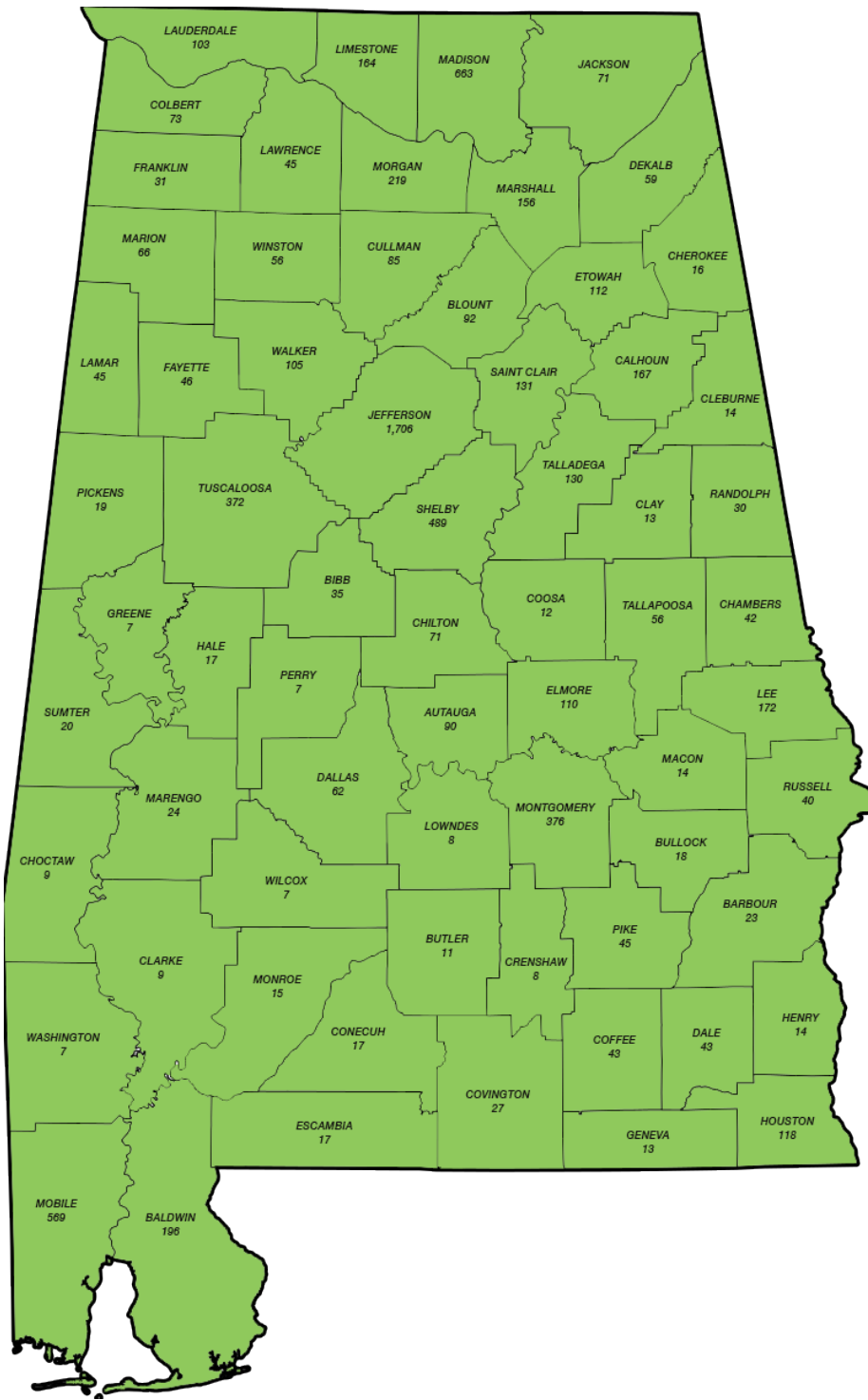
"With the help of EI, we know we've got it," she said.

# AEIS by the numbers

Infants & Toddlers

Served

**7,650**



**Serving all 67  
Alabama counties  
from 7 locations**

## Sources of Revenue

**State: \$13,220,806**

**Federal: \$6,045,826.23**

**Other: \$5,609,343.90**

## Use of Revenue

**Direct Services:**

**\$23,630,817.90**

**Administration:**

**\$1,245,158.23**



Lorenz Souffrant has endured many challenges in his short life, but with the help of a loving family and Early Intervention programs, he has made great progress. He now enjoys playing with his siblings and any family activities.

## Lorenz Souffrant

### *Madison County*

Huntsville's Souffrant family has experienced a wave of emotions as they have watched their son Lorenz grow. Lorenz, who was born five weeks premature and had his first surgery at 2 days old, has since endured 18 more surgeries and 100 hospital visits.

Lorenz has faced an uphill climb, but with the support of his parents Abena and Lawrence, his siblings, and a supporting cast from Early Intervention and medical professionals, he has made incredible progress.

Abena said their first obstacle came when doctors learned Lorenz was born without an anus. A quick surgery helped begin to correct the situation and all seemed well until NICU doctors discovered a heart murmur. Two heart defects, a tetralogy of fallot and Total anomalous pulmonary venous return (TAPVR), were detected. Fortunately, Abena said they balanced each other out.

Lorenz was sent to the University of Alabama at Birmingham for the next three months with the objective of having surgery to correct these abnormalities. A genetics test revealed he also had Cat Eye Syndrome, which occurs when the 22nd chromosome has an additional chromosome attached. The syndrome tends to cause heart problems, small kidneys, and a segment of children with failure to thrive.

When Lorenz stabilized and was able to return home, Abena said Early Intervention programs proved to be extremely helpful. She said it was a relief to have a program come to them after so many stays in the hospital

and doctor visits.

"He was able to be in his comfort zone at home," she said. "He was able to see us, he was able to see his siblings. His everyday life was just better for him. They used whatever you had in your home to help the child progress; even using the siblings. I feel like they played a significant role in his growth and development."

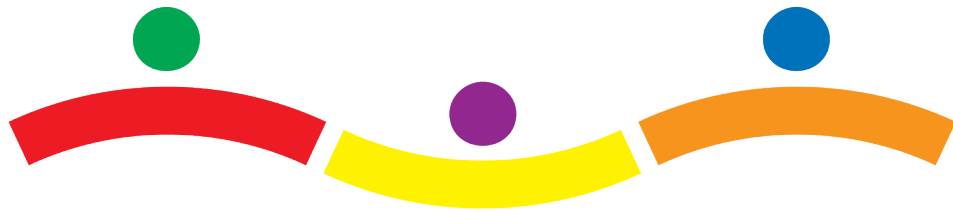
The family incorporated everyday life into EI sessions, and the staff was always extremely patient and helpful. Abena said they had to cancel many appointments due to emergencies, but the EI staffers never gave up on them and moved at his pace.

One of the more helpful elements of EI programs was the encouragement to involve Lorenz's siblings. Courtney Musso, a service coordinator, and special instructor for United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville & Tennessee Valley, said this was extremely helpful to the process.

"That's one of the beautiful things about Early Intervention," she said. "We get to use everyone and anyone who is in the house. Knowing that he does love his siblings and loves that attention from there, we used that to help him make progress."

Now Lorenz can play with his siblings with few reservations, and Lawrence said that brings him great joy.

"Seeing him now as strong as he is and as happy as he is, as adventurous as he is puts a smile on my face," he said. "That really makes me happy."



**CHILDREN'S**  
Rehabilitation Service





## *children's rehabilitation service*

**For many parents** of children and teens with special health care needs, Children's Rehabilitation Service is a cherished resource and proven lifeline.

Caring doctors, nurses, social workers, therapists, audiologists, and nutritionists partner with clients and their families to provide essential care, information, and support for each child to succeed in school, at home, and in the community.

Throughout Alabama, CRS collaborates with school systems to provide expertise and consultation for assessment, evaluation, therapy services, and assistive communication devices, helping children with special health care needs to participate more fully in school.

Fourteen community-based offices around the state offer a team approach to bring together health care specialists from many fields providing services tailored to each family's needs.

### **Services include:**

- **Information and referral:** links families to community resources and services
- **Care coordination:** assists the child and family in identifying, accessing, and using community resources to effectively meet their individual needs
- **Clinical evaluation:** identifies the unique

needs of a child with feeding problems, mobility and/or communication challenges, or special diagnostic needs

- **Clinical medical:** operates specialty clinics throughout the state
- **Patient/family education:** provides information necessary to carry out treatment regimens and to make informed choices about services
- **Parent Connection:** facilitates strong family/professional partnerships by providing information and support to families as well as opportunities to participate in program and policy development
- **Youth Connection:** facilitates youth involvement with policy development and decision-making.

Services are available to any Alabama resident who has special health care needs and is younger than 21; individuals with hemophilia are eligible for services into adulthood.

Treatment options vary, ranging from clinical interventions and medication to specialized equipment and therapy services to care coordination and referral to community resources, as needed.

Families can receive services regardless of their income. Financial participation is on a sliding scale, based on each family's needs and resources.

## In FY21, Children's Rehabilitation Service:

- Served 12,833 children and youth with special healthcare needs including 358 with no insurance through the clinic program.
- Accomplished a total of 152,331 client encounters, 13,392 clinic visits, and 2,686 information and referral contacts. Expedited Medicaid travel reimbursements for an estimated total of \$130,015.
- Assisted 1,831 clients with connecting to community resources totaling \$800,420 for assistance including audiology, nutrition, speech-language, food assistance, medical supplies, wheelchair ramps, prescription medication assistance, and other miscellaneous items.
- Completed the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) funded Care Coordination Academy. As a result of participation in the Academy CRS began a Tiered Care Coordination pilot. The pilot which began in August will continue through 2023. Implementation of a tiered system of care coordination will allow our clients to receive contacts at various intervals and appropriate follow-up according to diagnosis and/or certain risk factors.
- A work group comprised of CRS Care Coordinators, Parent and Youth Consultants, and other staff finished a draft of the comprehensive CRS Plan of Care. CRS began working with Computer Services to design the document and to test for accuracy before statewide implementation. This document will be completed at least annually and will be mutually developed by the family and staff to address needs, concerns, and goals.
- Collaborated (CRS Parent Consultants) with staff from Family Voices of Alabama to build connections with families by creating a Facebook Group, "Alabama Special Needs Parents-Support Group" which now has over 700 members, who share information and support with one another daily.
- Completed the fourth and final year of the Collaborative for Improvement Innovation Network (CoIIN) to advance care for Children with Medical Complexity (CMC), a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant that is administered by Boston University. HRSA agreed to extend the CMC CoIIN project for a fifth and final year to focus on Sustainability, Spread, Dissemination, and Evaluation. During Year five CRS will focus on spreading the CMC CoIIN model and disseminating project accomplishments.
- CRS continued to work with the National Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Workforce Development Center on a Health Transformation project to improve service delivery for Children with Special Health Care Needs and their families. The center provides CRS staff and key stakeholders specialized training, intense coaching, and participation in collaborative learning events. A major accomplishment was completing the first in a series of Staff Surveys being conducting by UAB School of Public Health Applied Evaluation and Assessment Collaborative (AEAC) on behalf of CRS. The first survey focused on Access to Services and key themes identified as needed to improve access to services included: Tiered Care Coordination; Efficiency and Modernization of Enrollment Processes and Procedures; Marketing and Community Partnerships; and Additional Specialty Providers.

## In FY21, the Hemophilia Program:

- Served 411 people with bleeding disorders.
- Served participants through 36 on-site comprehensive, multidisciplinary care clinics, and 12 telemedicine hemophilia clinics. The Birmingham HTC held 23 on-site clinics, and also held two on-site satellite clinics in Montgomery. Because the population utilizing the Mobile HTC is smaller, 11 on-site clinics and one telemedicine were held there.

# Thomas Weymouth

## Tuscaloosa County

Navigating life with a special needs child can be an overwhelming experience for new parents. Fortunately for the Weymouth family of Tuscaloosa, Children's Rehabilitation Service is there to provide support, advice, and resources.

When Bridget Weymouth was pregnant with her son Thomas, she said everything seemed to be going as planned. However, a week after Thomas's birth a pediatrician noticed his head size was smaller than normal. An ultrasound revealed problems, and four weeks later Thomas began having seizures. At that time, the family was referred to Early Intervention and began receiving services centered around vision and speech.

Thomas continued making progress, and when he aged into CRS, Bridget said the team discovered he had a desire to become mobile.

"With CRS, our physical therapist noticed while his gross vulnerabilities were pretty significantly delayed his desire and interest to move was pretty on time and on track," she said. "That's when she connected us to CRS with the mobility clinic so that we could see if there are ways to help him meet that desire to move."

She had also connected with CRS Social Work Administrator Kaleena Sorrells, who was quick to help.

"I was able to partner with the family and get a good understanding of what kind of services they could provide for Thomas and make sure the family was comfortable with the care that he would be getting," Kaleena said.

The family was referred to a seating clinic and the CRS team noticed other areas they could help including a Medicaid waiver. They helped with the process of securing additional insurance, helped the family begin their journey into the Rise Center, and discussed how to advocate for Thomas and help him with day-to-day activities.

Bridget said one of Thomas's favorite items CRS helped them secure is a gait trainer. She said he loves walking around with his gait trainer and has been able to use the device to improve his stability.

Bridget said having Kaleena in their corner has been extremely helpful, especially with the process of getting Medicaid resources for equipment, so they don't have to go out of pocket when he quickly outgrows things.



**The Tuscaloosa CRS team has proven to be a great resource in many ways for the Weymouth family.**

"She has been a great resource in terms of things we need and in terms of helping us navigate the school system," she said. "I foresee this being an extremely valuable resource as we continue our journey with him over time. It definitely has been a game changer for us in terms of becoming more aware of the services that are available. It's extremely overwhelming, especially when you are not prepared to have a child with a lot of additional needs. I see that as he continues to grow that they will be a great resource for us as his needs change."

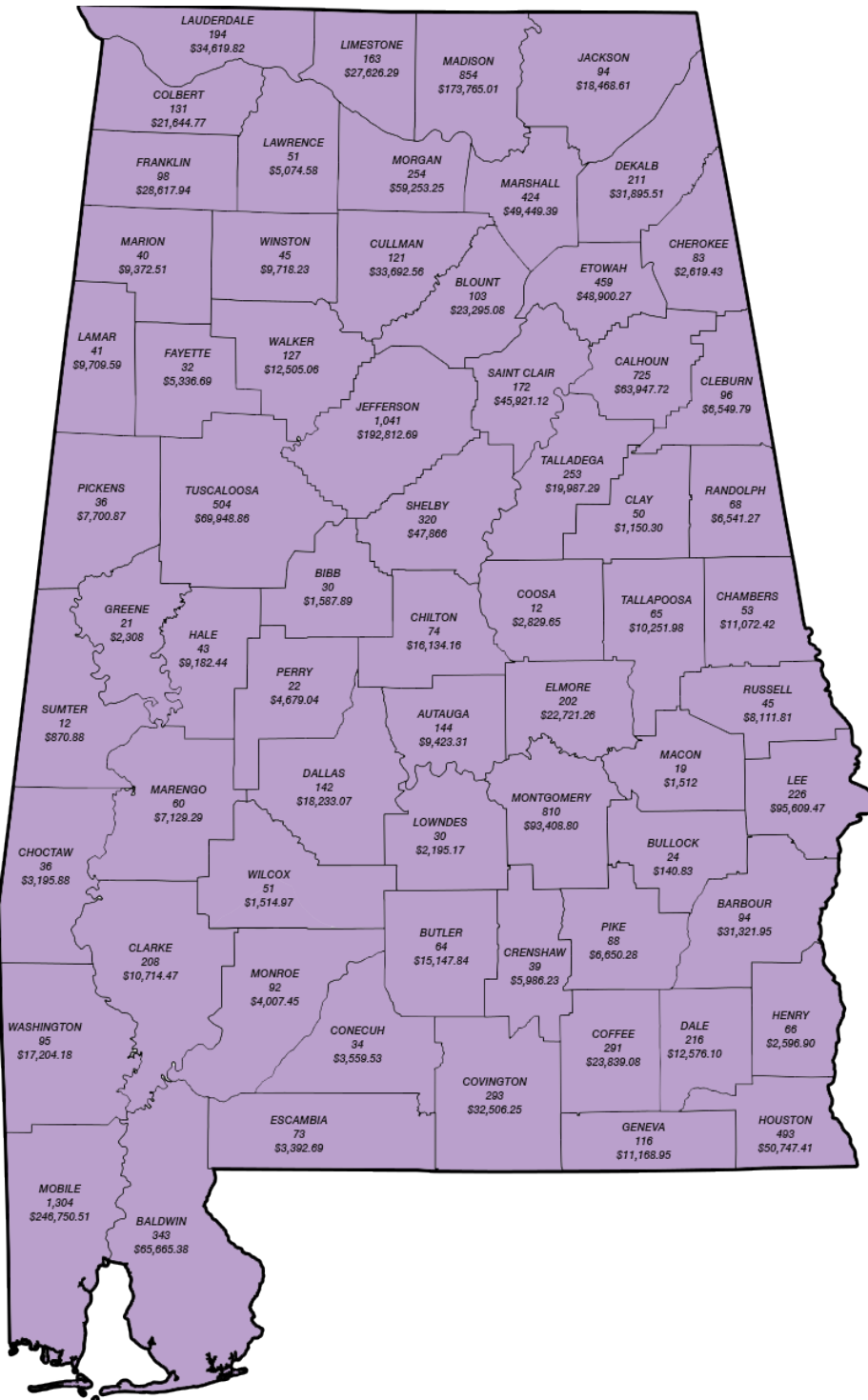
Kaleena said it is a joy for her to see Thomas grow and make progress, and she credited his family for always advocating and doing their part to help him reach his maximum potential.

"His family members are amazing advocates for Thomas," she said. "I can really see him flourishing with the amount of resources the family has and the knowledge and hope for him to be able to develop into the very best Thomas he can be in the future. He is definitely going to go far without any barriers other than whatever Thomas sets his mind to."

# CRS by the numbers

Children Served

**12,833**



**Serving all 67  
Alabama counties  
from 14 locations**

## Sources of Revenue

**Other: \$13,817,589.26**

State: \$13,555,696

Federal: \$4,020,785.44

## Use of Revenue

**Direct Services:**

**\$27,321,441.62**

Administration:

**\$4,072,629.08**



# Charlie Mae Wilson

## Dallas County

Advocacy for people with disabilities is an important part of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services blueprint. For the Wilson family of Plantersville, advocacy for their daughter Charlie comes in the form of a children's book titled, "Charlie Mae's First Day."

The book tells the story of 5-year-old Charlie's first day of school as she explains to her classmates that she may appear different but has the same interests as other children.

Charlie's mother Hannah, the author of the book, said their journey with SMC1A disorder that includes epilepsy, inspired her to create a tool to help her daughter and other children with disabilities open the lines of communication with other students.

"It's just about introducing her to her classmates and all the differences but also how she is the same as any other kid too," she said.

Children's Rehabilitation Service Care Coordinator Gina Hornsby, who works with the Wilsons, said she was excited to learn about the book and see it distributed.

"I think this is such a great resource not only for families that have children with special needs starting school, but also other parents to help educate their children on how to interact with their peers who might have different abilities," she said. "Just hearing her story and how she was inspired to write the book really makes me understand that these families have a lot to offer, and it is great that we are able to work with them and have them bring out those special skills."

The book is the result of a journey that ventured into the unknown for Hannah and her husband Tim. Charlie began having seizures at 3 months old. More seizures and missed milestones led to a recommendation for Early Intervention programs. Hannah said they made friendships through these programs that still exist today.

Through EI and CRS, the Wilsons received a wheelchair, bathing seat, and attend seating clinics while working with CRS Physical Therapist Laurie Rodgers.

"Every time we go people are super nice," she said. "Anything that I ever need I call, and everybody is super nice and they get what we need. They are great people."

The transition to CRS and entering the school system was scary but it also inspired Hannah to begin work on the book in the summer of 2020.



**The Wilson family values time together and opportunities to advocate. Hannah recently published a book titled "Charlie Mae's First Day" to help introduce her daughter to classmates and show them that she has much more in common with the other children than they might think.**

Hannah said she has received requests from preschool teachers who want to place the book in all their classrooms. Others have expressed emotional connections because they have friends or family with special needs. There have even been doctors who provided positive feedback. The story is relatable to many families who reach out to Hannah, and most of all, the lead character is easy to cheer on.

"I feel like everybody loves Charlie," she said. "Anybody who meets Charlie loves her."

Covid has created a lapse for in-person school attendance for Charlie, but when she returns the book will again serve as a valuable tool to introduce her to her new classmates. It also means a new opportunity to advocate.

Hannah said they cherish every chance they have to raise awareness.

"I feel like it doesn't matter what abilities your child does or doesn't have," she said. "They can make a difference no matter what. I never dreamed I'd have a children's book, but now I do and I hope it will make a difference in some families' lives."

# Libby Hagan

## Shelby County

When Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services staff members come into the lives of consumers, they often establish a special bond with the family. This has been the case for Children's Rehabilitation Service Senior Physical Therapist Kristi Renneker and the Hagan family of Birmingham.

Libby's journey began seven years ago when she sustained trauma during birth and was intubated bedside. She spent 38 days in the NICU, and during that time received a massive overdose of insulin that led to a list of complications. These complications meant that Libby would never walk, talk, hold her head up or regulate her body temperature very well.

At the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020, he began putting some of his thoughts on paper. He thought about some of the most difficult experiences of being an early parent with Libby and the questions and strains of the first 18 months. He recalled how his wife Kathryn had to take on a great deal of these duties on her own as he supported the family and the high costs of copays. Gaps in coverage left the family owing 20 percent on a wheelchair that might cost \$5,000 and hundreds of dollars on braces and bath equipment.

Libby's Friends provides a financial resource and serves as a hub of information, Renneker said.

Renneker, who first met the Hagans through the Early Intervention program while working with United Cerebral Palsy (Now United Ability), was reunited when their daughter Libby transitioned to Children's Rehabilitation Service in 2016. Libby was being evaluated for a wheelchair, provided with a loaner gait trainer, and advised on bath equipment. Renneker also made school visits when adjustments were needed on Libby's chair.

Throughout this process, Renneker and the Hagans struck up a friendship that prompted Libby's father Lane to call her two years ago to discuss ways he could help other families. His goal was to aid those who struggle with financial resources for medical equipment and offer advice on how to find needed medical help and supplies. From those conversations, "Libby's Friends" was born.

When the nonprofit began to take shape, Lane said he



**The Hagan family are not only CRS consumers, they have proven to be a great partner through their nonprofit "Libby's Friends."**

continued to go to Renneker for advice.

Every child has different needs, Lane said, and they want to help families with children raising disabled children across the spectrum.

"We had so many people who helped us in Libby's life," he said. "Therapists, doctors, lawyers. Just a ton of people, and that always stuck with me."

Libby's Friends has already proven to be a valuable partner for CRS. Social Worker Emma Hereford worked with Lane recently to aid a 7-year-old consumer in the Gadsden area who has similar disabilities to Libby. He was excited when he learned of the impact they had.

"She said it was the first time this little girl has ever stood," he said.

"She sent me pictures, and I had tears in my eyes because I remember that personally. I can remember the emotion and just how awesome that was, and I'm so thrilled to be a part of that for the parents, the little girl and everyone involved. It gave me so much joy."

**"We had so many people who helped us in Libby's life," he said. "Therapists, doctors, lawyers. Just a ton of people, and that always stuck with me."**

# Huntsville CRS excited about addition of clinic

Service to the community has long made the Huntsville Children's Rehabilitation Service office a cherished resource and proven lifeline in the community. The addition of a new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Follow-up Clinic makes this office an even more valuable resource.

The clinic, which officially opened in 2021, fills a need in the Huntsville area that has existed for a decade, CRS District Supervisor Tammy Meyer said.

"I have always had a passion for the babies," she said. "In Huntsville, I learned that we had a follow-up clinic, but the funding had gone away probably 10 years ago or so. Nobody had been able to restart a clinic until now."

Meyer, who is a member of the area prenatal advisory council, said members were reviewing prenatal infant mortality cases and were alarmed by the numbers. According to the Center for Disease Control, Alabama's infant mortality rate ranks 48th. Meyer said members realized how many babies might have had a chance with more follow-up or support, and from there the idea to house the clinic at CRS was born. CRS will work closely with pediatrician or PCP by providing clinic reports and developmental assessments.

Because the mission of CRS is to fill gaps in services, Meyer said the clinic is a natural fit for their office. She started looking at some of the programs already offered at their 3000 Johnson Road SW facility and noticed a specialty Pediatric Evaluation Clinic, which covers infants because CRS serves children



Huntsville families were excited to attend the new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit follow-up clinic when it officially opened at the CRS office earlier this year.

birth to 21. At that point, organizers worked with Medicaid to add a pediatrician, neonatologist or nurse practitioner.

The follow-up clinic will focus on the developmental side of the equation and other diagnoses where the program can provide assistance.

Meyer said this will be tremendously helpful because families will be able to stay local for services. Home visits are also provided as needed.

Those eligible for the follow-up clinic will be referred by their doctor, a resident of Alabama and have at least one of the following conditions:

- Premature (less than 32 weeks)
- Low/Very Low Birthweight
- Failure to Thrive
- Feeding Difficulties
- Complex Medical Conditions
- Unspecified Developmental Delays
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

- Congenital Abnormalities
- Hydrocephalus
- Seizure Disorders

The NICU follow-up clinic team includes:

- Neonatologist, pediatrician, or nurse practitioner
- Registered dietician
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Speech-language pathologist
- Nurse
- Social worker

Other professionals may be called in by the team on a consultant basis.

Services include an evaluation of medical status and condition; assessment of developmental needs; patient and family education; referral for needed diagnostic studies; Initial management planning; referral to appropriate services and care coordination.

Because the mission of CRS is to fill gaps in services,  
Meyer said the clinic is a natural fit for their office.



**VRS**

Vocational Rehabilitation Service





# *vocational rehabilitation service*

**Each year,** Vocational Rehabilitation Service's general and blind/deaf programs offer specialized employment- and education-related assistance to tens of thousands of teens and adults with disabilities.

Whether the person is a young adult going to school to prepare for his or her first job or an older adult trying to gain employment or remain employed, VRS can help.

Partnerships are the key to VRS' success and the successes of those it serves. To assure consumers achieve in the classroom, VRS collaborates with high schools, vocational schools, junior colleges, and universities statewide to assist students with disabilities in receiving appropriate educational opportunities. Through 21 strategically located offices, VRS works closely with Alabama employers, community rehabilitation programs, workforce partners, and other state agencies to match people with jobs.

## **VRS Blind and Deaf Division**

VRS-Blind and Deaf Services provides assistance to Alabamians statewide through its Blind and Low-Vision Services, Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services, Business Enterprise Program, and the OASIS (Older Alabamians System of Information and Services) programs.

Despite a turbulent year of providing needed services during a pandemic, Blind and Deaf Services was able to exceed its goal for successfully employed individuals by 25 percent with a record high average hourly wage of \$18.48.

# VRS *2021 highlights*

## **In FY21, Vocational Rehabilitation Service:**

- Supported Employment is a specialized service that assists individuals with the most significant disabilities, including serious mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse, find competitive integrated employment. In FY 21, 662 individuals were closed rehabilitated after receiving supported employment services. They averaged \$9.59 an hour and worked on average over 25 hours a week. The number of closed rehab cases was up from 588 the previous fiscal year. The wage and hours worked per week reflects an increase from the previous year as well. The outcome incentives put into place last fiscal year provided an additional \$250 for job stability and \$250 for closed rehabilitated. We also added an The exceptional wage outcome incentive of \$500 for those making 9.25 and working 25 hours or more per week. This helped to incentivize the importance of helping consumers find better paying jobs.
- In FY 21, we closed 94 consumers working in the exceptional wage category. We continue to have a SE provider covering every county of the state with multiple providers in some counties which means individuals with the most significant disabilities will be able to access specialized supported employment services in whatever county they reside. Despite Covid restrictions, ADRS in collaboration with ADMH managed to train new employment staff around the state via two virtual Customized Job Coach Trainings held this year. The trainings were successful and were well attended for both events.
- Project SEARCH saw success even in the pandemic. Outcomes remained strong among the systems that were able to continue their programs. Shelby County, Tuscaloosa County, and Marshall County as well as our three youth sites all moved from their host sites into alternate sites in the community. This year we have reopened nine secondary sites and have plans in 2022 to reopen two that are still in hiatus and add three new programs.
- Assisted 4,033 individuals with disabilities in achieving their goal of employment.

## **In FY21, the Vocational Rehabilitation Services blind/deaf division:**

- The 2021 Summer Work Experience Program was a success with 30 high school/college students participating. Each student worked for up to six weeks for up to 40 hours per week while earning wages.
- Each year ADRS partners with AIDB to host three Transition Events for blind and low vision high school students to improve the transition of these students from school to postsecondary education or employment. Each event focused on a different area including introducing students to pre-employment transition programs, agency services/community resources, and mentoring. Participation for these events was exceptional, with over 100 students, parents, teachers, volunteers, and staff attending.
- Blind Services, in partnership with the Alabama School for the Blind and E. H. Gentry, hosted the first statewide ACT Bootcamp for high school students who are blind or visually impaired. The ACT Bootcamp was held on the Alabama School for the Blind campus from June 20-26, 2021. Students had the opportunity to take the ACT Exam at the end of the Bootcamp with all requested accommodations provided.
- To meet the high demand for interpreters around the state, the agency was able to work with state personnel to create an additional job classification of American Sign Language Interpreters. This new position will allow the agency to hire qualified but less experienced interpreters and mentor them as they gain the skills to become nationally certified.
- 2021 Deaf Consumer Satisfaction Survey reported the highest approval rating of counselors and VR staff since we begin these evaluations in 2006. All questions relating to staff received a 90 percent or higher satisfaction rating with the overall satisfaction of 95.8 percent.
- Counselors for the Deaf distributed 350 weather radios and strobe lights to deaf and hard of hearing citizens around the state to assist with emergency preparedness related to inclement weather or disasters.

# Ashton Johnson

## Calhoun County

Calhoun County resident Ashton Graham-Johnson and Vocational Rehabilitation Service Rehabilitation Counselor Pamela Curry have built a plan for success brick by brick.

Like most great working relationships, it began with trust.

When Ashton, who has a cognitive impairment in the form of a learning disability in reading and written expression, moved to Alabama from Virginia Beach, Va. as a high school junior, he was unsure of what the future might hold for him. He knew he wanted to get a job so that he could help his grandmother, who is disabled and uses a wheelchair. He also expressed an interest in earning his driver's license and buying a car but had reservations about living on his own.

The first step toward building this trust was when Curry helped Ashton begin the process to earn his driver's license. She quickly helped him enroll in the Assistive Driver Training Program and once he saw results, he was ready to buy in.

He agreed to a stint at E.H. Gentry over the summer but said he was not sure what to expect. He soon found his personality to be a natural fit.

"I was a bit skeptical. I'm not going to lie, but I trusted her and went to Gentry," he said. "It was a challenge, but I enjoyed seeing people with disabilities achieving their goals."

The now 20-year-old wasted little time making progress. He learned some sign language, problem-solving techniques for different challenges, independent living skills and was the one of the first to earn a forklift certification. Ashton was quick to help others as a peer advocate and resident assistant as well as a spokesperson for tours.



**Ashton Graham-Johnson has gone from a high school junior who was unsure of his future to a young man with a promising career.**

Ashton worked throughout his program and saved 75 percent of his earnings as part of his quest to purchase a car, but his momentum hit a speed bump when the pandemic forced him to go home. It would have been easy for him to lose sight of his goals, but Ashton returned more determined than ever. While working in the departments and the residential hall he took pride in his designated duties. He continually showed progress, and management observed passionate work ethic.

Ashton showed interest in earning a job at Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) in the warehouse and continued to give his best every day which did not go unnoticed by his supervisors.

The results speak for themselves. Ashton became a permanent employee at AIDB July 16 and is part of a team that produces 600 ties per day for the military. During this process he also worked with his VRS counselor who scheduled a dealer to take a car to E.H. Gentry so that he could test drive it and have the mechanic offer an analysis of the

vehicle.

With all his goals in place after recently securing an apartment, Ashton can now concentrate on climbing the ladder at work. AIDB Employment Specialist Diann Phillips said she has no doubt he will do just that because Ashton's work ethic is unmatched.

"I wish you could send 10 of him to me," she said. "He has been great. He is willing and wanting to learn. Anything we gave him he was wanting to learn how to do more. Even with this job he wants to know, 'How do I step up?'"

Curry said seeing Ashton go from a high school junior unsure of his future to a man with a career and a plan has been a joy, and she cannot wait to see what the future will bring.

"Seeing him reach his goals is awesome and seeing him do it by himself was great," she said.

"I didn't have to hold his hand. He didn't need that or require that. It's great seeing him continue to grow. He has proven that if you put the work in the results will follow."

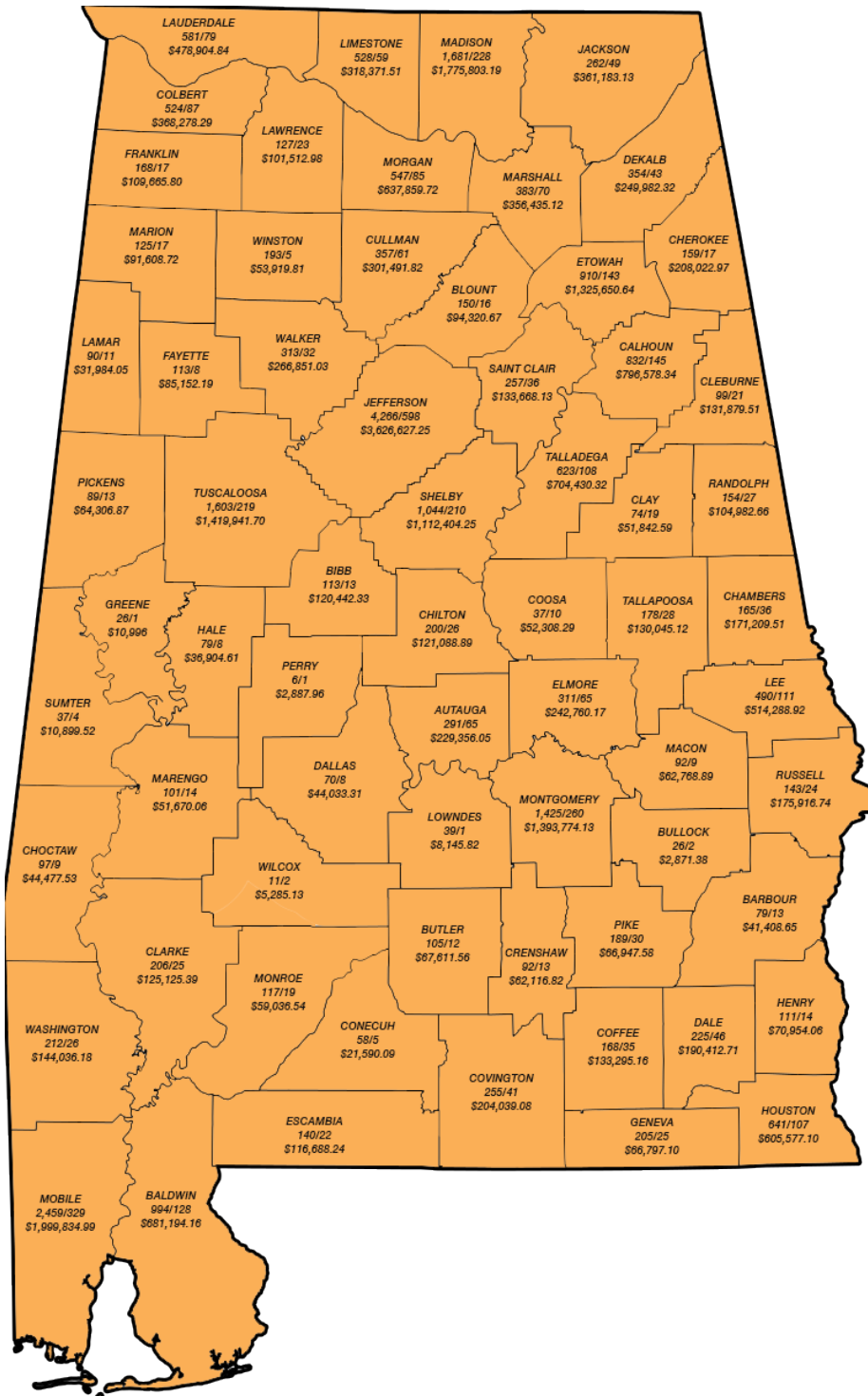
# VRS by the numbers

Consumers placed in jobs

**4,033**

Served

**37,068**



**Serving all 67  
Alabama counties  
from 21 locations**

## Sources of Revenue

**Federal: \$62,793,198.94**

**State: \$13,764,814**

**Other: \$5,902,784.52**

## Use of Revenue

**Client Services:**

**\$39,120,883.59**

**C&P: \$32,956,628.68**

**Administration: \$10,383,285.21**



# Ken Gamble

## Houston County

Ken Gamble's philosophy is never stop learning and never stop trying. The Wicksburg resident does not just say these words, he lives them.

Gamble, who earned his Commercial Driver's License through a new and innovative program at Wallace State Community College at Hanceville and is now hauling trailers for a company in Indiana, worked hard to find opportunities to get behind the wheel as the demand for truckers continues to grow.

Gamble, who has used a wheelchair since 2009, said his life changed after a major back surgery and what doctors described as a spinal stroke left him paralyzed from the waist down.

Even with this new challenge, Gamble said he knew he still wanted to be a productive member of the workforce. When he made contact with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services office in Dothan and was teamed with Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Service Counselor Kimberly Boykins, things started to fall into place.

Gamble said he was tagged in a Facebook post by his brother in law that highlighted a Missouri man using a wheelchair who was able to maintain his job as a trucker after an accident. This inspired Gamble to seek opportunities for himself.

"I said, 'Shoot, if he can do it, I can do it,'" he said.

Gamble reached out to schools and trucking companies in Texas, California, Utah, and Washington only to be told there were no opportunities for someone with his disability. He was excited to receive a call from Boykins letting him know about a partnership between Wallace State at Hanceville



Ken Gamble is pictured above during one of his training sessions at Wallace Community College-Hanceville.

and the ADRS adaptive driver training program that would make his dreams a reality in his home state of Alabama. His wife, Dee, who had always encouraged him and urged him to keep going when he thought about giving up, was equally excited.

"I was thrilled. I was very thrilled," he said. "My wife was happy, excited, thrilled, and ready. She was very excited about it."

Much like the trucking industry, the path to a CDL was a bumpy ride. Gamble began classes in 2019 until a pause for the holidays. Repair for the customized truck used for his classes caused another delay and then Covid-19 arrived on the scene cancelling classes completely.

After classes resumed, Gamble completed the three-year process of earning his CDL and is now looking for an opportunity to prove himself.

Gamble is great with his hands and performs most of his own home and auto repairs. He knows the inner

workings of an engine inside and out, which makes him an even more valuable addition to any company. He attributes his knowledge to a desire to stay busy and contribute.

"I have always been somebody who loves to work," he said. "It doesn't matter to me if it is a semitruck or a hot shot rig truck. I want to be out there actually working. I don't like stuff given to me."

Boykins said she feels Gamble will continue to be a wonderful addition to any company because "quit" is not in his vocabulary. She said even during uncertain times he kept moving forward and she continued to reassure him that she was in his corner.

"I never doubted he could do it," she said. "I just kept telling him, 'We are here to help you and we want you to be successful.' I never doubted he would stick with it. He did everything we asked him to do and never once complained."



Jason Vaughan and VRS Counselor Blair Cowan discuss some of the progress he has made and plans for the future during a 2021 home visit. Cowan, Kellee Sanchez and Sharon McLean have teamed up to help Vaughan keep moving forward.

## Jason Vaughan *Baldwin County*

Every day is an opportunity to make progress for Summerdale resident Jason Vaughan.

Vaughan, who is driven by a work ethic that serves as a source of pride in his family, continues to overcome vision loss caused by diabetes and has been a success story for the Vocational Rehabilitation Service team that assists him.

Vaughan first learned of his vision loss after an infection caused him to lose part of a finger on his right hand. Further inspection of his eyes after cloudy vision concerned doctors who eventually discovered the damage would cause him to lose his sight. At this point, he was referred to the VRS office in Mobile.

Expensive surgeries were the first step in the process, which was one of the reasons Dr. Mark Douglas felt it was important for Vaughan to connect with VRS. Counselor Blair Cowan was quick to find financial support to help make the surgeries possible. When a second surgery was necessary, he said Cowan was ready and willing to help again.

"She was always in contact and always trying to get you what you need," he said.

After the surgeries, Vaughan was ready to get back into his routine. He spent more time with Sanchez learning to use a tapping cane and a cane with a roller on the end. They began moving around the house, progressed to the

yard, and eventually headed to a park in Foley and the outlets.

He was nervous at first, but Vaughan said Sanchez told him about the accomplishments of other consumers and friends who had lost their vision.

Vaughan learned to maneuver stairs at the park and use crosswalks at the outlets gaining confidence with every visit. That confidence, and visits from Rehab Teacher Sharon McLean, helped him pick up some of his old tasks.

McLean provided special knives for cutting, potholders, and timers to help him cook. Vaughn fondly remembers the first pot of beef stew he made for his wife and parents with his new tools and the excitement of receiving rave reviews.

A small flashlight and a talking tape measure helped Vaughan with building things and home improvement projects along with a magnifier, sunglasses, and indoor glasses to reduce glares. She also introduced him to library services where he could order audiobooks.

Other items included a bill reader for money and instructions on how to fold bills to determine their value.

McLean said she was always excited to meet with Vaughan, because she was confident, he would make progress.

## Business Enterprise Program

The Alabama Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides qualified blind individuals with job training and employment opportunities that offer independence through self-employment.

Currently, there are 80 blind vendors working within the Alabama Business Enterprise Program and they employ around 375 other Alabamians.

In addition to operation of rest area vending facilities and military dining halls, our blind vendors also provide commissary services to the Department of Corrections. Because the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant business disruption, the BEP adapted by securing federal relief funds for vendors and pursued innovative solutions. Recently, the BEP secured its first ever full-service coffee operation with Airbus of Mobile and plans to explore other non-traditional formats in the near future.

Thanks to the perseverance, hard work, and entrepreneurial spirit of our blind vendors, the Alabama BEP is able to weather the challenging business environment.

# 375

The 80 blind vendors of BEP employ around 375 other Alabamians.

## ADRS Lakeshore

Lakeshore's Vocational Evaluation Program (VE) has been involved in the development of the grant based Forensic Vocational Evaluation Certification program that Auburn University started offering in the fall of 2021. Our VE program has also been

involved in state-to-state quarterly meetings with other VE professionals across the country where current VE issues are discussed.

Lakeshore's VE program has continued a training partnership with EHG's blind and low-vision VEs. Lakeshore's VE team is planning a week-long intensive back-to-the-basics training program for both of our teams. This training event may be opened to other VEs who are employed by community rehabilitation programs across the state.

The Adaptive Driving Program has worked to streamline and develop a new process for all ADRS - ADT individuals to obtain a license online instead of going into a local examination center. The program is providing all Bioptic license tests for ADRS low-vision clients in Alabama that receive services from ADRS.

We have streamlined the restriction process for licensure with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) while assisting them with the software development and change over to the new ALEA driver's license system in late 2021 or early 2022.

The Adaptive Driving Program has worked closely to request and facilitate the first state approval for an Alabama government issued driver's license with a social / verbal impairment code. This will alert officers and other first responders that the individual has a disability that can or does affect their direct ability to communicate, which can be worsened during a stressful event such as an accident, confrontation, or traffic stop.

The Employment Development Team held quarterly Money Management, SET, Creating Reliable Employee Strengths and Traits (C.R.E.S.T.) classes via Zoom. Deaf College Prep was held at Jacksonville State University. Also, we held multiple sessions of Virtual College Prep via Zoom. A two-day training centered on autism spectrum disorders (ASD) took place virtually

by Rehabilitation Specialist Samantha Wadsworth through Zoom. More than 60 participants attended the two-day training throughout the state.

## Community Rehabilitation Programs

Located throughout the state, the Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) is a network of private organizations that has been providing services to ADRS consumers for more than 70 years.

In 2021, two of the CRPs obtained CARF certification which enables them to provide employment services to our consumers. This brings the total of CRPs with CARF certification to 29. This year the program's staff worked to structure and implement a \$500 fee increase for its job retention payment, which is distributed when a consumer has worked 90 days and the case is eligible for rehabilitated closure. CRP finalized an agreement for an incentive payment of \$500 for consumer employment when the case is eligible for closure with the consumer earning \$11.24-plus per hour and working more than 35 hours per week.

This living wage incentive payment began Oct. 1.

In addition to the many other services CRPs provided to consumers, they assisted with approximately 1,000 consumer cases being closed as rehabilitated. This is only a 4 percent drop from the previous year, which is wonderful given a pandemic that resulted in CRP closures for varying periods of time.

Twenty four of our CRPs completed the requirements to offer virtual job shadowing for high school students. This will allow services to continue to be offered in systems where students are attending high school virtually or have chosen the hybrid method. The average hourly pay rate increased from \$9.92 in 2019 to \$11.23 in 2020.

## Business Relations

The Business Relations program is a vital component of the Vocational Rehabilitation program and plays an integral role in ensuring the disability and employment-related needs of business and industry are being met by the state workforce system. This year's annual report theme of "Together Success" exemplifies the work of the Business Relations Program during this fiscal year. COVID-19 and the Delta variant caused unforeseen labor shortages for Alabama's business and industry and resulted in many companies partnering with the VR Business Relations Program to create new and innovated ways to outreach, recruit, and hire from an untapped talent pool of qualified candidates with disabilities.

New partnerships with the University of Alabama, Buffalo Rock, Mollertech, Reliance Worldwide Corporation, Schnellecke, SHIPT, Vulcan Inc., just to name a few, provided opportunities for companies to observe, evaluate and train VR consumers for jobs through the VR Pre-hire Work Experiences. In addition, newly formed partnerships with the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship and the Transportation Diversity Council ensure that qualified VR candidates will have equal access to apprenticeship and talent pipeline development opportunities. This year the Business Relations Program provided over 5,000 services to 905 Alabama businesses and provided over 5,650 services to VR consumers. Partnerships with business and industry, as well as greater alliances with workforce partners and councils resulted in over 500 new hires and jobs retained for VR consumers.

## Transition Services

Through the Transition Services

program, ADRS provides services to enable Alabama's students and youth with disabilities to be independent, productive, contributing members of their communities.

FY21 started with consistency and ended with changes to our transition program. Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and Transition Services began in our local schools and VRS offices as scheduled until the pandemic occurred resulting in school closures which significantly impacted Pre ETS-Services, including Pre Employment Transition Conference, Youth Leadership Forum, Project SEARCH and other services through our community rehabilitation programs.

VRS staff began working immediately to identify virtual platforms so many of these services could continue to be provided to consumers. Pre-ETS Curricula was approved for in-person and virtual service delivery and ADRS employed measures to ensure services continued with minimal disruption as a result of the current pandemic. Pre-ETS virtual platforms were explored and virtualjobshadow.com was purchased as another option for Pre-ETS.

In FY21, ADRS provided almost 8,000 distinct preemployment transition services to almost 5,000 students. These services included those delivered both in person or through a virtual platform. These include job exploration counseling, work-based learning, counseling on opportunities for post-secondary training, workplace readiness training and self-advocacy.

In FY19 and FY20, ADRS engaged in contracts with Jobs for Alabama Graduates (JAG). In FY21, students with disabilities continued to participate in JAG but moved to a fee for service. This has proved to be another opportunity for 44 students to receive Pre ETS and transition services.

As a result of the pandemic, there

were also changes to Transition Unlimited. Where these meetings were previously held in local offices and meeting facilities, Transition Unlimited general meeting was conducted virtually with technical assistance available. Counselors then met with teams in assigned schools to develop action plans. Through a collaborative effort between the VR counselor, LEAs, 504 coordinator and other school staff, action plans were developed for 364 public high schools in the state of Alabama. Transition Conference was held as scheduled and was a success and had great attendance with 687 participants. This conference allowed VR staff and local education agencies time for collaboration, training and transition updates.

Unfortunately, as a result of the pandemic Transition Conference was not held in FY21 however, in lieu of Transition Conference, ATLI conducted virtual presentations focusing on transition and self-care topics. There were 228 virtual participants.

Last year Project SEARCH was only able to move forward with three secondary programs due to the pandemic (Shelby, Tuscaloosa, and Marshall County). This year we have 9 secondary sites (and one additional youth site). Many of these sites were not able to return to their host sites but we have been welcomed by new employers -mainly in hospitality. Next year we plan to add three additional secondary sites and reopen two additional secondary sites that remained in hiatus this year.

Despite the pandemic employment outcomes for PS remain high with employment rates of over 70 percent. The interest in expansion continues among both employers and school systems.

ADRS in FY21 successfully closed 1,861 students and youth in gainful employment.

## TBI Program

ADRS is the state's lead agency in traumatic brain injury (TBI) and a source of education and resources for survivors, professionals, and organizations.

They also provide community reintegration, counseling, care coordination, cognitive remediation, TBI education/training, trauma registry information and referral linkage and transition to school/community and employment.

In FY21, the ADRS Traumatic Brain Injury Program concluded a two-year Administration for Community Living grant, partnering with the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) to screen, identify and customize treatment interventions for individuals with TBI within the state behavioral health and substance use disorder programs.

The 2021 TBI/ADMH dissemination report showed 1 in 3 individuals within the mental health system screened positive for a TBI, those with a suicide attempt were 2.6 times likely to have a TBI and those diagnosed with a trauma disorder were 1.14 times more likely to have a history of TBI.

In FY 21, the ADRS TBI Program was awarded a new Administration for Community Living TBI Grant for the next five years totaling \$1 million for TBI Systems Change. This grant will continue to build upon the success of our last grant in partnering with ADMH to expand screening and education statewide to ADMH Community Providers, Crisis Intervention Centers and Hospital Behavioral Health Units. A Statewide TBI Navigation system will be developed within ADRS for helpline calls, Resource Facilitation, and Information/Referral Services. ADRS will also partner with Alabama Head Injury Foundation to provide a Statewide TBI Caregiver Peer to Peer Mentoring Program.

In FY21, the new five-year TBI State Plan was developed for the Alabama

Head Injury Task Force with 5 new TBI Priority areas: 1) Education and Awareness 2) Community Re-integration 3) Infrastructure 4) Service Access and 5) Pediatrics. A Task Force TBI Advisory/Survivor's Council was also created. More than 4,500 individuals with TBI were contact and/or served in this fiscal year within the TBI program at ADRS.

## Supported Employment

Supported Employment is a specialized service that assists individuals with the most significant disabilities, including serious mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse, find competitive integrated employment.

In FY 21, 662 individuals were closed rehabilitated after receiving supported employment services. They averaged \$9.59 an hour and worked on average over 25 hours a week.

The number of closed rehab cases was up from 588 the previous fiscal year. The wage and hours worked per week reflects an increase from the previous year as well.

The outcome incentives put into place last fiscal year provided supported employment providers an additional \$250 for job stability and \$250 for an exceptional wage outcome (\$9.25 an hour working 25 or more hours a week).

This helped to incentivize the importance of helping consumers find better paying jobs and working more hours to help improve their quality of life. In FY 21, we closed 94 consumers working in the exceptional wage category. We continue to have a SE provider covering every county of the state with multiple providers in some counties which means individuals with the most significant disabilities will be able to access specialized supported employment services

in whatever county they reside. Despite Covid restrictions, ADRS in collaboration with ADMH managed to train new employment staff around the state via two virtual Customized Job Coach Trainings held this year. The trainings were successful and were well attended for both events.

Project SEARCH saw success even in the pandemic. Outcomes remained strong among the systems that were able to continue their programs. Shelby County, Tuscaloosa County, and Marshall County as well as our three youth sites all moved from their host sites into alternate sites in the community.

This year we have reopened 10 secondary sites and have plans in 2022 to reopen two that are still in hiatus and add three new programs.

## OASIS Program

Older Alabamians System of Information and Services (OASIS) is a federally funded program designed to assist individuals age 55 and older who are blind or visually impaired in living more independently in their homes and communities.

In FY21, OASIS consumers received 4,183 hours of vision rehabilitation therapy instruction and 661 hours of orientation and mobility instruction and \$147,381 in adaptive aides and devices. There were 870 consumers served.

In FY21, staff completed 665 community awareness activities that reached an estimated 2,551 people to help them learn and share with others about OASIS services. OASIS was able to reissue 34 returned or donated assistive technology items to consumers.





# *state of alabama independent living (homebound)*

## **Independence. Self-sufficiency.**

No two words better summarize the goal of the State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Homebound program.

With seven community-based offices located throughout Alabama to serve residents in every county, SAIL assists individuals with the most significant disabilities in maintaining and

regaining as much independence as possible while remaining in their homes and communities.

SAIL's team of registered nurses, rehabilitation counselors, and community support specialists provides consumers and their families with individualized services and training on the unique issues and needs presented by their disability.

Through specialized in-home education, counseling, attendant care, training and medical services, consumers are taught about activities of daily living, health, safety, nutrition, and assistive technology.

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SAIL is comprised of four specialized programs:

**The SAIL/VRS Hybrid program** allows individuals with the most significant disabilities to consider and pursue educational training and employment options. Participants in this program receive Waiver or Homebound services and vocational rehabilitation services through one counselor.

**The Homebound Services program** provides a wide range of education and in-home services to assist people with the most significant disabilities in leading more independent lives. To be eligible for this program, a person must:

- be an Alabama resident
- be at least 16 years old
- have a medical diagnosis of traumatic brain injury or quadriplegia
- be dependent on others for assistance with activities of daily living
- demonstrate a financial need

**The SAIL Medicaid Waiver program** is able to maximize its resources and access additional programs and services for the individuals served by providing services in the participant's home, leading to reductions in institutional placements. To be eligible for services through the waiver, a person must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be medically and financially eligible for a nursing home
- have experienced the onset of the disability before age 63
- have a neurological disability as a result of reasons other than aging

**The Community Supports program** enhances and promotes independence in the home, community, and workplace. To be eligible, a person must:

- have a severe disability that limits his or her ability to live independently in his or her community
- provide evidence that by receiving CS service, his or her potential to participate fully in the community will improve

# Kearria Freed

## Mobile County

Kearria Freed is an unstoppable force. More than six years after sustaining life-threatening injuries she's not only achieving her dreams. She's working to help others do the same.

On March 28, 2015, as a 20-year-old student at Alabama A&M on a spring break trip to Panama City, Fla., Kearria's life changed in an instant when a gunman opened fire striking her in the head. Her rehabilitation efforts required her to learn to talk, walk, and perform many other tasks to regain her independence but she never quit.

Kearria's determination has been an inspiration for State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) representative Sherrita Williams and Harriet James, her SAIL Homebound nurse case manager and Vocational Rehabilitation Service case manager, who have had the pleasure of assisting with the journey.

Kearria's mother Madonna Burden first learned about ADRS programs from a cousin and was eventually connected to Williams and James. She said both helped ease her through the uncertainty of what was to come.

"When I went over there it was heaven-sent," she said. "They knew about her story and knew we needed to connect some kind of way and then we did."

Williams helped enroll Kearria in the SAIL program, which assisted with medical supplies and personal care. Kearria eventually progressed to the assistive driver program in Montgomery and has regained her independence.

Burden said having ADRS programs



### Kearria Freed and her mother Madonna Burden are using their experiences to help others through their foundation Kearria Kares.

and representatives to help with recovery was especially helpful when there were questions.

"ADRS has always responded, and they have always been there," she said. "There has not been a question I had that has gone unanswered. If they could not answer right then they'd say 'Let me find out what I can do.'"

Williams and James are quick to point out that much of Kearria's success comes from her determination.

"She is not taking no for an answer," Williams said. "I tell her things and she listens. She listens, she takes the lead, and she runs with it. She has done that so many times."

When there are sudden life changes people can sometimes become depressed and shut down, but James said Kearria always keeps things positive.

"She's very proactive in moving toward her goals," she said. "She realizes what she wants to do. She will

ask the question, 'What do I need to do?' I know if I call or text her, she will respond as quickly as possible. I'm excited to see her progression."

It's that inner drive that helped her to graduate first from Bishop State Community College and then from the University of South Alabama. She is now enrolled in graduate studies at the University of Alabama where she will earn a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling.

Counseling is a natural fit for Kearria, who has already inspired a friend to follow her lead and push forward. During her rehab efforts, she befriended a 17-year-old girl who was paralyzed in a car accident. The young lady had become depressed and lost the desire to return to physical therapy. She talked to her, prayed with her, and the young lady not only pushed forward, but she is also now a member of the board for Kearria's foundation, Kearria Kares.

James said she knows Kearria will be successful when she begins her career.



# SAIL *2021 highlights*

## **In FY21, the State of Alabama Independent Living (homebound) program:**

- Assisted 1,627 Alabamians with the most-significant disabilities in remaining in their homes and communities.
- SAIL Community Support Services Specialists obtained \$131,358.88 in donated goods and services, leveraging their budgets for additional services to individuals with significant disabilities.
- Provided a total of 105 consumers with ramps for accessible entrance and egress from their homes using a combination of SAIL funds for materials and community volunteers for labor.
- Collaborated with other state agencies and community stakeholder to assist consumers with significant disabilities in gaining access to COVID-19 vaccinations.



Kearria Freed has been a wonderful success story for the State of Alabama Independent Living (homebound) program. She is even using her story to inspire others.



Ashley Foster and Patrick Kimbrell discuss plans for his future during a recent meeting on the campus of the University of Alabama. Patrick has a bright future and uses his story to motivate others who might have had setbacks.

## Patrick Kimbrell *Tuscaloosa County*

Patrick Kimbrell's life drastically changed in an instant, but with those changes came a new outlook and new opportunities to have a positive impact on others.

While enjoying a successful career in Jasper and looking forward to a bright future, Kimbrell was severely injured in a car accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down and with limited movement of his hands and arms. His future was uncertain until he was introduced to the State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) program and learned how small victories can pave the way for big things.

Kimbrell was bedridden when he was connected to SAIL in 2017. The first major step was securing an electric wheelchair, and that first taste of independence lit a fire.

"Being locked inside all the time keeps you in a dark place," he said. "Once I got this chair, I was able to explore more and go outside and go other places. It helped ease my depression a lot. That helped me

both mentally and physically."

SAIL's Ashley Foster said when she began meeting with Kimbrell his SAIL nurse felt he had untapped potential and should be moved to the waiver program so he could return to work and school.

Transportation was an issue in the early stages, but by early 2020 they had secured a van, enrolled Kimbrell in the Assistive Driver Training program with Craig Rogers, and eventually helped him secure a driver's license. A vocational evaluation from Lakeshore provided a path to explore career options and the stage was set for his move to Tuscaloosa.

Foster said things really started taking shape when she received a call from Business Relations Program State Administrator Leslie Dawson, who had learned about a job opening at the University of Alabama through the Work Based Learning Experience.

Rehab Engineer Sylvia Perez

entered the picture and proved to be tremendously helpful as Kimbrell made the move to his girlfriend's home in Tuscaloosa. ADRS and Perez helped him obtain a hospital bed, mattress, and a shampoo basin because the house is not handicapped accessible in bathroom. A metal ramp was added as well.

Foster and Perez then visited his workspace, evaluated his office, and took note of the technology and equipment that would be needed. Perez brought in adaptive tools, a mouse, and microphone to help him control different devices. He proved to be such a valuable employee that he was hired full time Sept. 20, 2021.

Kimbrell, who works in the Human Development and Family Studies building, said his journey and the mission of that department have inspired him to earn his degree and remain a part of the team.

He said he would also love to have opportunities to share his story as a motivational speaker.

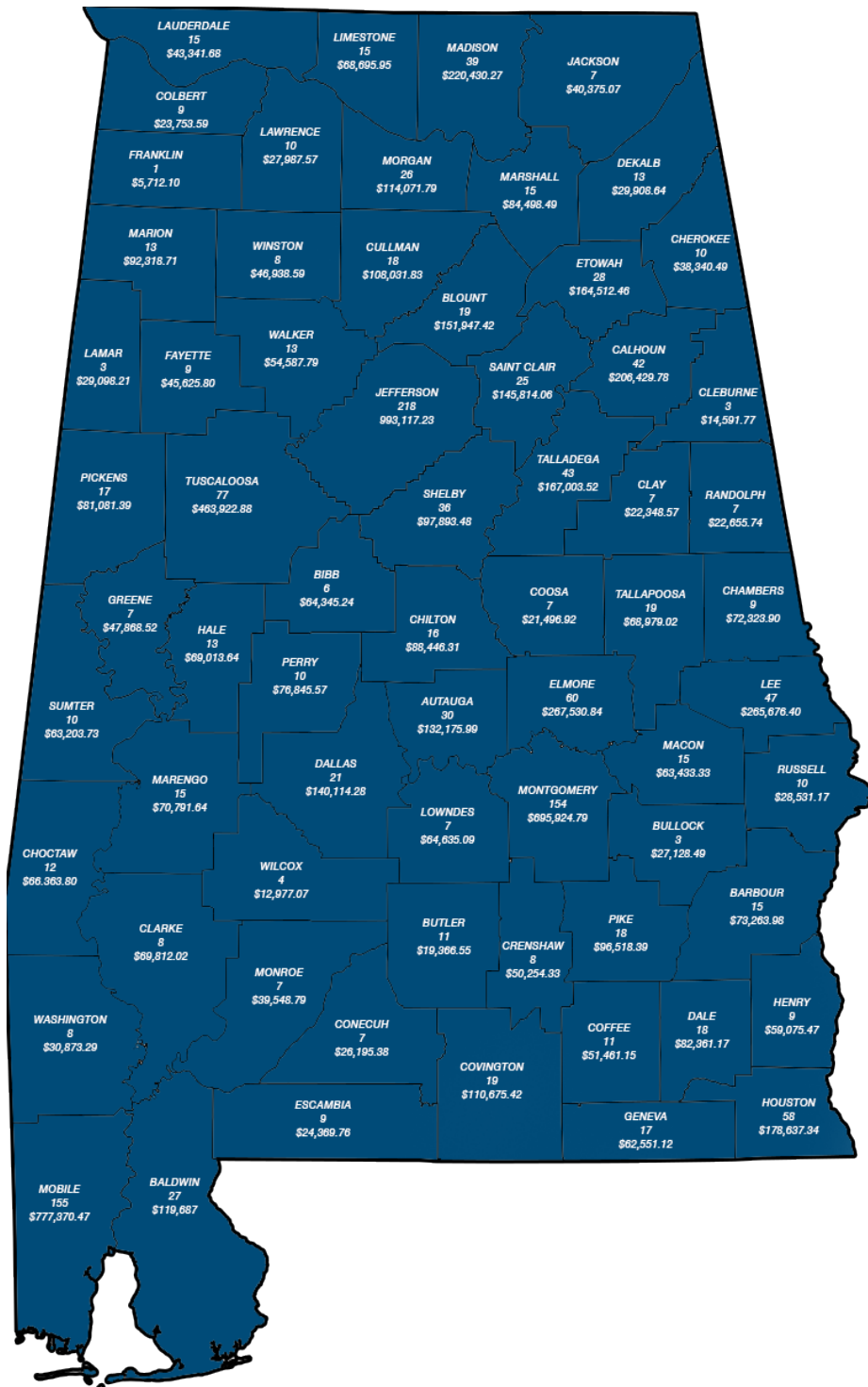
# SAIL by the numbers

Consumers Served

1,627

Serving all 67 Alabama counties from 7 locations

Use of Revenue  
**Direct Services:**  
**\$15,585,756.49**  
**Administration:**  
**\$1,053,962.50**



Sources of Revenue  
**Other: \$10,396,584.49**  
**State: \$6,189,172**

## Rehabilitation Engineering & Assistive Technology

The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology (RE&AT) Program provides state-of-the-art engineering and technology services to consumers across the continuum of ADRS divisions to facilitate the dignity and independence of individuals with disabilities in the community, at home, at school, and at work. The RE&AT program hosted a Remote Education and Employment Technology Summit with assistive technology experts throughout the country to develop and share best practices for virtual evaluations and training. These new practices allow the program to continue services without interruption, decrease the lead time for evaluations, increase and improve training opportunities



The ADRS RE&AT program is doing incredible things throughout the state to help consumers reach their maximum potential.

for consumers, and allow staff to spend more time focusing on serving people with disabilities. A total of 942 consumers were served through CRS, VRS, and SAIL. In addition, 495 consumers received evaluations, 226 consumers received training, and 120 consumers received rehabilitation engineering design

services.

# 942

A total of 942 consumers were served through CRS, VRS, and SAIL

## STAR

STAR is Alabama's Assistive Technology Resource program. It is one of the 56 AT Act Programs funded by Health and Human Services (HHS)/Administration for Community Living (ACL) in Washington D.C. Through its State Level and Leadership Activities (Reutilization, Training, Demonstration and Loans, Coordination and Collaboration, Alternative Finance Programs and Public Awareness activities), STAR assists Alabamians with disabilities by improving access to and acquisition of assistive technology (AT) that enables them to live more productive and independent lives. Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, during FY21 the STAR

Reutilization Program experienced an increase in overall savings to consumers totaling \$1,904,518.06 (25.46 percent), \$99,30.64 savings to ADRS consumers (55.25 percent), 5,154 items reused (25.03 percent), 6,315 requests (22.66 percent) as compared to FY20. ADRS referrals increased from 120 in FY20 to 148 in FY'2021. There was an increase of 19.08 percent in donations, from 3,151 in FY20 to 3,894 in FY21. FY21 was a record-breaking year for the STAR Reutilization Program. Eleven loans were approved through the Alternative Finance Program totaling \$341,261.49. The breakdown of loans are as follows:  
**Adaptive Vehicles:** Nine for \$295,150.53  
**Vehicle Modification:** One for

\$40,730.00

**Home Modification:** One for \$5,380.96

Overall, there were 11,473 individuals served for FY'21.

Through its Coordination & Collaboration and Public Awareness activities, there were 151,110 individuals potentially impacted. Additionally, there were 16,708 visits to the [www.StarTraining.org](http://www.StarTraining.org) website.

# \$1.9M

More than \$1.9 million in overall savings to consumers in FY21

# ADRS

people served,  
purchased  
services

total served  
59,208

total  
purchased

**State: \$46,730,488**

**Federal: \$72,859,810.61**

Other: \$35,726,302.19

**Direct Services:  
\$138,561,565.78**

Administration:  
\$16,755,035.02

## ONE DEPARTMENT. ONE MISSION.

Our mission is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.

# community rehabilitation program locations

### ALABASTER

Independent Advantage  
Placement Agency

### ANNISTON

Opportunity Center-Easter  
Seals

### BIRMINGHAM

ADRS-Lakeshore  
Easter Seals of the  
Birmingham Area  
Glennwood  
Goodwill Industries of  
Alabama  
Independent Advantage  
The Is Able Center  
Triumph Services  
United Ability  
Workshops Inc.

### DECATUR

Erica Allen Employment  
Services (EASE)  
Phoenix Rehabilitation  
Foundation

### DOTHAN

Wiregrass Rehabilitation  
Center

### GADSDEN

Darden Rehabilitation  
Foundation

### HUNTSVILLE

Phoenix Rehabilitation  
Foundation  
ARC of Madison County  
Glennwood

### JACKSON

Clarke County ARC

### KELLYTON

Central Alabama Reach Out  
Center

### MOBILE

Goodwill Easter Seals of the  
Gulf Coast  
Howell Employment Services  
United Cerebral Palsy of  
Mobile  
MONTGOMERY  
Easter Seals Central Alabama  
Goodwill Industries of Central  
Alabama  
Triumph

### MUSCLE SHOALS

Northwest Easter Seals

### OPELIKA

Achievement Center-Easter  
Seals  
Jackie Johnson Employment  
Services

### PELHAM

Shelby County ARC

### SELMA

West Central Alabama Easter  
Seals

### TUSCALOOSA

Easter Seals West Alabama

# early intervention program locations

### ANNISTON

East Central Alabama United  
Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Center  
Inc.

### BIRMINGHAM

Alabama Institute for Deaf  
and Blind, regional office  
ARC of Central Alabama  
Children R Us  
Children's of Alabama Early  
Intervention Program  
United Ability of Greater  
Birmingham - Hand in Hand  
Village Early Intervention  
Watch Me Grow  
WISE - Wooley Institute for  
Spoken-Language Education

### CULLMAN

Cullman County Center for  
Developmentally Disabled  
Inc. (Todd's Club)

### DECATUR

Center for the  
Developmentally Disabled  
(CDD)  
North Central Alabama Mental  
Retardation Authority

### DOTHAN

Alabama Institute for Deaf  
and Blind, regional office  
Dothan-Houston County  
Mental Retardation Board Inc.  
(Vaughn Blumberg Center)

### FLORENCE

SCOPE 310

### GADSDEN

United Ability of Greater  
Birmingham - Hand in Hand

### GUNTERSVILLE

Marshall/Jackson Mental  
Retardation Authority

### HUNTSVILLE

Alabama Institute for Deaf  
and Blind, regional office  
ARC of Madison County  
UCP of Huntsville and  
Tennessee Valley

### JASPER

ARC of Walker County

### MOBILE

Alabama Institute for Deaf  
and Blind, regional office  
Goodwill Easter Seals of the  
Gulf Coast

Gulf Coast Therapy Early  
Intervention  
UCP of Mobile (Project Special  
Delivery)

### MONTGOMERY

Alabama Institute for Deaf  
and Blind,  
Montgomery and Auburn  
offices  
Children's Center of  
Montgomery Inc. (PPEI)  
Project Wiggles and Giggles  
UCP of Mobile (Horizon)

### OZARK

Vivian B. Adams Early  
Intervention  
PELHAM  
Shelby County ARC/Kids First

### PRATTVILLE

ARC of Autauga/Western  
Elmore County (EIEIO)

### ROBERTSDALE

Cindy Haber Center, Inc.  
UCP of Mobile (Project  
Sunrise)

### SCOTTSBORO

Marshall/Jackson Mental  
Retardation Authority  
Twin Acres Early Intervention

### SELMA

Cahaba Center Early  
Intervention

### TALLADEGA

Alabama Institute for  
Deaf and Blind, regional office

### TUSCALOOSA

Alabama Institute for  
Deaf and Blind, regional office  
Community Service Programs  
of West Alabama Inc.  
Early Intervention at the  
University of Alabama

### TUSCUMBIA

Alabama Institute for Deaf  
and Blind, regional office  
UCP of Northwest Alabama

### VALLEY

Chattahoochee Valley  
ARC/Valley Haven Early  
Intervention

### WINFIELD

Tri County Early Intervention

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