



together, **success**



HOME
SCHOOL
WORK

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES



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.

welcome

together,
success

letter FROM the COMMISSIONER



Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure as commissioner to invite all of you to join me in looking back at “the year that was” in *Together, Success*, the annual report for the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

Each year, I am surprised by not only how quickly another 12 months have passed, but also by the steady progress we have made in improving services, enhancing access, and touching lives all across Alabama.

Together Success, of course, highlights the data that are the record of our performance and accomplishments in every program. But I encourage you to look past those numbers, charts, and graphs to see the real people they represent. Behind the numbers are the thousands of individuals and families we serve, the dedicated staff of this department who make such a dramatic difference in the lives of so many, and the numerous agencies and

community partners who team with us in relentless pursuit of our mission. Together, we accomplish so much.

I urge you to spend some time in our ADRS Families section to meet the real people who give us the energy, will, and inspiration to perform our jobs better every day. Theirs are stories of challenge, hope, determination, and success and are just a sampling of the real-life dramas that are going in so many households every day across this great state.

While we celebrate the successes our consumers are achieving, we must also express our sincere gratitude to our many partners who play a vital role in those achievements. They include local school systems, community rehabilitation programs large and small, other state agencies, and policymakers and elected officials at every level of government. They all share with us the achievements of our staff and consumers.

Again, many thanks to all who have been part of this year’s success story. I encourage you to join my staff and me in this coming year as we rededicate ourselves to our mission: *to enable Alabama’s children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.*

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together,
success

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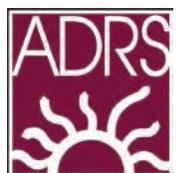
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Compiled and designed by the Office of Communications and Information of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services to be presented to the Alabama State Legislature.

the **ADRS** continuum of services:

FOR A *lifetime*

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

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 more than 50 community programs that provide direct services to families.



Children's Rehabilitation Service

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, CRS 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.

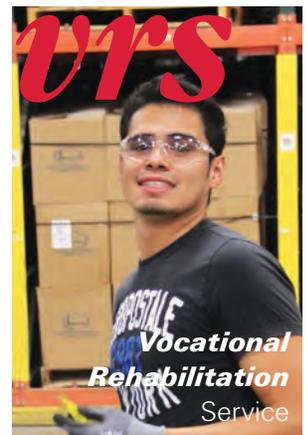
The CRS Hemophilia Program serves Alabama's children and adults with life-threatening blood disorders.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service

provides rehabilitation, education and employment-related services to teens and adults with disabilities.

Every year, the VRS Business Relations Program provides disability management and employee placement services to Alabama businesses.

The Business Enterprise Program for Alabamians who are blind and visually impaired promotes independence through the operation of vending operations, snack bars and cafeterias in locations statewide.

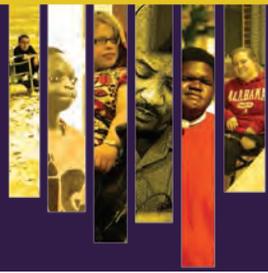


State of Alabama Independent Living/Homebound

provides services to Alabamians who have catastrophic congenital disabilities or disabilities resulting from spinal cord or head injuries.

SAIL/Homebound staff provide education and support services to families with children and adults with severe disabilities to make them more independent in the home, community, or workplace to maximize their educational experience.

the ALABAMA
board OF
rehabilitation SERVICES



Dear Friends,

It was a great pleasure to serve as chairman of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services for another year.



Though the state's financial difficulties have made this a challenging time for our department, it has given me the opportunity to personally witness the ingenuity and dedication of ADRS staff, who have been dogged in serving Alabama's children and adults with disabilities.

As you look over this year's annual report, you will learn about the many amazing successes that have resulted from our staff's hard work. These successes also illustrate the value of our partnerships – with school systems, community programs, and other governmental agencies. You will see that their work changes lives – at home, at school, at work, and in the community.

On behalf of the board, I would like to offer my deepest gratitude to our staff as well as our partners for another wonderful year! Because of your collective efforts, we – and the people we serve – are able to achieve more!

Roger McCullough
Board Chairman
District 6



Stephen Kayes
District 1



Jimmie Varnado
District 2



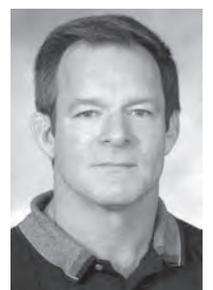
Patricia
"Crickett" Floyd
District 3



Andrea Collett
District 4



Eddie Williams
District 5



Mitch Strickland
District 7

about OUR **board**

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. Per Alabama law, three members must be individuals with a disability, selected from consumer disability organizations; one member must be the parent of a child with a disability; and three members must 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 rights of and services to people with disabilities; and serving as the governing authority of programs administered by the department.



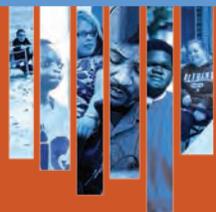
together,
success

*at*HOME
*at*SCHOOL
*at*WORK



*meet*OUR*families*

for VETERANS,
for AMERICA



ben TOMLINSON

JACKSONVILLE



Ben Tomlinson is overjoyed by the level of support he and his family has received through ADRS, the VA, and their community

In Alabama, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs works closely with ADRS to tap our specific areas of expertise, including employer development, rehabilitation technology and disability management.

Sometimes, it isn't about working harder, but working smarter.

ADRS found this to be the case when it first opened a case on U.S. Marine Ben Tomlinson, who was shot in the neck by sniper fire while on a reconnaissance mission in Afghanistan on May 11, 2011, resulting in him being an incomplete quadriplegic.

"I was running rooftop security," said Ben. "We were stationed in an area littered with bomb-making materials, and we were basically there to just clear out the bad guys. I never lost consciousness after being hit by that long-range bullet, but I didn't know how bad my injury was until being tended to at the hospital."

Even before Ben returned to his Jacksonville home, he was referred to several different organizations for support, including the Veterans Administration, Semper Fi Fund, and ADRS. He was also greeted by a tremendous outpouring of support from his family and the community, evidenced by the more than 2,000 who turned out at Jacksonville's square for his homecoming.

"Ben's case is unique," said Bynum Duren, ADRS rehabilitation technologist. "He pretty much had all of the tools already in place, but we needed to hone those tools. The support he had was great, but we needed to work with Ben to really develop a specific plan that would most efficiently help him."

To do this, ADRS built an entire team around Ben to guide him down the path of rehabilitation. Along with Bynum, Ben has worked with VR Counselors Keith Dear and Eddie Albright and Business Relations Consultant Leslie Dawson. Since Eddie is his VR counselor, Ben currently works most closely with him.

"Ben's case is one still in progress for us," Eddie said. "We just completed his vocational evaluation, but knowing and working with Ben, he can do pretty much anything he chooses because of his wonderful and positive attitude."

On his road to complete rehabilitation, SAIL provided Ben with a table to better accommodate a wheelchair, utensils for feeding, and a lower dumbbell rack to help strengthen his upper body.

"As a veteran, help for me was already in place," said Ben, "but ADRS has really taken the lead to provide direction for that assistance. This direction has helped me hugely. Eddie and Bynum's advice means the world to me because I trust their experience. Without it, I wouldn't know where to turn."

Everything is coming together for Ben so he can now focus his energy exactly where it needs to go: to rejoining the workforce.

THE *doss* FAMILY

DALEVILLE

Knowing that the early years are critical for the success of any child, Sylvia Doss doggedly fought for answers when her daughter, Aspen, started consistently missing development milestones.

"Because we're a military family, my husband, Steven, was gone for the first 10 months of her life, so there wasn't a ton of interaction with many people other than me," said Sylvia. "Still, I grew concerned when she wasn't babbling when I expected her to, didn't start walking until later than normal, and by 17 months, I even felt that any progress she was making started reversing when she stopped saying her first words."

Two different pediatricians further confounded the Doss family by insisting that her slower-than-normal progress was no real cause for alarm.

At around 20 months of age, the professional opinion on Aspen started to change when she was showing more signs of being somewhere on

the autism spectrum.

"Aspen wouldn't walk on grass, she gagged when she ate, she flapped her hands when excited," Steven said.

In October 2011, doctors finally had enough evidence to diagnose Aspen with PDD-NOS, a diagnosis for persons who exhibit some, but not all, criteria on the autism spectrum, and later revised their diagnosis to full autism in March 2012.

"I fought, not for the label, but for the help," Sylvia said. "I definitely fought, though. I became a warrior for Aspen. All I ever wanted was the best for our child, and the difference we've witnessed in her is amazing."

Early Intervention has provided speech and occupational therapy for Aspen since October 2011, with Aspen taking additional speech, occupational, and hippotherapy sessions at Sumlar Therapy in Ozark.

"Just about everything has improved," said Sylvia. "She's handling different textures better, her sensory

issues have improved, as have her language skills. Hearing my baby talk now makes every day seem just like Christmas."

Energized from seeing Aspen improve, Steven and Sylvia constantly advocate for their child, seeing autism awareness, and awareness of special needs in general, as one of the few negatives about living just outside Fort Rucker in Dale County.

They both know that with some effort, that too will improve, and Sylvia has already made inroads by joining various support groups and even starting one of her own, specifically for autism.

"Everybody deserves that opportunity, everyone deserves that voice," she said. "It takes teamwork, but if I have to shout it from the top of a mountain, I will. It's that important."

Once ordinary parents, Steven and Sylvia Doss transformed into warriors when advocating for their daughter, Aspen.



meet our
families

Partners in Success

The Doss Family
Alabama's Early Intervention System
Sumlar Therapy

Future Partner:
Vocational Rehabilitation Service



Partners in Success

The Mitchell Family
Alabama's Early Intervention System
Children's Rehabilitation Service

Future Partner:
Vocational Rehabilitation Service



THE *MITCHELL* FAMILY

P A N S E Y

Shea Mitchell practices signing with her mother, Beth, during playtime.

Because they are from New York, much of the Mitchell family's time is spent talking to extended family members they don't get to see often back home.

In other words, communication is a pretty big deal to them.

So, when they learned that their daughter, Shea, had severe to profound hearing loss, Beth and Michael knew they had a long road ahead of them to just be able to speak to her.

"We knew Shea had difficulty hearing when she was born," Beth said. "Testing a newborn's hearing is tricky, though, and it wasn't until several months after that we discovered just how serious our daughter's hearing loss was."

CRS audiologist Jennifer Westly helped put the Mitchell family in touch with Early Intervention during a hearing clinic sizing Shea for hearing aids.

Suzie Barr, service coordinator

working with the EI program location in Dothan, quickly offered support in addition to that of CRS. She arranged for speech therapy sessions in the home twice a month, and additional monthly sessions with an audiologist.

"They really are a model family," said Suzie. "They are proactive, receptive to recommendations, and advocate well for their child. Their support will ensure Shea goes far in life."

At first, it was all pretty overwhelming, said Michael. "Here I am, 39 years old, and I'm learning a new language, sign language. It's a new world, but we are adapting to it well."

For him to say they're "adapting" might be stating it mildly. Beth and Michael worked to get a "Deaf Child at Play" sign placed on their county road and are now active in the Deaf community, developing Facebook pages for silent social activities in and around Houston County. Beth started

a mother's support program in her home, and even received a grant from Fisher-Price to host educational toy parties.

Perhaps coolest of all, though, is the Facebook page they created for Shea. *Signing With Shea* features web clips uploaded regularly that feature mom, dad, and Shea all signing newly learned words together, and is just another way the Mitchells stay connected with parts of the family they don't see everyday.

"If we had to do it all over again," said Beth, "I think the only thing we would do differently is find out about EI and CRS sooner. Working with them has been fabulous, but now that they have ignited that fire within me, I am ready to help make people unfamiliar with the Deaf community understand. Because Shea is naturally outgoing, she will help me, too, and that is a beautiful thing."

zaadriuan HARBOUR

ANNISTON

The dramatic recovery of 9-year-old Zaadriuan Harbour still brings a smile to the face of everyone working in Anniston's CRS clinic.

"I've known Zaadriuan a long time," said Randy Whitt, CRS field supervisor of Anniston/Gadsden district. "And there was a time when I wasn't sure of his survival."

Zaadriuan was born with Wolf-Hirschhorne syndrome, a rare condition that depletes the fourth chromosome, characteristic of slow growth, cleft lip and palate, poor muscle development, microcephaly, and epilepsy.

Jewelene West, Zaadriuan's grandmother and guardian, is so thankful to have CRS play such an important role in his success.

"It's been a long haul; he is such a fighter," said Jewelene. "When he couldn't keep food down, or even sit up by himself, CRS was there, pushing. They are amazing with him, and I couldn't be happier."

Today, at only 40 inches in height and mere ounces over the 30-pound threshold, Zaadriuan still has a long road ahead of him. Taking his history into account, though, his progress is clear and profound. Zaadriuan weighed a scant 2 pounds, 12 ounces at birth and was a miniscule 39 centimeters in length. Typified by failure to thrive, the Wolf-Hirschhorne diagnosis meant that growth would be incredibly tough for Zaadriuan. At 18 months, he weighed that of a healthy newborn, and at 2-and-a-half years, still weighed only 11

pounds.

So, for those who know him, Zaadriuan turned quite a few heads when he walked into the CRS clinic for the first time this past summer.

"I only dreamed I'd see the day when Zaadriuan would walk," Randy said. "He's Anniston CRS's little miracle kid, and I'm so excited for him."

Jewelene ensured Zaadriuan never missed an appointment at any of the five CRS clinics he attends. Zaadriuan receives services from seizure, seating, feeding, hearing and orthopedic clinics at Anniston CRS, and CRS also provided braces for Zaadriuan's legs, and a gait trainer to assist him while learning to walk.

Stacie Rolfe, CRS care coordinator for Zaadriuan, acknowledges the hard work both Zaadriuan and his grandmother put forth to get him where he is today.

"Watching this child, just seeing what he has done, makes me extremely proud to be involved with that family," she said.

Jewelene said she is grateful for CRS' role in her grandson's successes.

"CRS is a second family to me," Jewelene said. "They have my deepest admiration. We couldn't have done it without their help, and with him now up and walking, I just know his speech is right around the corner. With their help, he's making noises now, and that just makes me smile."



meet our families

CRS Care Coordinator Stacie Rolfe reads a story book to Zaadriuan Harbour in the Anniston CRS clinic lobby.

Partners in Success

Zaadriuan Harbour and family
Children's Rehabilitation Service

Future Partner:
Vocational Rehabilitation Service



kenneth DAVIS

MOBILE

Coming from a very large and close knit family, Kenneth Davis Jr. has received overwhelming support and has made an incredible amount of progress since sustaining a severe head injury by falling out of the back of a truck in March 2011.

"When we first met Kenny, he was wheeled into our Mobile clinic space on the back of a gurney," said Aimee Lott, traumatic brain injury care coordinator in Mobile. "His recovery is unbelievable. If you'd asked me then if he would be able to walk or talk, I would've said no. Now, 18 months later, he's walking, talking, and social. He loves telling jokes; he loves girls, sports, and video games. You know, he's pretty much just like any other 9th grade boy."

"My family is there for me," said Kenny. "It has been hard, but I keep going for them."

CRS diligently worked throughout

Kenny's rapid recovery, first placing him at the Rotary Rehabilitation Hospital in Mobile, a facility normally intended exclusively for adult patient care.

"Kenny may be young, but he is the size of a fully-grown adult male," Aimee said. "We knew early on that the Rotary was the best fit for him, and he left such a positive impression on the people there that they are now more willing to consider caring for more pediatric patients."

Following Rotary, CRS was there every step along the way, providing everything from wheelchairs to walkers aiding in mobility. Now, instead of riding in a wheelchair, he is riding atop a zero-turn radius mower, and trying to ride a bike.

With a bicycle helmet brochure in hand, Aimee mentions to Kenny's family that persons with a previous head injury are much more susceptible to a second brain injury.

"That's good to know," said Elaine Marks, Kenny's mother. "CRS is like an extension of our family. They really care about Kenny and about us, and it shows in just how far they have gone for our family, and how quickly they deliver. Kenny's recovery might have outpaced all expectations, but I know in my heart that CRS is at least partly responsible."

Kenneth Davis Sr., Kenny's father, added, "From first hearing about the intense pressure, the swelling, and the 50/50 chance of survival to now, I must say that it has been an tough, but amazing journey. We prayed a lot about it, and will accept whatever we need to do for him. ADRS has been there through this whole process, and I am so satisfied with everything they have done for us along the way. Kenny is now very independent and desires to succeed, and with that kind of attitude, he definitely will go far."

Constantly improving since his accident, Kenneth Davis Jr. recently started cutting the lawn again to pitch in and help out around his home.



meet our families

Partners in Success

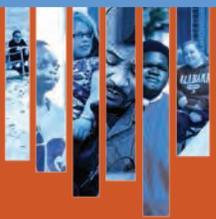
Kenneth Davis and family
Children's Rehabilitation Service
Future Partner:
Vocational Rehabilitation Service



meet our families

Partners in Success

Jacob Sanford and family
Children's Rehabilitation Service
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
State of Alabama Independent Living



Sixteen-year old Jacob Sanford first enrolled with CRS on Sept. 16, 2011.

In his short exposure to the department, he has seen how ADRS works to mitigate setbacks caused by his metatropic dysplasia, a rare skeletal disorder resulting in short stature.

"I really don't see myself as having a disability," said Jacob. "I think that's the right attitude to have, there's still several things that are just too difficult to do on my own. That's still not going to stop me from achieving my dreams."

Jacob dreams big, too. He's interested in state government, and has even spent some time at the State House advocating for persons with disabilities. Citing Abraham Lincoln as a hero, Jacob envisions his future following a political path.

So when Jacob decided to take on an advanced placement workload at school, ADRS was there. Smart enough to keep up with the brisk pace, it was note taking that nearly grounded Jacob's mighty ambitions. Severe finger swelling from extended

pen and paper sessions was limiting his success. Thanks to ADRS, Jacob now takes class notes digitally with an AlphaSmart smart keyboard.

Jacob's AP history teacher, Jill Boatwright, said the introduction of the smart keyboard was a blessing. "He's a real go-getter, outspoken, and unafraid to take on a challenge," she said, "but was just unnecessarily challenging himself by taking notes by hand."

Already having completed Teen Transition Clinic, Jacob is fast tracking himself by exploring his options beyond high school. He's spent some time with his VR counselor, Brandy Mills, and Daphne Jackson, a SAIL specialist primarily involved with the CRS program.

"This is a crucial time for Jacob," said Rehabilitation Technologist Bynum Duren. "Crucial because of his age, and also because technology has advanced and opened doors previously unimaginable – things like *Dragon Naturally Speaking* software that improve efficiency and reduces fatigue. There's really no limit to things

we can now do."

Bynum designed and installed a desk – specifically tailored to comfortably seat Jacob while in his wheelchair – at Jacob's school, enabling him to work and study more comfortably.

"In the year since first enrolling, we've gotten him really connected," said Deanna McMurtrey, CRS social worker. "Because of his independent nature, he sometimes doesn't know what to ask for, but he now understands that with some modifications, he can be more productive and not have to put up with so much pain in the process."

A year after first enrolling, Jacob now understands the importance of that extra support supplied to him through ADRS.

"The organization is top-notch," said Jacob. "They really go out of their way to help people like me overcome any difficulties in our daily lives. I know I can do anything I want with my life, and it is comforting to know that ADRS is there to help my voice get heard."

Bynum Duren and Deanna McMurtrey make some final adjustments as Jacob Sanford tries out his new desk.

meet our families

Partners in Success

Addie Ray and Family
Children's Rehabilitation Service
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
State of Alabama Independent Living



addieRAY

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Addie Ray performs a yarn toss during the final team-building exercise of the 2012 Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum.

Intelligent, independent, driven and determined, Addie Ray most definitely knows a thing or two about overcoming obstacles.

Despite her diagnosis of cerebral palsy quadriplegia, she excelled throughout school and graduated from Davidson High School in Mobile with honors. She scored a 29 on her ACT and is now a freshman at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

While preparing for her first year, Addie knew she needed a new wheelchair and chair lift. However, Medicaid didn't exactly agree.

"I've known Addie since she was in elementary school," said Kathryn Mixon, CRS social work specialist. "She's a delightful, energetic, and independent young woman. We were as crushed as she to learn that Medicaid denied her claim, not once, but four different times. She didn't lose hope, though, and neither did we. Patti Fassbender, Mobile CRS physical therapist, worked so hard for 13 months to secure Addie her new chair. Medicaid still refused to purchase the lift, so VR stepped in to provide her everything she needed to get her on

her way."

Addie said she was raised to be persistent.

"My mom instilled in me a sink or swim attitude," said Addie. "The way I see it, I could have died 15 minutes after being born, but that didn't happen. Here I am, some 19 years later. I know I was put on this planet for a reason – no, not just a reason, a purpose."

Just before blazing tracks on the UA campus, Addie seized the opportunity to participate in the Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum on another campus: Troy University.

Addie said the opportunity to participate in YLF 2012 empowered her and made her comfortable enough to be herself. She said spending time among peers who didn't see her differently was both therapeutic and a confidence builder.

The young woman is currently exploring opportunities before her in Tuscaloosa. She is pursuing a degree in industrial engineering and would like to do consulting work on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"Being who I am, I have intimate knowledge with various systems concerning persons with disabilities, and I am not afraid to say that there are several things we can do differently to be more efficient," she said. "Everything can be improved upon, and the world of disability is no different."

While she's away at school, SAIL Waiver and Homebound Case Manager Ashley Foster is working with Addie as part of the SAIL/VR pilot program to provide assistance with activities of daily living to students with disabilities.

Each day, attendants assist Addie with tasks such as transferring her from the bed to her wheelchair, or washing laundry, she said.

"We provide that support she would normally have while at home so she need not unnecessarily worry about anything other than her studies," said Ashley.

"Throughout my entire life, ADRS has done so much for me," said Addie. "I simply wouldn't be who I am without them."

mollyMOSES

DECATUR



meet our
families

Partners in Success

Molly Moses and Family
State of Alabama Independent Living

Future Partner:
Vocational Rehabilitation Service



When a boating accident claimed Molly Moses's right leg three years ago, she knew that she was going to have to make several adjustments to her routine to keep going.

She didn't anticipate those adjustments would ever involve using a windowsill as an armrest while hopping up steps with her right leg to get inside the front door of her family home.

"After graduating high school, I decided to try living with my sister and niece," Molly said. "My dad's parents built this house, but it definitely wasn't built to be wheelchair accessible."

Julie Manley-Agee, independent living specialist in Decatur, first heard of Molly's dilemma in mid-August, when Molly's stepmother contacted the State of Alabama Independent Living/Homebound (SAIL) Service requesting assistance.

"She asked if there was anything we could do, and I told her absolutely we could help," Julie said. "I invited Rehabilitation Technologist Ashley McLeroy out to take some measurements, draw plans, and ensure the ramp

met ADA guidelines, and from there, we were on our way."

Plans actually came along even faster than expected when Julie found companies in the area that were looking for volunteer projects as a way to commemorate 9/11. Within days, Julie had arranged local volunteers to provide the labor and sponsors to provide the materials.

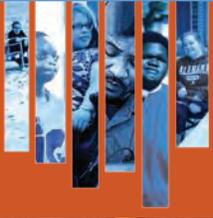
"I'm so pleased because everything came together so well," Julie said. "I don't think this project could have gone to a more motivated and deserving person. Molly has a great attitude and a bright outlook. She makes me smile."

"Thank you, thank you, thank you!" Molly said. "Without the ramp, I just knew I was eventually going to fall and hurt myself. Working with Julie and SAIL was so great, and it had the added benefit of reopening a dialogue with my VR counselor, Carolyn Sutherland. Great things are ahead for me, and I'm looking forward to looking more closely at going to nursing school."

Molly Moses is thankful to Independent Living Specialist Julie Manley-Agee for responding so quickly to her need for a ramp outside her home.

Partners in Success

Herbierto Nuñez
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Alabama School for the Deaf
E.H. Gentry Technical School



herbierto NUÑEZ

O N E O N T A

*Herbierto Nuñez
preps a pallet of
fire extinguishers
for shipment at
his job at Amerex
manufacturing.*

For a young man who divides his time among three distinct, and largely separate worlds, Herbierto Nuñez almost never complains.

“There is a hearing culture and a deaf culture,” Heriberto said through an interpreter. “And, of course, there is my family, so you can add Latin culture, too.”

Herbierto moved to Alabama from Mexico when he was 7 years old. At home, Spanish was spoken, but his eyes were suddenly opened to the new language of American Sign Language when he enrolled at the Alabama School for the Deaf (ASD) at age 9. Before this breakthrough, communication with Heriberto was incredibly difficult. As a student at ASD, he became social and thrived.

While still in school, he was

strongly encouraged by family members who had attained U.S. citizenship to also try to pass the stringent immigrant’s testing procedures. After some failed attempts, Herbierto passed the test and became a U.S. citizen.

“His story is a remarkable one,” said Deaf Support Specialist Jaime Laird through an interpreter. “For all the barriers he overcame in finding employment, he never became frustrated. Instead, he remained gracious, humble, and positive. These traits, in addition to his tremendous work ethic, really worked to make him a model client.”

VR encouraged Herbierto to apply for employment at Amerex, a fire extinguisher manufacturer in Trussville with a long 20-year history and excellent rapport with ADRS.

“The process was really straightforward,” Herbierto said. “I now have a great job that I can grow with. I eventually want to get into welding, and this company has opportunities for advancement in that field. VR has made all this possible, and I know to never give up and to stay assertive.”

With his career just the latest of his many accomplishments, his efforts have hardly gone unnoticed. He recently received an achievement award from the Council of Organizations Serving Deaf Alabamians.

“I learned from my father at a young age that if there is motivation to excel, the United States of America is a great place to be,” Herbierto said. “I couldn’t agree more.”

lorenza MITCHELL

B E S S E M E R

Fifteen years ago, Lorenza Mitchell had just graduated high school and was eagerly looking forward to starting the next chapter of his life when a car accident left him with a C6 neck injury.

"Hearing that news – that I would never walk again – left me devastated, depressed," said Lorenza. "I was in shock. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know where to turn."

Initially, State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL)/ Homebound Service assisted in rebuilding Lorenza's confidence, first by helping him conquer daily tasks. As he became better acquainted with ADRS and its services, he started seeing the possibilities open to him. Before that contact, he only envisioned doors abruptly shut, due to his injury.

"I've got to keep cooking," Lorenza said. "That's something that my grandfather used to say, and it's become my motto for life. His memory helped me out of my depression and helped me find my strength. I was

raised thinking that if you don't work, you don't eat. So, if I want to live a life that I am proud of, I've got to keep cooking and keep providing."

After consulting ADRS, Lorenza decided to enroll at Jefferson State Community College to study radio and television broadcasting. Craig Rogers, certified driver rehabilitation specialist at ADRS-Lakeshore, worked with Lorenza to modify his vehicle for driving with hand controls. SAIL helped make his home accessible by constructing a ramp while also providing needed medical supplies. Senior Rehabilitation Counselor Wade Wofford was instrumental in securing Lorenza a new manual standing wheelchair.

"Lorenza is willing, cooperative, and appreciative," Wade said. "He shows drive and determination that is rare, and that is a big part of why he is such a success."

Stella Pelham, a retired ADRS business relations consultant, met Lorenza and encouraged him to seek employment in public service. With

that little piece of encouragement, and the help of ADRS, Lorenza is really "cooking" now and is employed as a dispatcher on B-watch for the Bessemer Police Department. The 2 p.m. – 10 p.m. shift alone handles approximately 260 emergency calls each night, 96,000 calls annually.

"The job is certainly stressful – we truly are the nerve center for all of Bessemer – but knowing that what I'm helping the public through what is potentially a life or death situation really makes me feel good," Lorenza said. "The work is rewarding, and I couldn't be happier."

"My experience with ADRS was life-changing," Lorenza said. "People with disabilities need a voice to help open doors. ADRS is that voice. They've helped me with school, supplies, my chair, and my job. It all adds up, and has improved my quality of life considerably. I probably wouldn't have done a lot without their help, and certainly wouldn't be where I am now without them."

Wade Wofford, senior rehabilitation counselor in Homewood, looks on as Lorenza Mitchell discusses the capabilities of the Bessemer Emergency call center.

meet our families

Partners in Success

Lorenza Mitchell
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
State of Alabama Independent Living



rickyWALKER

MCCALLA

From an early age, Ricky Walker knew that he wanted to work with numbers.

Born with cerebral palsy, Ricky "grew up in rehab," with CRS assisting with various surgeries on his legs and eyes during childhood and providing a walker for mobility.

"I distinctly remember my first experience with VR, because they helped me learn how to drive," said Ricky. "It was there that I learned that they would also assist with school, so I fast tracked myself to getting an associate degree in accounting from Bessemer Tech."

For several years, Ricky used his associate's degree in a bookkeeping position as an office manager. While it was decent work, he desired more in his career and decided to enroll at Samford University.

That was when he met Susan Higgins.

"I first learned about Ricky when Samford contacted me in 2005," said Susan, who is a senior rehabilitation

counselor for VRS-Homewood. "They had loaned him a old power chair to assist him in getting around their campus, which is quite hilly. That chair had broken down, and they wanted a technician to look at it. We couldn't do anything to fix the chair, but we could do practically anything with someone as bright and driven as Ricky."

After securing his four-year accounting degree, Ricky heard through ADRS that the city of Birmingham was looking to hire people in accounting. Yolanda Spencer, VR unit supervisor in Homewood, learned about an accounting job through state Sen. Linda Coleman (D- Birmingham), who serves as Americans with Disabilities compliance officer with the city of Birmingham. Susan and Yolanda both agreed that Ricky was an excellent fit for the job and urged him to apply.

"The city of Birmingham was clearly impressed with Ricky, and they were serious about hiring him because they contacted us

directly about making necessary accommodations before even offering him the job," said Susan. "That was a first for me, and it was refreshing to work with an employer so willing to make adjustments proactively, before potential problems surface."

Modifications needed to employ Ricky turned out to be not nearly drastic as once thought. In fact, the most important accommodation was one Ricky already possessed, thanks to ADRS: a keyboard with the number pad on the left-hand side of the board.

"It has been a long journey for me, but if I would do it all over again without hesitation," Ricky said. "I wouldn't be here without the help of Vocational Rehab, and I am so appreciative for all they have done for me. I knew there were key things I wanted to accomplish in my life when I was young, and ADRS has helped me reach so many of my goals. It has truly been a blessing."

Ricky Walker, center, and Senior Rehabilitation Counselor Susan Higgins, rear center, meets with Walker's colleagues Rudy Roussel and Sen. Linda Coleman at Birmingham City Hall. Ricky and Rudy have become good friends since Ricky started working for the city of Birmingham in May 2012.



meet our
families

Partners in Success

Ricky Walker
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Children's Rehabilitation Service



Partners in Success

Patrick Peterson
Vocational Rehabilitation Service



Patrick Peterson makes an early morning presentation at Gulf Shores High School promoting the health benefits of a standing chair compared with a traditional wheelchair.

Having served his country as a member of the U.S. Army for six years, Patrick Peterson has always been the type of person to stand up for something he believes in.

Yet, it wasn't until he injured his spine in a motorcycle accident that he understood just how much the physical act of standing up really meant to him.

"It – my injury – blew my mind," said Patrick. "When I woke up and realized what had happened, I thought that life doesn't owe me anything else. I was born again that day."

Thrilled just to be alive, Patrick had a renewed outlook and a new passion for helping others, but no outlet to channel this new passion.

Patrick's sister encouraged him to contact ADRS to help him get back on his feet and follow the right path in his life. Denise Patterson, senior rehabilitation counselor for VRS-Mobile, opened new doors to Patrick.

"Patrick was a total joy to work with," said Denise. "I first met him when he was still coping with his injury, but I quickly realized he was going to be a shining star because he was so good with communication. A lot of that is his training with the Army, but the rest of it is just Patrick."

Patrick was receiving additional technical assistance and help with vehicle modifications from Craig Rogers, certified driving rehabilitation specialist at ADRS-Lakeshore, while brainstorming on what to do with his career. It was when Patrick was receiving his new wheelchair through the VA that he found his true calling of working as a wheelchair representative of The Standing Company, a wheelchair manufacturer that specializes in making wheelchairs with standing functions.

"Denise was my guide, my mentor, my friend," Patrick said. "She always encouraged me to put myself out

there, and she always told me I had exactly what it took to get a great job. I didn't always want to believe her, but through it all, she gave me the confidence I needed, and helped me keep the right mindset."

"We are helping people at a pivotal point in their lives," Denise said. "Connecting with people and watching their lives change for the better is really what it's about."

In the end, everything came together for Patrick, as he achieved what he refers to as his "true calling."

"What more meaningful work can I have than positively affecting other people's lives?" Patrick asked. "My new job gives me meaning, and I wouldn't have found it without ADRS's assistance. I am so grateful for everything they have done. They've truly been fantastic, and I mean that from the bottom of my heart."

robertKELLY

MONTGOMERY

With a long and distinguished career to his credit, Robert Kelly cannot imagine any of it having taken place without the services of ADRS's Business Enterprise Program (BEP).

"I was 12 years old when my vision went out on me like a light switch," said Robert. "It was a virus that claimed my sight by attacking the weakest part of my body, which happened to be the retina."

After losing his sight, Robert enrolled at the Alabama School for the Blind, attended E.H. Gentry Technical Facility in Talladega, and practiced professional piano tuning for two years following his training.

"Piano tuning was a hobby, and I enjoyed it, but I wanted more out of a career," said Robert. "I decided to return to Gentry in '67 and train for a job within BEP."

Robert re-entered the work force, working at numerous BEP facilities, including Public Housing Authority

facilities; sites in Florence, Decatur, and Huntsville; the Interstate 65 Welcome Center on the Tennessee line; Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant; NASA; and Redstone Arsenal.

"Like a lot of careers, I worked my way up the ladder," Robert said. "Early in my career, I operated vending machines, and in '89, I had the opportunity to start training for cafeteria management. After working at grills at NASA and Redstone, I finally had the opportunity to take ownership of a facility at Maxwell Air Force Base in 2002."

The facility Robert speaks of so humbly is the Riverfront Inn, the largest federal dining hall contract in the state of Alabama. Robert's food service company generates gross annual revenues of \$4.9 million and employs more than 150 people, many with disabilities.

"To put it simply, BEP is the absolute best thing for the blind to become independent and successful,"

said Robert. "Just about all that I have, and all that I have done can somehow be linked to the program. It has provided me an opportunity to grow, and without it, I don't know where I would be."

Along with Robert's numerous outstanding achievements, he has also provided a voice for and volunteered to give back to the rehabilitation community that helped him become so successful. A charter member of the Elected Committee of Blind Vendors (EC), he has been active with the EC since 1974, has chaired several sub-committees, has served as a member of the National Federation of the Blind, and has been a deacon for his church.

"I have lived a happy life, and have no regrets," Robert said. "Rehab was always there for me, and over the years, I have recommended its services to so many people. When I think of opportunity, ADRS is the first thing that comes to mind."

Robert Kelly poses by the serving line at Maxwell Air Force Base's Riverfront Inn, the largest federal dining hall contract in the state of Alabama.



meet our
families

Partners in Success

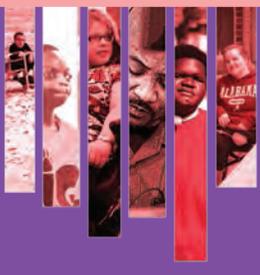
Robert Kelly
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Business Enterprise Program
Alabama School for the Blind
E.H. Gentry Technical School





together,
success

*at*HOME
*at*SCHOOL
*at*WORK



ALABAMA'S *early* *intervention* SYSTEM

S E R V I N G I N F A N T S & T O D D L E R S



early intervention

Every dollar invested in early intervention saves \$7 in future costs.



The Mitchell family — Michael, Beth, and Shea — received services from the EI program in Dothan

The early years are critical to the success of any child, but they are especially vital for a child who has a developmental delay or disability.

Created as the first step in ensuring that all children start to school ready to learn, Alabama's Early Intervention System (AEIS) is a vital component in assuring lifetime success for children with disabilities and developmental delays.

Through its coordinated, community-based, family-centered system of support and services, EI works together with families, community organizations, and public and private service providers to help

with development.

Studies show that 85 percent of a child's brain development occurs by the age of 3, and investment in early childhood programs results in more effective public schools, more educated workers, and less crime. Early Intervention is also a good investment. Studies also indicate that every dollar invested in early intervention saves \$7 in future costs.

There are more than 50 early intervention programs in local communities across Alabama delivering services and supports to infants and toddlers and their families in their natural environments. In home and community settings, such as

child-care centers, mother's-day-out programs, or city parks, youngsters with disabilities are able to become involved in daily activities with their peers who do not have disabilities.

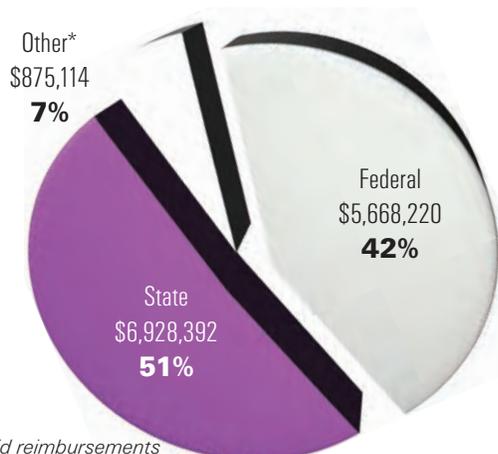
To be eligible for Early Intervention services, a child must be younger than 3 years old and experience delays in hearing, seeing, walking, talking or learning or have a diagnosed condition that has a high probability of resulting in delays.

Infants and toddlers may be referred to EI by calling the toll-free Early Intervention Child Find line, 1-800-543-3098 (en Español, 1-866-450-2838).

byTHEnumbers

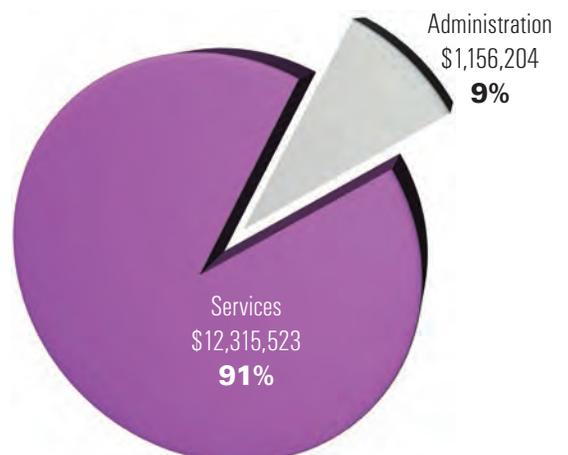
More than \$13.4 million in services to infants, toddlers, and families

Source of Revenue



*Medicaid reimbursements

Use of Revenue





program highlights

Alabama's Early Intervention System

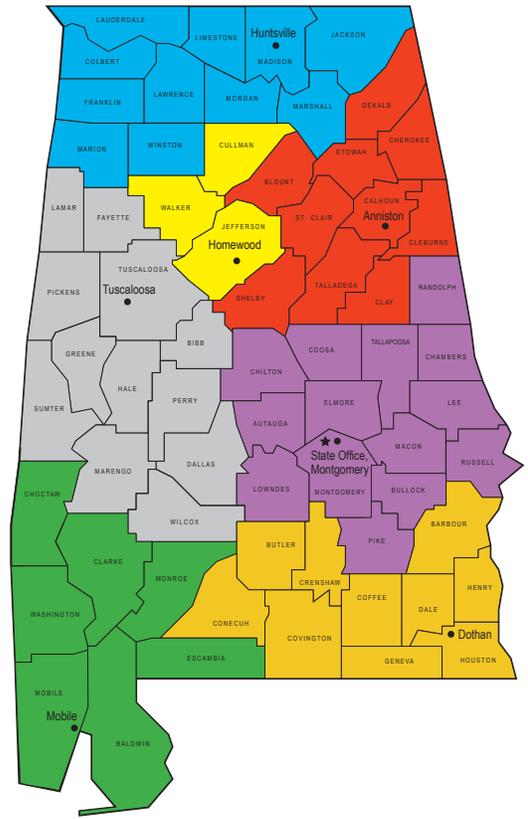
Aspen Doss and her family has benefitted from speech and occupational therapy sessions she has received through Early Intervention



- ▶ Provided services and supports to more 6,000 infants and toddlers and their families.
- ▶ Provided funding, technical assistance, and program monitoring to more than 50 local community early intervention programs statewide to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. In 2012, programs continued to maintain a high level of compliance.
- ▶ Offered extensive training and technical assistance on the new regulations for early intervention under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These new regulations focus on measuring and improving outcomes for children served by EI with the goal of ensuring that all children are ready for preschool and kindergarten.
- ▶ Was again ranked in the highest category of "Meets the Requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" as determined annually by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs based on compliance with federal regulations. Specific factors affecting Alabama's determination include the provision of valid and reliable data reflecting measurement of each required indicator and reported high levels of compliance on all indicators.

- ▶ Submitted an Annual Performance Report (APR) and State Performance Report (SPP) that evaluates Alabama's efforts in implementing the requirements and purposes of early intervention and describes how Alabama will improve such implementation. ADRS, as the lead agency for Alabama's Early Intervention System, must report annually to the public on the performance of each local EI program based on the targets found in the SPP. These individual program profiles may be found on the ADRS website.
- ▶ Continued to collaborate, coordinate, and communicate with other early childhood partners, including the Alabama Department of Mental Health, Head Start, the Alabama Department of Education, the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs, ADRS' Children's Rehabilitation Service division, the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the Alabama Partnership for Children, and the Alabama Respite Coalition. Ongoing joint trainings were provided to staff throughout the year, resulting in improvements in the referral process, strengthening service delivery, and enhancing supports to children and families.

Early Intervention Office Locations





together,
success

*at*HOME
*at*SCHOOL
*at*WORK



children's
REHABILITATION
service

children's rehabilitation

Fourteen community-based offices provide services tailored to each individual family.



For parents of children and teens with special health care needs, Children's Rehabilitation Service can be a valuable lifeline.

Caring doctors, nurses, therapists, and other specialists serve as an extended family, providing the support, information, and disability expertise that each child needs to succeed at home, in the classroom, and in the community.

Throughout the state, 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 provide a team approach, bringing together health care specialists from many fields to provide services specially tailored to each individual family.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- ▶ Information and referral: links families to community resources and services
- ▶ Care coordination: assists the child and family in identifying, accessing and utilizing community resources to effectively meet their individual needs
- ▶ Clinical evaluation: identifies the unique needs of a child with feeding problems,

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: provides a network of family support
- ▶ Youth Connection: facilitates youth involvement with policy development and decision-making.

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

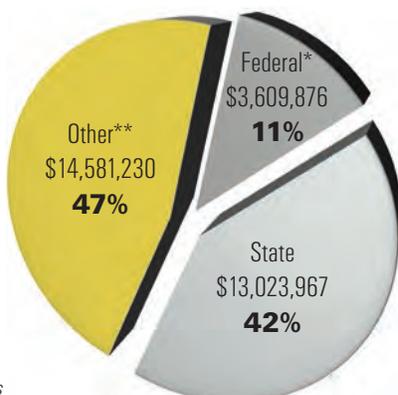
Treatment options vary, ranging from clinical interventions and medication to specialized equipment and therapy services to care coordination and referral to community resources as needed.

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

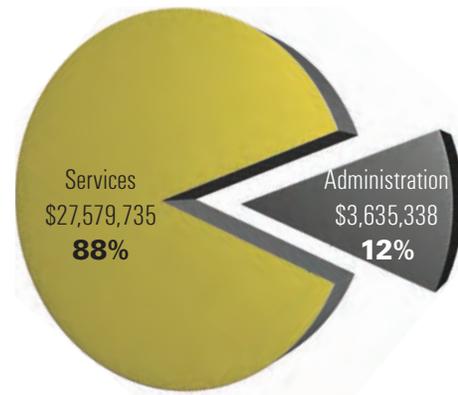
byTHEnumbers

More than \$31.2 million in services for Alabama's children and youth

Source of Revenue



Use of Revenue



*Federal grants

**Medicaid, insurance reimbursements



program highlights

Children's Rehabilitation Service



The Davis family receives services from the Mobile CRS office

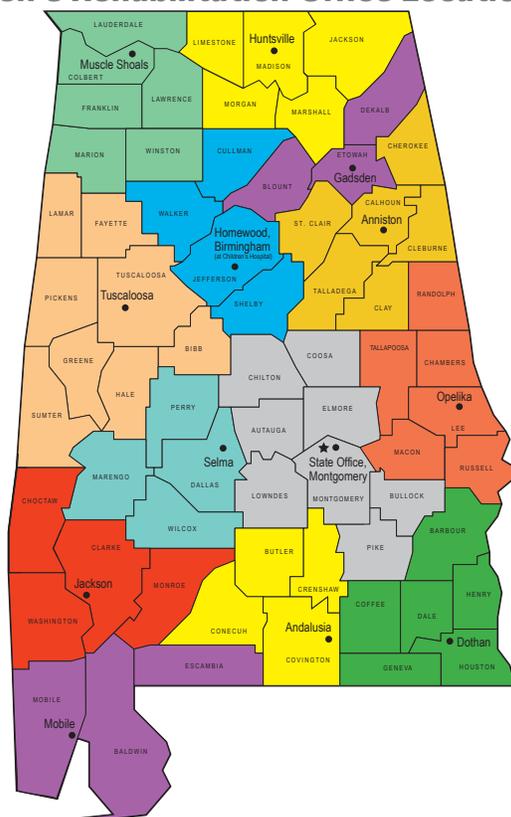
CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION SERVICE:

- ▶ Served 10,669 children and youth with special health care needs, including 538 with no insurance, through the CRS clinical programs.
- ▶ Provided 2,505 information and referral services.
- ▶ Provided more than \$195 thousand in donated goods and services to enrolled clients, including wheelchairs/ramps, food assistance, nutritional supplies, and medication assistance.
- ▶ Purchased iPads with communication software to be used for evaluations in six Augmentative Communication Technology (ACT) clinics.
- ▶ Presented at the Alabama Newborn Hearing Conference and the National Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference.
- ▶ Worked with Mississippi State University to develop and implement a new Client Satisfaction Survey. The survey was conducted by phone and there was a short clinic survey which focused on the family's experience.
- ▶ Received Year II funding from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau for the State Implementation Grant for Systems of Services for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (D70). Funding from this grant will be used to improve the system of care for all children and youth with special health care needs in Alabama.
- ▶ As part of the D70 project, added a youth consultant to assist with some of the activities of the project.

CRS-HEMOPHILIA PROGRAM:

- ▶ Served 314 people with bleeding disorders.
- ▶ Served 28 uninsured participants.
- ▶ Provided 12 pediatric Hemophilia Treatment Clinics in Birmingham.
- ▶ Provided 12 adult Hemophilia Treatment Clinics in Birmingham.
- ▶ Provided six Hemophilia Treatment Clinics in Mobile.
- ▶ Provided two satellite pediatric Hemophilia Treatment Clinics in Montgomery.
- ▶ Provided 977,000 units of clotting factor at a cost of approximately \$800,000.

Children's Rehabilitation Office Locations





together,
success

*at*HOME
*at*SCHOOL
*at*WORK



vocational REHABILITATION *service*

S E R V I N G T E E N S & A D U L T S

vocational *rehabilitation*

With individually tailored services offered through 21 offices statewide, VRS matches people to jobs.



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 remain employed, VRS can help.

With individually tailored services offered through 21 offices statewide,

VRS matches people to jobs. In fiscal year 2012, VRS provided services to 31,383 Alabamians and assisted 4,577 people with disabilities in achieving their dream of employment.

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.

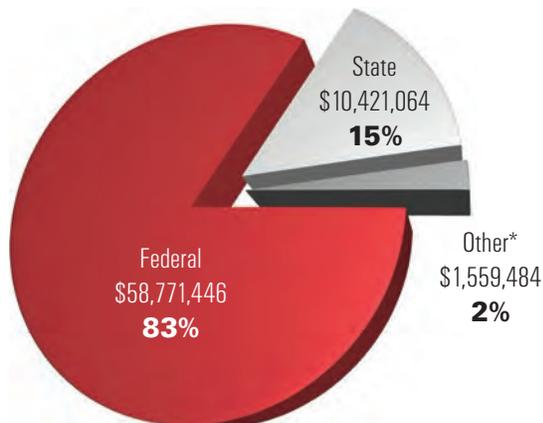
VRS also works closely with Alabama employers, marketing its trained, job-ready consumers and a wide range of consultant services to Alabama's business community.

For the thousands of Alabamians with disabilities who receive services, though, VRS is more than a monetary return. For them, employment means pride, dignity and independence.

byTHEnumbers

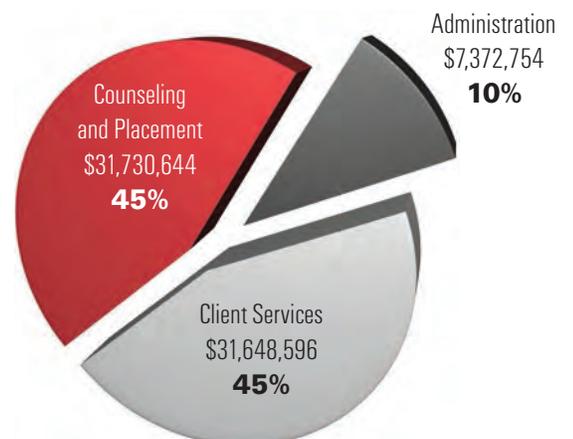
More than \$70.7 million to provide direct services to teens and adults

Source of Revenue



*Social Security reimbursements

Use of Revenue



program highlights

Vocational Rehabilitation Service



- ▶ Provided rehabilitation, education, and employment related services to 27,173 Alabamians.
- ▶ Assisted 3,915 Alabamians with disabilities in becoming successfully employed.
- ▶ Successfully rehabilitated into employment 209 consumers who received Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Income.
- ▶ Held the 2012 Youth Leadership Forum on the campus of Troy University. Twenty-eight high school juniors and seniors attended, participating in seminars on leadership, self-advocacy, career planning, independent living, assistive technology, and developing a Personal Leadership Plan. The five-day event is sponsored by ADRS, the Alabama Department of Education, the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and Troy University.
- ▶ Partnered with Auburn University to conduct a transition training conference, providing ADRS transition staff with updated information on providing quality services to students transitioning from school to work or college.
- ▶ Conducted the "2012 Ability Counts" Poster Journalism Awards competition. This event invites junior high, senior high, and post-secondary students to write essays and design posters that emphasize the abilities of people with disabilities.
- ▶ In conjunction with the Blind/Deaf Services division, conducted a "Boot Camp for New Counselors." This training provided counselors with less than three years of experience an intensive training on policy, casework, and program information.
- ▶ Continued the Alabama Head Injury and

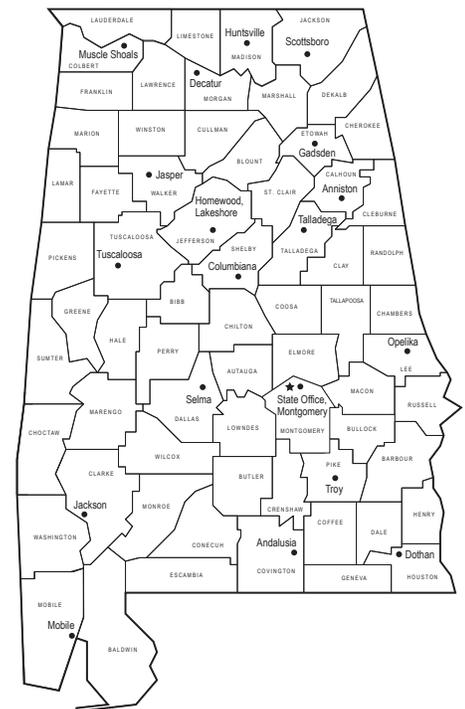
Spinal Cord Injury Registry for Survivors of Spinal Cord and Traumatic Brain Injury in Alabama in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, and the UAB Center for Injury Sciences.

- ▶ Partnered with the Alabama Department of Human Resources to continue the Independence Through Employment grant, serving 2,462 consumers and helping remove 1,669 consumers from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) roles.
- ▶ Conducted statewide training for VR staff on practices related to serving consumers who receive SSDI or SSI payments.
- ▶ Was cited by the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) for a very high success rate in the rehabilitation of consumers receiving SSDI or SSI payments.
- ▶ Began full utilization and use of the ADRS Business Intelligence system, a tool for effective management for supervisors and counselors.

VRS-BUSINESS RELATIONS PROGRAM:

- ▶ Provided 5,233 services to 1,391 Alabama businesses at no cost to the business. Recruitment assistance and disability management, training, and employee retention services top the list, with a special emphasis on federal contractor businesses.
- ▶ Worked with 1,522 VR consumers seeking employment, delivering 8,462 services such as job search assistance, referral to employers, job development, career counseling and guidance, and job readiness classes.
- ▶ Total number of consumers employed or retained as a result of these services: **623**
- ▶ Total number of business relations consultants who provided these services: **12**

Vocational Rehabilitation Office Locations



Ricky Walker shows the adaptive driving modifications VR made to his van to his counselor, Susan Higgins.

VRS Blind & Deaf Services



Deaf Support Specialist Beth Moss performs a mock interview with an Alabama School for the Deaf student

The VRS Blind and Deaf Program provides assistance to Alabamians statewide through its Blind Services, Deaf Services, and OASIS (Older Alabamians System of Information and Services) programs. Services are delivered through a team of specialized professionals, partnerships with consumer organizations, and other state and private organizations that serve people who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind.

- ▶ VRS rehabilitation counselors for the Blind and Deaf served more than 3,353 individuals with significant vision or hearing disabilities through individual employment programs. These services assisted 662 individuals with significant visual and hearing impairments in entering the workplace.
- ▶ Continued a seven-year trend of increasing entry-level wages of blind and deaf consumers entering the workforce to an average wage of \$12.66 per hour.
- ▶ Through the rehabilitation teachers for the blind program, provided services to 1,527 individuals to allow them to function independently in order for them to pursue employment and other personal goals.
- ▶ Through the orientation and mobility program, provided services to 325 blind adults on how to travel independently using a white cane.
- ▶ Through OASIS, provided instruction and services to 1,080 senior citizens with age-related blindness to assist them in maintaining or gaining independent living skills to allow them to remain independent in their homes.
 - Of the 1,080 individuals served, 937 received assistive technology services and training; 816 received daily living skills training; 529 received information and referral for other community resources; and 509 participated in peer, individual, or group counseling/support activities.
 - Purchased 28 closed circuit television magnification devices for low-vision consumers.
 - Hosted a reunion of the first consumer group to participate in the Camp SAVI

(Seniors Adapting to Visual Impairment) project.

- Through the rehabilitation teaching program, offered technical assistance and support to the 25 OASIS-affiliated consumer support groups in the state.
- Introduced more 7,000 Alabamians to the availability of OASIS services through short-term community awareness events and activities.
- ▶ Through the rehabilitation audiology program, served 314 consumers, with 147 fit with hearing aids and 581 receiving consultation/follow-up.
- ▶ Provided approximately 9,900 hours of interpreter services to 2,107 consumers. (These hours do not include hours of interpreter services provided by vendor interpreters paid for by ADRS.)
- ▶ Conducted a consumer satisfaction survey with successfully closed cases in deaf and hard-of-hearing caseloads.
- ▶ Held stakeholder meetings statewide to develop another three-year Strategic Plan for Blind Services. Two hundred and eight stakeholders participated in this process in five regional planning meetings.
- ▶ Met quarterly with our Deaf Advisory Council, which is made up of deaf and hard-of-hearing citizens from around the state.
- ▶ Developed collaborative agreements and strategic partnerships with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB), Troy University, Mississippi State University, and the Alabama Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to improve and expand services throughout the state.
- ▶ Partnered with AIDB to sponsor three transition events to assist students who are blind or visually impaired and their parents in becoming familiar with resources that would facilitate each student's transitioning from high school to postsecondary education or training and then to employment.

- ▶ Collaborated with AIDB and the alumni of the Alabama School for the Blind to present the Technology Symposium, which provided individuals who are blind, low vision, or deaf-blind and professionals who work in the field of blindness or deaf-blindness the opportunity to receive training and hands-on exposure to current technology.
- ▶ Participated in an advisory capacity in the Troy University Interpreter Training Program, and the Mental Health Advisory Board.
- ▶ Partnered with the National Weather Services (NWS) of Huntsville to provide the state's first-ever Weather Spotter Training specifically for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Each attendee received a NOAA weather radio with an external strobe light attachment.
- ▶ Collaborated with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) to provide interpreters for Gov. Robert Bentley's press conferences concerning Hurricane Isaac.
- ▶ Partnered with FEMA and AEMA to provide training Disaster Preparedness for the Alabama Association for the Deaf.
- ▶ Provided an interpreter and a deaf support specialist for the videotaping of driver license exams for the state of New Jersey.
- ▶ Supported leadership development activities for blind and deaf high school and college students. These activities included college prep programs, leadership training, participation in mentoring activities, and sponsorship of students to attend state conferences of deaf and blind consumer organizations.
- ▶ Sponsored transition events for high school students around the state who are blind and those who are deaf.
- ▶ Expanded summer work experiences for 48 blind, deaf, and deaf-blind multi-disabled students.
- ▶ Sponsored a leadership training for individuals who are blind or have low vision at the 2012 state ACB Conference and Convention. Forty-seven people participated in this initiative.



program highlights

VRS Assistive Technology Services



Throughout the state, thousands of Alabamians with disabilities are able to become more independent every year through Assistive Technology Services.

The statewide rehabilitation technology specialist team is comprised of individuals with backgrounds in engineering and industrial design who partner with other assistive technology professionals – including computer specialists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, and physical therapists – to provide high-quality services to Alabama’s children and adults with disabilities.

Rehabilitation technology specialists (RTS’s) systematically apply engineering methodology and scientific principles to evaluate and provide technological solutions to children and adults in areas such as mobility, communications, vision, hearing, and cognition in activities associated with employment, education, independent living, and community integration.

RTS’s evaluate the functional abilities of people with disabilities, the tasks they perform, and the environments they live and work in to recommend off-the-shelf, modified, or customized technology solutions to increase their independence.

IN FY 2012, THIS PROGRAM:

- ▶ Provided 310 assistive device services to ADRS consumers.
- ▶ Provided 74 engineering design services.
- ▶ Provided AT training or demonstrations to 36 individuals.
- ▶ Provided follow-up or coordination of services to 271 consumers.
- ▶ Provided one or more services to 347 VRS consumers, 61 CRS consumers, and 21 consumers of other ADRS programs.
- ▶ Provided services to 180 Children’s Rehabilitation Service consumers through Augmentative Communication Technology (ACT) clinics.

Rehabilitation Technology Specialist Jeffrey Mega demonstrates various assistive technology devices at 2012 YLF

**Alabama's
Business Enterprise
Program (BEP)**



BEP vendor Robert Kelly operates the Riverfront Inn on Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama's largest federal dining facility.

Business Enterprise Program vendors operate some 109 facilities throughout the state.

Thanks to the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1936, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama BEP for the Blind continues its 66-year tradition of excellence and success.

Alabama's BEP boasts the second-highest number of blind vendors per capita of any state and provides employment for some 108 blind vendors and licensees in snack bars, cafeterias, vending machine facilities, vending routes, and a gift shop. The program also has five federal dining hall operations statewide. Vending machine operations continue to account for the lion's share of these facilities with Alabama's vendors operating approximately 67 vending machine routes – more than any program in the country.

Alabama's blind vendors also employ 293 other Alabamians –

including persons with disabilities – to assist in their small business operations.

Most notably over the past year, the Alabama BEP entered into a partnership agreement with the Alabama Department of Corrections whereby 10 work release facilities will be actively managed by blind vendors. The agreement preserves valuable, long-term jobs for vendors and guarantees above-average earnings.

The BEP formula for success is based on aggressive site recruiting by 12 area representatives, comprehensive managerial and technical support, a close relationship with our training partners at the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, the consistent can-do attitude of our vendors, and the spirit of cooperation of the Elected Committee of Blind Vendors.

Despite a challenging economic environment in FY 2011, the Alabama BEP achieved \$29,291,714 in gross sales while maintaining an average income of \$33,798 per vendor.

\$33,798

Average income of an Alabama BEP vendor



program
highlights

**Community
Rehabilitation
Programs**



ADRS operates Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility, which is located in Birmingham

Located throughout Alabama, the community rehabilitation program (CRP) network of private, nonprofit organizations has been providing services to ADRS consumers for more than 70 years. In 2012, the ADRS network of 23 CRPs served 4,697 ADRS consumers. Of those, 2,623 entered the STEPS to Employment program, and 1,331 of these consumers were closed as rehabilitated into jobs. The average wage for these jobs was \$8.59. Consumer satisfaction surveys continued to show positive responses to services provided by the CRP network, including evaluation, vocational training, job readiness, job search activities, and job placement. Again in 2012, funding was made available for all CRPs to offer a

special Summer Employment Program, and nine facilities participated in this effort. Participating CRPs developed comprehensive, job-oriented curriculums and work activities for both transition and general caseload consumers. ADRS requires that our CRPs be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the accreditation standard for community-based providers in the field of rehabilitation. This year, several of our CRP partners went through the intensive three-day review. The highest award is an accreditation for a three-year period, and each of these facilities attained this status.

program
highlights

**ADRS-Lakeshore
Rehabilitation
Facility**



The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services operates Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility located in Birmingham. This facility serves individuals with disabilities statewide through such programs as Vocational Evaluation, Career Exploration, College Preparation, Assistive Technology, and Adaptive Driving. Several of these programs have been recognized as "Best Practice" at the local and national level.



Adaptive Driving, a program operated by ADRS-Lakeshore, enables individuals with limited mobility throughout the state to drive by providing vehicle modifications and lessons to use them.

DURING FY 2012, ADRS-LAKESHORE:

- ▶ Continued to update its inventory of training vehicles for the Adaptive Driving Training Program, the only program of its type in Alabama. In addition, continued to monitor staffing of this statewide program to ensure timely services.
- ▶ Continued to develop group-based services based on the career needs of our consumers. CONNECTIONS, CREST, and now CONNECTED are offered throughout the year to assist young adults in developing appropriate social skills/soft skills for the work place.

- ▶ Continued to develop blind/low vision services with the addition of a dedicated blind/low-vision evaluator to cover the state. These services are specifically designed to identify post-secondary and employment strengths and challenges in this population.
- ▶ Evolved College Preparation programs into one- to two-day sessions in high schools all throughout the state, as well as the five-day program offered during the summer.

For a complete list of our community rehabilitation partners, go to page 46

Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities



Gov. Robert Bentley spoke at the AGCEPD Awards ceremony in December.

The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (AGCEPD) ADRS educates the public about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and promotes greater independence for people with disabilities.

AGCEPD ACHIEVES THESE GOALS BY:

- ▶ providing information and resources on:
 - accessibility in employment, housing, or transportation
 - the Americans with Disabilities Act
 - rehabilitation services
 - other resource linkages
 - affiliation with national disability organizations
- ▶ overseeing a statewide network of local governor's committees
- ▶ coordinating events for National Disability Employment Awareness Month
 - ▶ partnering with Alabama Business Leadership Employment Network (ABLE)
 - ▶ working in tandem with the Alabama Association of Local Governor's Committees on Employment of People with Disabilities
 - ▶ guiding local committees through the annual Disability Mentoring Day

National Disability Employment Awareness Month, established by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and

Rehabilitation Services, remained the major focus of AGCEPD.

"Profit by Investing in Workers with Disabilities" was the national theme for the 14 local events hosted by the many AGCEPD chapters around the state. Some 114 certificates of recognition from the governor were presented to businesses, individuals with disabilities, professionals, media, transition youth, and educators. Statewide award winners were honored at a December 2011 event at the Capitol with Gov. Robert Bentley congratulating the award recipients.

Throughout the year, *Disability Mentoring Days*, coordinated by

Vocational Rehabilitation Service business relations consultants and counselors, offered VR consumers opportunities to become acquainted with the world of work by mentoring under private sector business leaders.

AGCEPD continued its collaborative activities with the ABLE Network, with on-going emphasis on support through improved web communication and recruitment or job posting, a conference for business, and participation at the U.S. Business Leadership Network national gathering.

Traumatic Brain Injury System of Care

ADRS is the state's lead agency in traumatic brain injury (TBI) and a source of education and resources for survivors, professionals and organizations. Services funded by ADRS and the Impaired Drivers Trust Fund (IDTF) assisted more than 3,200 Alabamians with TBI during FY 2012. Services included community re-integration, housing, respite care, independent living, resource coordination, attendant care, medical supplies, assistive equipment, cognitive, recreation, and employment.

ADRS collaborates with the Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF), the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), and other partners to improve the current system.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- ▶ Alabama's Sports Concussion Law amended to clarify that that all schools were covered by legislation and that athletes suspected of concussion could not return to play or practice the same day, and must be released by a licensed physician. The law is intended to prevent, identify and treat concussions with return to play provisions.
- ▶ Gov. Robert Bentley proclaimed March as Brain Injury Awareness Month.
- ▶ Continued partnership with UAB's TBI Model System, one of 16 programs funded by the National Institute of Disability Rehabilitation and Research improving care and outcomes for individuals with TBI.

Funded by the Rehabilitation Service Administration, STAR is Alabama's Assistive Technology Act program. Through its Reutilization, Training, and Alternative Finance programs and public awareness activities, STAR assists Alabamians with disabilities by improving access to and acquisition of assistive technology that enables them to live more productive and independent lives.



REUTILIZATION PROGRAMS

In FY 2012, STAR, through its partnerships with the six reutilization programs statewide (the 3-R Project in Anniston, Enabling Resources in Mobile, the Waste Not Program in Huntsville, the CARE Project in Montgomery, the ReMEDy Project in Birmingham, and the REAL Project in Dothan):

- ▶ Saved Alabamians with disabilities \$1,826,942 by refurbishing assistive technology for reuse.
- ▶ Received 3,982 requests for assistive technology items.
- ▶ Received 2,555 donated items from communities.
- ▶ Reused 2,447 assistive technology items.
- ▶ Responded to 151 ADRS consumer requests.

- ▶ Saved ADRS \$127,489 by providing needed assistive technology to ADRS consumers.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Through its partnership with T.A.S.C. (Technology Assistance for Special Consumers) of UCP Huntsville, STAR offers assistive technology training modules for Alabamians with disabilities, family members, caregivers, schools, support groups, businesses, and other organizations providing services to people with disabilities.

Training is provided on site, off-site and online through www.startraining.org. A summary of training activities for FY 2012 includes:

- ▶ 18,123 trainings
- ▶ 18,963 individuals directly impacted

- ▶ 21,541 visits to website

ALTERNATIVE FINANCE PROGRAM (AFP)

Alabama's Ability Loan Program, a partnership that includes ADRS, STAR, Southern Disability Foundation Inc., and AuburnBank, provides individuals with disabilities access to affordable low-interest/extended-term loans to purchase assistive technology equipment and/or other related services. The AFP program offers loans at a 4 percent and 6 percent interest rate.

For FY 2012, the program provided nine loans with a dollar value of \$199,986.11. The top three requested items were adaptive vehicles, mobility equipment, and hearing aids.



Project SEARCH, a one-year transition program, was introduced to Alabama in 2012

Supported Employment assists ADRS consumers with the most-significant disabilities who need ongoing supports to obtain and retain competitive, integrated employment.

- ▶ Maintained agreements with 34 supported employment providers. These providers conduct situational assessments in the community or utilize the discovery process for customized employment or job carving to best assess the consumers' skills to determine good job matches. Job

Supported Employment Programs

development, on-site job coaching, and support services ensure job stability. Long-term supports are provided for the duration of the employment to ensure stability and maintain a positive relationship with employers.

- ▶ Had 637 clients complete situational assessments or use the discovery process. Upon completion of these assessments, many of these were referred to the providers for job development and placement services. Of those referred, 329 obtained competitive employment in the community. Additionally, 266 were closed successfully employed. More than 860 are currently being followed in long-term support.
- ▶ Introduced Project SEARCH to Alabama. Founded in 1996 at Children's Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, Project SEARCH is a one-year transition program for exiting seniors with the most-significant disabilities. These students complete three seven- to eight-week internships at the host site, to learn non-traditional, transferable skills to enhance employment opportunities. At the beginning of the 2012-2013 school

year, 23 students were enrolled in two host businesses, with Montgomery Public School interns working at Baptist South in Montgomery and Shelby County Interns working at Shelby Baptist Medical Center in Alabaster. Project SEARCH is a collaborative transition program supported by Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Council for Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Mental Health, the State Department of Education, Montgomery Public Schools, Shelby County Schools, The Arc of Shelby County, United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Birmingham, Baptist South Hospital in Montgomery, and Shelby Baptist Medical Center. Additional SEARCH sites will be added as the program expands.

- ▶ Continued to collaborate with the Department of Mental Health to improve services to those with mental illness in order to secure integrated, competitive employment. Also, began exploring options in this area, including Dartmouth University's Individual Placement and Support initiative.

program highlights

VRS Transition Service



2012 YLF delegates from group 5 on the third day of the forum



Jordan Borel, YLF delegate, speaks to a mentor at the Angeline Pinckard Mentor Lunch at the RSA Activity Center

ADRS Transition from School to Work Services helps to ensure that Alabama's students with disabilities leave school as independent, productive, and contributing members of their communities.

As in past years, transition students comprised approximately one-third of all individuals served and placed into employment by ADRS counselors, with 11,567 transition students receiving services and 1,573 successfully employed.

In FY 2012, ADRS continued efforts to develop and improve transition partnerships, programs, and service models to meet the needs of students with more-significant disabilities and overcome barriers to employment and community living.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY 2012 INCLUDE:

- ▶ Continued College Prep Program services offered at five sites around the state, with more than 200 students participating.
- ▶ Continued collaboration with the Special Education Division of the Alabama Department of Education and the Department of Corrections to implement the Prison Transition Initiative for youth with disabilities incarcerated in adult prisons.
- ▶ Continued collaboration with Children's Rehabilitation Service to provide Teen Transition Clinics in Homewood, Mobile, Huntsville, and Montgomery.
- ▶ Continued collaboration with Children's Rehabilitation Service to provide the Transition Liaison Council.
- ▶ Increased collaboration in the State Interagency Transition Team to encourage local areas to establish Community Transition Teams to address transition issues for youth with disabilities.
- ▶ Continued collaboration with the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, the State Department of Education, the Department of Mental Health, Troy University, the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Governor's Office for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to provide the Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum. In FY 2012, 28 exemplary youth with disabilities from throughout Alabama participated in this one-week program designed to enhance leadership skills. Twenty alumni of previous forums returned to work as staff.
- ▶ Established a statewide Transition Workgroup to develop a strategic plan for strengthening and improving transition services.
- ▶ Supported many local transition events, such as career fairs, transition expos, mentoring days, and summer employment readiness programs.

Business Relations Program



Forklift driver Shae Scarbrough (center) visits with Deaf Support Specialist Beth Moss (right) and the staff interpreter (left) during ADRS's visit of the OfficeMax distribution center.



The ADRS business relations program, READI-Net (Resources for Employment And Disability Information Network), provides no-cost recruitment and disability-related services to Alabama's businesses while also providing customized links to employment for VR consumers.

READI-Net remains the premier outreach program that serves Alabama businesses on disability issues in the workplace. Partnering with 1,391 businesses in FY 2012, READI-Net provided 5,233 service, assisting with recruitment, hiring, accommodations in the workplace, and training of supervisors on disability issues.

READI-Net prioritized its business outreach focusing on employers within the Federal contractor sector. This addressed the proposed mandates from the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP) programs dictating more stringent guidelines for recruitment, hiring, accommodation and retention of workers with disabilities. With more than 35 percent of businesses, nationally, being federal contractors, READI-Net has strategically positioned itself to respond to their needs and develop new partnerships or sustain existing ones. This has been done while maintaining the hundreds of partnerships with other Alabama businesses who are not federal contractors, and have generated more than 1,800 job leads.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY 2012 INCLUDE:

- ▶ Partnered with ADRS-supported ABLE Network, the OFCCP, the Alabama Industry Liaison Group, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to host a statewide federal contractor conference.
- ▶ READI-Net developed impressive partnerships with two federal contractor partners, OfficeMax and Hewlett-Packard.
- ▶ Since May 2012, the OfficeMax distribution center in McCalla has hired more than 20 individuals with disabilities, including deafness, cognitive challenges, low vision, orthopedic issues, and other health-related impairments, some of whom are veterans. In addition, they have trained all of their supervisors and management on disability-specific issues and are preparing to enter Phase II of their partnership: distribution center on-site, pre-hire training in a specially designed training area for workers with additional challenges due to disabilities. A driving factor for this partnership is low turnover rate with these hires.
- ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation and VR Blind/Deaf have worked in concert with READI-Net to nurture a new partnership with Hewlett-Packard through Winston-

Salem Industries for the Blind, both federal contractors. Eight individuals who are blind successfully started full-time employment as federal help desk representatives in their local call center. This effort is on-going and is the result of strong collaboration. Assistive technology played a significant role in achieving the most desired results allowing the employees to use their knowledge of magnification software, such as Zoomtext. Winston-Salem's technology team has also identified alternative assistive technology, which will allow for the future use of speech recognition software utilization such as JAWS.



Assistant Commissioner Rita Houston VRS-Blind/Deaf Services (left), eagerly greets Johnny Jackson during the visit.



together,
success

*at*HOME
*at*SCHOOL
*at*WORK



STATE *of* ALABAMA

independent LIVING/ *homebound*

S E R V I N G P E R S O N S W I T H
S I G N I F I C A N T D I S A B I L I T I E S



sail/ homebound

SAIL assists individuals with severe disabilities in regaining independence.



Independence, self-sufficiency. No two words better summarize the goal of the State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL).

With seven community-based offices located throughout Alabama to serve residents in every county, SAIL assists individuals with severe 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 independent living specialists provides consumers and their families with individualized services and training about the unique problems 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.

SAIL is comprised of five specialized programs:

HOMEBOUND:

Homebound Services provides a wide range of education and home-based services to assist people with severe 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.

SAIL WAIVER:

Through a special SAIL Medicaid Waiver, the 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 60,
- ▶ have a neurological disability as a result of reasons other than aging.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES:

IL Services 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,

- ▶ provide evidence that by receiving an IL service, his or her potential to achieve independence will improve.

TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED WAIVER (TAW):

SAIL provides targeted case management for the Technology Assisted Waiver for Adults (TAW), serving those eligible who are 21 years of age, ventilator dependent or who have a tracheostomy and require private duty nursing services to remain in the home. SAIL TAW case managers perform assessments and initiate, monitor, and coordinate waiver services to participants in the program.

ALABAMA COMMUNITY TRANSITION WAIVER (ACT):

This waiver provides services to persons with disabilities currently residing in institutions to assist them in safely transitioning into the community.* To be eligible for services through this waiver, an individual must:

- ▶ meet the nursing home level of care criteria,
- ▶ meet the Alabama Medicaid Agency financial eligibility,
- ▶ be in the nursing home at least 90 days

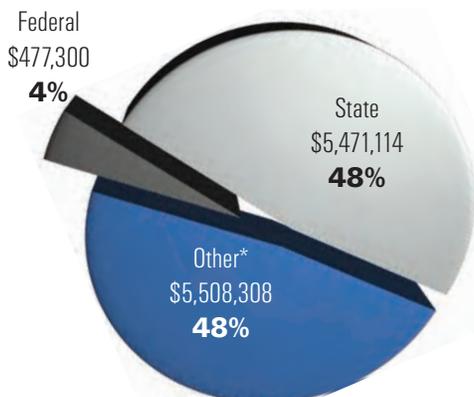
In addition, nursing home transition must occur within 180 days of initializing.

**The cost to provide services in the community cannot exceed Medicaid's cost for institutionalization per individual.*

byTHEnumbers

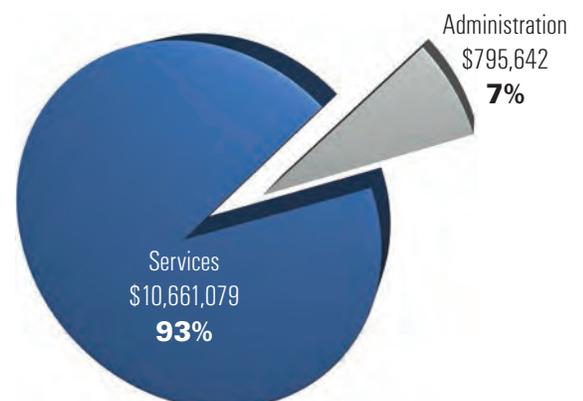
More than \$11.4 million to serve Alabamians with the most-significant disabilities

Source of Revenue



*Medicaid reimbursements

Use of Revenue

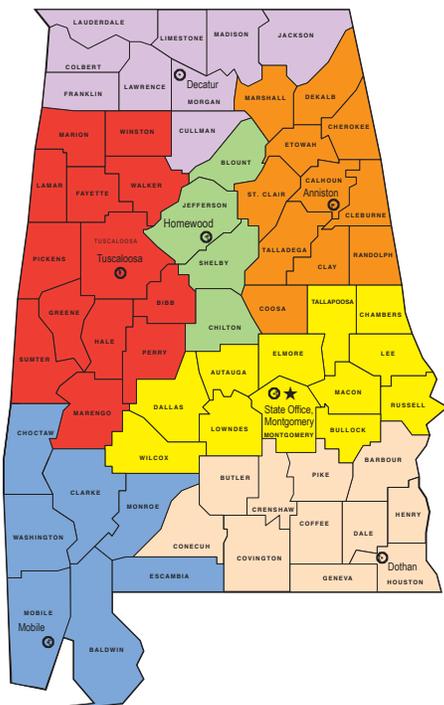


**State of Alabama
Independent Living/
Homebound**

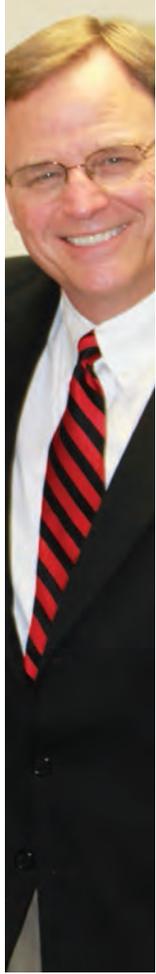


Jimmy Brooks takes target practice on a hunting trip.

**Independent Living/
Homebound
Office Locations**



- ▶ Assisted 1,441 Alabamians with the most-significant disabilities in remaining in their homes and communities rather than living in nursing homes or other institutions. This included 435 in the Homebound Program, 482 in the Independent Living Service, 508 in the SAIL Waiver Program, 18 in the Technology Assisted Waiver, and six in the ACT Waiver program. An additional 209 were served through the independent living specialists by receiving information and referral services.
- ▶ Collaborated with Alabama Medicaid for the creation of the Alabama Community Transition (ACT) Waiver designed to assist some persons currently residing in nursing homes in moving back into the community.
- ▶ Provided services to consumers and families in all 67 counties through seven SAIL teams located statewide.
- ▶ Continued involvement with the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) and the State Independent Living Council (SILC)
- ▶ Continued to work with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Alabama Department of Senior Services, and the Alabama Medicaid Agency to develop a seamless system of audits for direct service providers enrolled in the provision of waiver services.
- ▶ Continued to develop resources to supplement limited funding with donated goods and services, with independent living specialists securing donations of \$474,621.50.
- ▶ Began involvement with the Permanent Joint Legislative Committee on Medicaid Policy spearheaded by Gov. Robert Bentley and led by Rep. Greg Wren (R-Montgomery).
- ▶ Used the ADRS Recycling Centers, donated goods and services, in-kind services, and community resources to serve consumers throughout the state.
- ▶ Ended SAIL involvement with the Ticket to Work/Medicaid Infrastructure Grant that legislatively ended in December 2012. SAIL's involvement with the grant began in 2001.
- ▶ Continued participation in the Long-Term Choices task forces started by the Alabama Medicaid Agency in the spring of 2006 to address options for long-term care for Alabama's elderly and people with disabilities.
- ▶ Continued involvement in the VR/SAIL project in Homewood and Tuscaloosa, where SAIL case managers also serve people with the most-significant disabilities in a vocational rehabilitation caseload.



together,
success

*at*HOME
*at*SCHOOL
*at*WORK

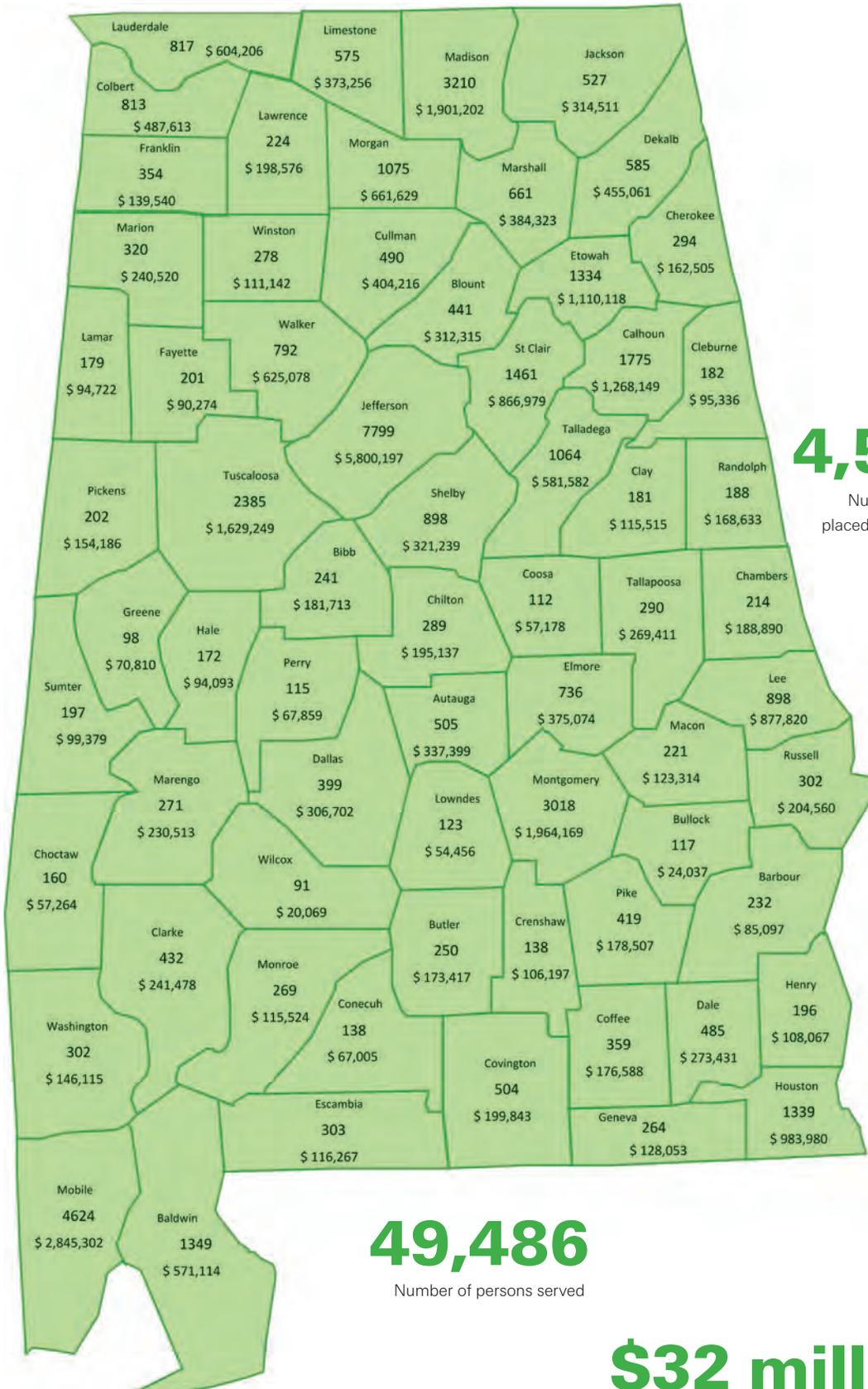


alabama DEPARTMENT *of* REHABILITATION SERVICES

S E R V I N G A L A B A M I A N S I N A L L 6 7 C O U N T I E S

adrs

PEOPLE SERVED, PURCHASED SERVICES



4,577

Number of people placed in employment

49,486

Number of persons served

\$32 million

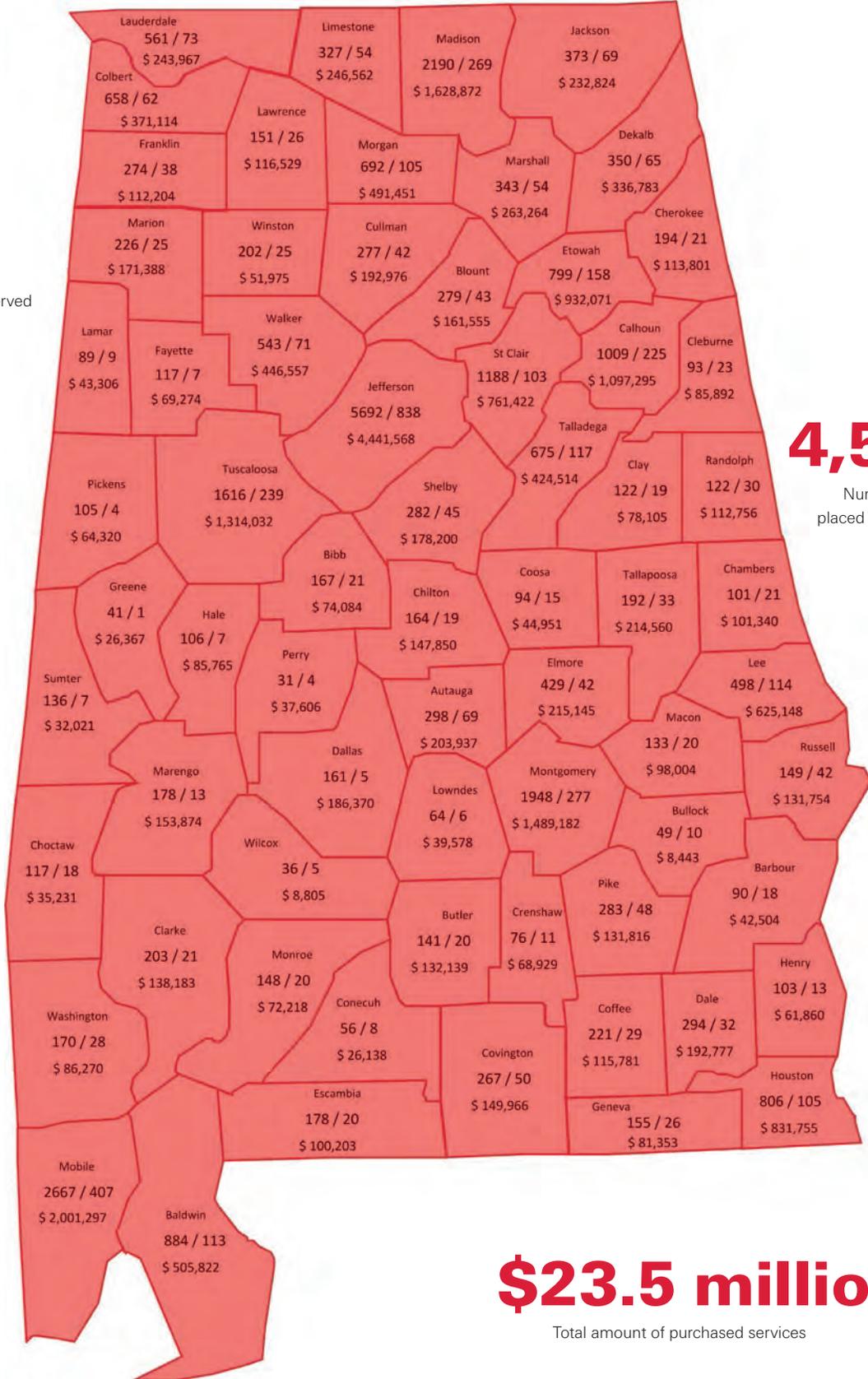
Total amount of purchased services

Note: Number served totals may include individuals who received services from multiple divisions



31,383

Number of teens & adults served



4,577

Number of people placed in employment

\$23.5 million

Total amount of purchased services

**Alabama's Early
Intervention System
program locations**



Vivian B. Adams Early Intervention is one of more than 50 programs that are a part of Alabama's Early Intervention System.

In FY 2012, these Early Intervention programs provided supports and services to eligible families in the counties surrounding the city listed.

ANNISTON

East Central Alabama UCP Center Inc.

ANDALUSIA

UCP Mobile Families First

AUBURN/OPELIKA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind,
regional office

BIRMINGHAM

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind,
regional office

ARC of Jefferson County Inc.

Central Alabama Therapy Services, LLC

Children R Us

Children's of Alabama Early Intervention
Program

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Hand in Hand)

BREWTON

UCP Mobile Family Ties

CULLMAN

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

DECATUR

Early Childhood Services of Centers 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

UCP 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

Madison County Mental Retardation Board

UCP of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley

JASPER

ARC of Walker County

MCINTOSH

UCP of Mobile New Journey

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,
regional office

Children's Center of Montgomery Inc. (PPEI)

Project Wiggles and Giggles

UCP of Greater Mobile (Horizon)

MUSCLE SHOALS

Shoals Committee on Programs and
Employment for Mental Retardation 310

Authority (SCOPE)

ONEONTA

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Blount County)

OZARK

Vivian B. Adams Early Intervention

PELHAM

Shelby County ARC/Kids First

PELL CITY

UCP of Greater Birmingham (St. Clair County)

PRATTVILLE

ARC of Autauga/Western Elmore County
(EIEIO)

RAINSVILLE

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Hand in Hand)

ROBERTSDALE

The MR/DD Board of Baldwin County/
Project Sunrise

SCOTTSBORO

Marshall/Jackson Mental Retardation
Authority

Twin Acres Early Intervention

SELMA

Cahaba Center Early Intervention

SYLACAUGA

Cheaha Mental Health/Burton Center Early
Intervention

TALLADEGA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind,
regional office

TROY

UCP of Mobile Bright Beginnings

TUSCALOOSA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind,
regional office

Community Service Programs of West
Alabama Inc.

TUSCUMBIA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind,
regional office

UCP of Northwest Alabama

VALLEY

Chattahoochee Valley ARC/Valley Haven
Early Intervention

**Community
Rehabilitation
Programs**



The United Cerebral Palsy center in Birmingham is one of more than 25 Community Rehabilitation Programs to partner with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

ANNISTON

Opportunity Center-Easter Seals

AUBURN

Jackie Johnson Employment Services

BIRMINGHAM

ADRS-Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center
Easter Seals of the Birmingham Area
Goodwill Industries of Alabama
Triumph Services
United Cerebral Palsy
Vocational Resources Inc.
Workshops Inc.

DECATUR

Phoenix Rehabilitation Foundation

DOTHAN

Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center

GADSDEN

Darden Rehabilitation Foundation

HUNTSVILLE

EASE
Phoenix Rehabilitation Foundation

JACKSON

Clarke County ARC

MOBILE

Goodwill Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast
Mobile Association for the Blind
United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile

MONTGOMERY

Easter Seals Central Alabama
Goodwill Industries of Central Alabama

OPELIKA

Achievement Center-Easter Seals

PELHAM

Shelby County ARC

SELMA

West Central Alabama Easter Seals
Rehabilitation Center

TALLADEGA

E.H. Gentry Technical Facility

TUSCALOOSA

Easter Seals West Alabama





together,
SUCCESS

**FY 2012
Grant Information**

Because we value maximum acquisition and efficient and effective management of resources, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services continues to seek funding from state and federal sources to enable Alabama’s children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. The following are grant highlights from fiscal year 2012.

HEMOPHILIA PROGRAM - \$25,953

Awarded by Hemophilia of Georgia, funded through Region IV South Maternal and Child Health Bureau Bleeding Disorders Program (administered through Children’s Rehabilitation Service)

Purpose of grant: To provide access to comprehensive, culturally sensitive family-centered bleeding disorder treatment and services in the state of Alabama

FY 2012 Accomplishments

- ▶ Served 28 uninsured participants
- ▶ Provided 12 pediatric Hemophilia Treatment clinics in Birmingham brain injury or quadriplegia
- ▶ Provided 12 adult Hemophilia Treatment clinics in Birmingham
- ▶ Provided six Hemophilia Treatment clinics in Mobile
- ▶ Provided two satellite Hemophilia Treatment clinics in Montgomery
- ▶ Provided 977,000 units of clotting factor, at a cost of approximately \$800,000

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI) STATE IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERSHIP: STRENGTHENING THE SYSTEM OF CARE FOR ALABAMIANS WITH TBI \$250,000.00 (FOURTH OF 4-YEAR CYCLE)

Awarded to ADRS by Health Resources Services Administration

Purpose of grant:

Goal 1: To expand the Statewide System of Care for Children and Youth with TBI who are unidentified and unserved/underserved, with a focus on those in rural communities. Children and youth with moderate and severe TBI may be more readily identified and referred to Core TBI System through the registry, school systems, and hospitals. However, those with mild TBI may be unidentified and underserved, particularly in rural communities where there may be few, if any, professionals equipped with expertise and experience in identification and treatment of TBI. This goal will:

1. Ensure that children and youth with TBI are identified and have

access to the TBI System through awareness, outreach and education employing the philosophy to “teach the people who reach the people.”

2. Provide community partners and service providers with education to enable them to identify and serve children and youth appropriately.

Goal 2: To increase access to neurobehavioral health services for children, youth and adults with TBI. This goal is a continuation of activities initiated by the AHITF and Behavioral Committee and 2005 HRSA grant: to create access to neurobehavioral health service options for people with TBI. Needs and resources findings have indicated that there are no appropriate, accessible, and affordable neurobehavioral health services for people with TBI in Alabama. This goal will result in increased access to the amount, type, intensity, and levels of neurobehavioral health service options by:

- ▶ Educating and linking with existing service providers
- ▶ Implementing new programs for services currently not available

FY 2012 Accomplishments

- ▶ Developed a Youth Sports Concussion Training and Dissemination Plan and materials (signs/symptoms recommendations for return to play/think and the Alabama Sports Concussion Law) in partnership with the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Target audiences are school and community athletic associations, student athletes, parents, health professionals, and school and educational partners.
- ▶ Developed a virtual Outreach and Education Guide to be used by core TBI staff in providing training and education to meet the goals of the grant to ensure that children and youth with TBI are identified and have access to the TBI System through awareness, outreach, and education employing the philosophy to “teach the people who reach the people” and to provide community partners and service providers with education to enable them to identify and serve children and youth appropriately.
- ▶ Developed a White Paper addressing the neurobehavioral health service needs of children, youth, and adults with TBI, and options for funding sources.
- ▶ Overhauled the Alabama Spinal Cord and Head Injury Registry (ASCHIR) service linkage system referral database to ensure compliance with the Alabama Spinal Cord Injury and Head Injuries Act of 1998. Changes will result in more timely notification to the individual/family of availability of assistance from the state and services available.



Miracle Woods was added as CRS Youth Consultant with funding from Alabama's Integrated Community Systems of Services for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs to carry out functions of the grant.

**IN-SERVICE TRAINING GRANT
\$110,988 (SECOND OF 5-YEAR CYCLE)**

Awarded by U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration

Purpose of grant: To enhance the quality of the vocational rehabilitation services provided to individuals with disabilities by improving the competencies of the vocational rehabilitation personnel through enhanced training and educational opportunities.

FY 2012 Accomplishments

- ▶ Provided training and continuing education to vocational rehabilitation staff to meet training needs in the areas of supported employment, transition services, assistive technology, and specific disabilities. Also, supported agency efforts to provide access to web-based training.
- ▶ Held a four-week Leadership Training Institute as part of the agency's succession planning.
- ▶ Supported and helped develop a "basic training" conference for 50 new VR counselors and supervisors (dubbed "Boot Camp") which will become part of a new employee training initiative.
- ▶ Collaborated with the University of Alabama at Birmingham and other divisions within ADRS to provide a two-day Medical Aspects of Disability Conference.
- ▶ Increased the number of direct service VRS staff who met state and federal criteria of the CSPD by offering financial incentives to complete coursework and sit for the certified rehabilitation counselor (CRC) exam.

**INDEPENDENCE THROUGH EMPLOYMENT GRANT
\$1,144,064**

Awarded by Alabama Department of Human Resources

Purpose of grant: To assist Temporary Assistance to Needy Family (TANF) recipients with disabilities referred from DHR in attaining independence through employment or other appropriate income.

Number of people served: 2,462

**STAR "ALABAMA'S ASSISTIVE
TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE"**

\$435,000 (19TH YEAR OUT OF 19-YEAR CYCLE)

Awarded by Rehabilitation Services Administration

Purpose of grant: "to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential through improved access to and acquisition of assistive technology"

FY 2012 Accomplishments

- ▶ Implemented STAR's AT Reuse "Real Time" database and website, al.at4all.com.

- ▶ Introduced Alabama's AT Lemon Law. The law was approved by the Senate, but did not make it to the House of Representatives. The legislation will be reintroduced in the 2013 regular legislative session.
- ▶ Revised the new emergency management plan for the state of Alabama in conjunction with the state's task force that will incorporate information about Alabama's AT reuse programs.
- ▶ Collaborated with Easter Seals Central Alabama and Trenholm State Technical College to discuss the logistics of implementing Alabama's Computer Reuse Program.
- ▶ Through Alabama's Ability Loan Program, established partnerships with vendors (MV-1 dealership of Birmingham, Medirest, Biotech Limb & Brace, Able HomeCare, Action Trak of Georgia, A&A Home Health Equipment, Rehabitat LLC and Forward Day LLC) to increase loans for vehicle adaptations and other medical equipment.
- ▶ Participated in a national workgroup on AT and employment to create a web portal that provides information to employers and businesses about the benefits of AT in the workplace.
- ▶ Collaborated in writing an article, entitled "The Reuse ReMEDy for Birmingham," for the AT Program News, a national newsletter for and from state AT act programs.

**ALABAMA'S INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SYSTEMS OF
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH
SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS
\$296,120 (SECOND OF 3-YEAR CYCLE)**

Awarded by Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

Purpose of grant: To improve access to a quality, comprehensive, coordinated community-based system of services for children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) and their families that is family-centered and culturally competent. The grant is to be used to implement the six core outcomes of a system of services for CYSHCN: (1) family-professional partnerships; (2) medical home (providing comprehensive primary care); (3) adequate insurance; (4) transition to adulthood; (5) organized community-based services; and (6) early and continuous screening for special health care needs.

FY 2012 Accomplishments

- ▶ Successfully staffed two primary care pediatric practice sites with a care coordinator.
- ▶ Added a youth consultant to carry out some of the activities of the grant.
- ▶ Held two meetings of the Grant Advisory Committee to discuss the progress of the grant activities.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

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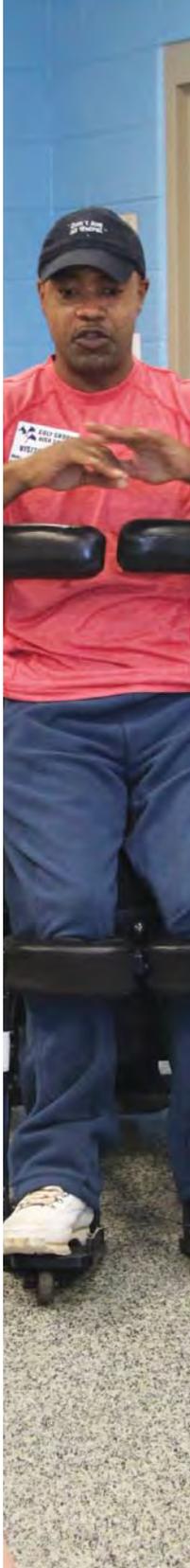
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The individuals listed represent only a small number of the hundreds of dedicated ADRS professionals around the state who work tirelessly to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Thanks to all ADRS staff who work each day to help the department accomplish its mission:

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





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