

TRC TODAY

TRC TODAY is a newsletter for the employees of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission.

Vol. 13 No. 10
October 1991

INSIDE

It's National Disability Employment Awareness Month!
See our special insert 4

Big news at DDS
In comparison to their old digs, the staff at DDS is finding their new accommodations a great improvement 7



It's All About Teamwork!

For those who live in a small town, one person's accident can mean tragedy for the whole community. This might have been the case in Grapeland, Texas, if it had not been for the determined personality of Chuck Bailey, a supportive community and TRC.

In a small town, almost everyone knows everyone else and who they don't know personally, they see at basketball and football games and at the store every now and then. But, due to the fact that in his first year as coach, his girls basketball team won the state championship, high school teacher Chuck Bailey was probably better known than most.

So, it was an especially bitter pill when a freak car accident left Bailey paralyzed in his legs and with no force in his arms to speak of. The story could have ended there. But it didn't.

Due to his determination to return as coach, Bailey's rehabilitation went swiftly. At Medical Center Hospital, he underwent an intensive rehabilitation program. After that, TRC helped with mobility aids such as modifying his van.

"He is a special person," says Jerry Gibson, his TRC counselor. "When he

was in the rehabilitation hospital in Tyler he was never in his room. He was always visiting other patients to pump them up."

The Grapeland school system, also eager for his return, worked promptly to make sure the school was accessible. "Even before Chuck was released from the hospital, both the president of the Grapeland School Board and the superintendent of Schools said they wanted to do whatever was necessary to get him back," says Gibson. You see, good coaches are hard to find. And so are dedicated teachers.

What does Chuck think about all of this. "This story is as much about my school as me," he says, "I'm just thankful they were on my team."

The day after Bailey was released from the rehab hospital, he spent a full day on the job—teaching, coaching and participating. In Bailey's case, it is not that he successfully returned to work, it is that he never left.

It is Bailey's ability to motivate and communicate to the girls, not his arms and legs, that make him such a good coach. "He was a winner before the accident...he still is," says Gibson.

Disabled: what's in a name?

The preferred term has come to be "disabled," which replaced "handicapped" and is the first word to emerge by consensus from disabled people.

It started as a promising idea. A charitable organization offered \$50,000 for the best new, positive substitute for the term "disabled." But before the winner of this contest could collect for his term, "people with differing abilities," his positive creation had elicited many negative reactions.

These reactions represent a significant trend in the disabled community. Like other minorities, they have come to take pride in being identified as disabled and are trying to change the way society views them by changing the use of language.

The importance of misused language is that it builds stereotypes and contributes to the discrimination and minority status experienced by many disabled Americans. The last thing disabled people want or need is another prettifying euphemism. Almost no disabled person uses cute phrases such as "the differently abled," the "handi-capable,"

and the "physically and mentally challenged."

The preferred term has come to be "disabled," which replaced "handicapped" and is the first word to emerge by consensus from disabled people themselves. Even more acceptable is "person with a disability" since it emphasizes the individual before the condition.

The winning term "people with differing abilities" probable will never catch on, but according to Irving Zola, chairman of the Sociology Department of Brandeis University, the contest is important in highlighting the power of negative language and the reaction to it by disabled people shows signs of a new and thriving group identity.

Adapted from an analysis written by Joseph P. Shapiro, an associate editor of U.S News & World Report and currently writing a book on disability rights.

Take a bite out of your phone bill

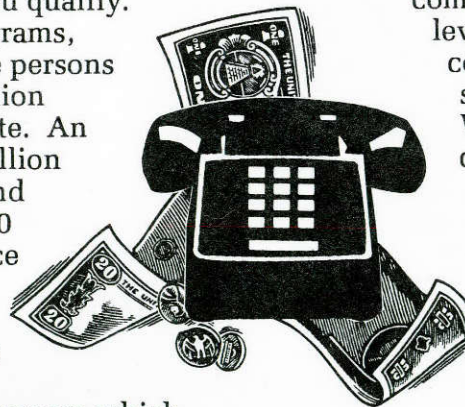
There are now two programs offered by Southwestern Bell that could add up to big savings if you qualify. The first of these programs, "Lifeline," will enable persons to receive a \$7 deduction from their monthly rate. An estimated one half million Texans will qualify and an anticipated 100,000 will request the service this year.

New service customers can also be eligible for "Link Up America," a federal program which could reduce installation rates by 50 percent. Locally, an additional 50 percent would be taken off the reduced cost to make estimated installation costs \$20, a substantial savings.

To be eligible, a person must meet all of the following requirements: be a head

of household or spouse, have only one telephone line at home and have income at or below the poverty level or show proof of receiving aid from a program such as Social Security, WIC, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance Program or Home Emergency Assistance Program.

To find out if you or someone you know is eligible, contact the telephone business office at one of these toll free numbers:



Area Code	Call
214 or 903	1-214-990-2850
409 or 713	1-887-7352
512, 816, 915	1-951-2354
817/ Waco area	1-990-2354
817/ Ft. Worth area	1-214-990-2850
Remainder of 817	1-990-2850

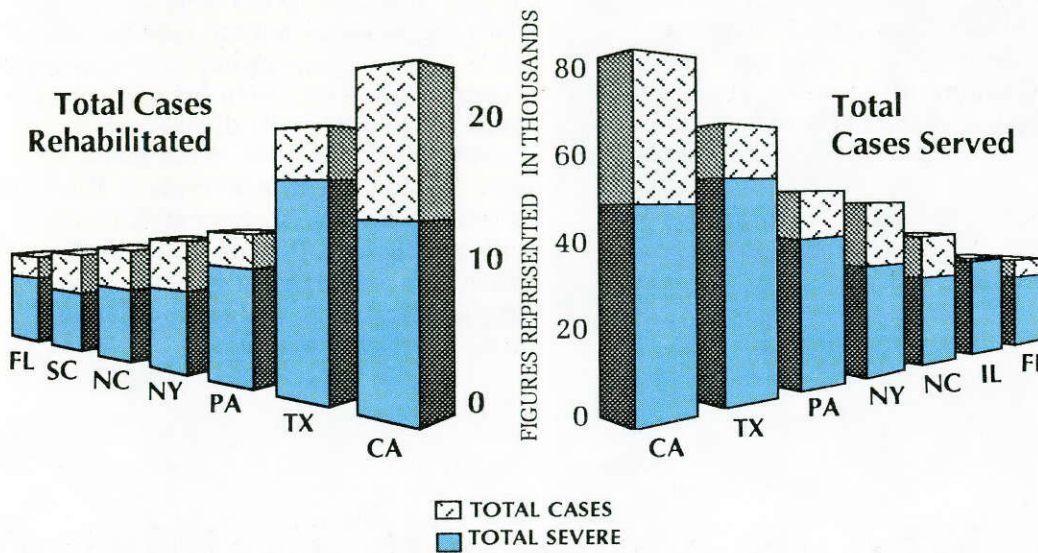
Carrying on a Texas tradition

The numbers are out and TRC can be proud. According to the 1990 RSA Annual Statistical report, Texas ranked first for total number of severe cases served and second in the nation for total cases served and rehabilitated. Eighty percent of the cases rehabilitated were severe.

"These numbers tell us what we've known for a long time -- that TRC is staffed with very productive, very dedicated people,"

says Max Arrell, TRC Commissioner, "What's even better is that these numbers translate into over 16,700 people returning to work and leading independent lives in 1990."

Historically, Texas has been among the top producers in state vocational rehabilitation programs. Since the 1973 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act, Texas has led the way to priority of service for persons with severe disabilities.



Governor announces appointees to Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities

Recently, Gov. Ann Richards appointed three people to the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities:

Margaret Robinson, 49, of Amarillo, has been a paraplegic since she was injured in a pick-up collision over 10 years ago. She is the mother of four grown children and is employed as fiscal manager and advocate at the Panhandle Action Center for Independent Living Skills.

Anita Faye Smith Jones, 43, of Houston, is a volunteer advocate for the disabled. A widowed parent of a disabled child, Jones is a member of the

Association for Adults and Children with Learning Disabilities, the National Association of Advancement of Colored People and the Association of the Retarded.

Genevieve Tarlton Hearon, 59, of Austin, is a parent of a mentally impaired child. She is a consultant on migrants for the Texas Education Agency and the Legislature and serves as a board member for the University of Texas School of Social Work and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

These appointments are not subject to Senate confirmation and each term will expire on February 1, 1997.

Region I

20 years:
Gary Gill

Region II

25 years:
John Stowe
John Heck

Region III

15 years
June Nauert
Joan Johnson
20 years:
Merry Buerschinger

Region V

15 years:
Nancy Dreier
20 years:
Wes Huerta
R.R. Garcia
25 years:
Richard Palacios

Region VI

20 years:
Bettie Rozell
25 years:
Naomi Marksbury

DDS

10 years:
Marla Gard
Donna M. McGhee
Ramiro Hernandez
Janice B. Smith
Robert Grayson
Dennis R. Gage
Joan Roberts Scott
Elizabeth Romero
Elsie Jean Wortham
Donna M. Aleman
Suzanne Michels
Michael Davis
Mary E. Schmidt
Cynthia Ann Cantu
Bruce Pruitt
Travis Cameron, Sr.
Mary Jane Berry
15 years:
Sandra G. Ross

Central Office

10 years:
Larry Thompson
20 years:
Donna Hobbs
Harry D. Amon
Ruby Werchan

THE TIME IS RIGHT for people with disabilities

A YEAR AGO, THE MESSAGE TO employers and service providers for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was "Catch the Spirit and Pass it on." Many have done that.

THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR PEOPLE with disabilities — not only to find job opportunities that have long been denied them, but to make a contribution to a lagging economy and workforce as well.

NDEAM HAS BEEN CELEBRATED for more than six years, but never with more excitement than now. As the Americans with Disabilities Act goes into effect, opportunities for jobs will be available as never before in this state.

ADA WILL NOT PUSH PEOPLE with disabilities to the head of the line, or give them extra points on employment examinations ... just an opportunity to compete, fairly, for jobs.

AND COMPETE THEY WILL. With the unemployment rate for the labor force at large rising over 8 percent, a conservative estimate for unemployment for people with disabilities is more than 66 percent. What has long been known to professionals in the field of rehabilitation, is now catching on with employers. People with disabilities are not only worthy of consideration for employment but can become valuable and productive employees.

For TRC program and client information, see page 7

SPREADING THE WORD
The Public Information Office (PIO) at TRC has sent a statewide letter announcing the month of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Media sources are encouraged to contact PIO for feature stories of interest for TRC clients.

- THINGS YOU CAN DO**
- Present a local story
 - Ask your mayor to speak at the NDEAM celebration during NDEAM. The PIO office typically has a list of speakers on hand. If they don't, call the TRC Public Information Office.
 - Present a certificate of appreciation to your community workers for their outstanding work with people with disabilities.

For help on how to contact the TRC Public Information Office, call (512) 483-1111.

Who are people with disabilities?



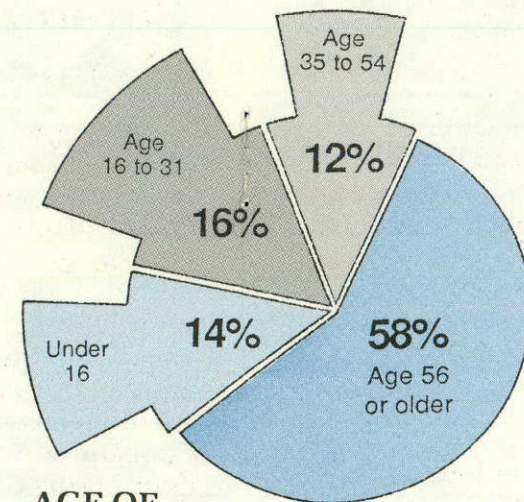
One in six Americans has a disability. (1980 census)

INCOME LEVELS

Twenty one percent have family incomes below poverty level (compared with 9.1 percent of the general population, as of 1980 census.)

Twenty nine percent have at least a four-year college degree (compared with 48 percent of the non-disabled population).

Thirty seven percent of persons ages 16-24 with work disabilities receive social security or public assistance (1980 census data.)



AGE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

WORD?

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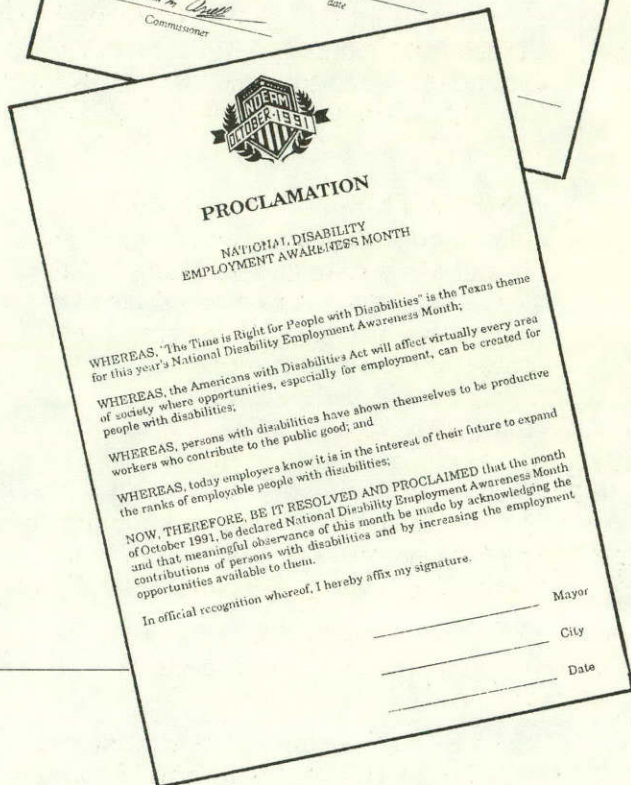
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PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WANT TO WORK?

o-thirds of Ameri-
s with disabilities
ween the ages of 16
l 64 are not work-
. Of those who don't
rk, 66 percent say
y would like to
e a job. (Harris Poll,
9)



WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

- holding an open house
- attending and supporting local job opportunity fairs
- setting up displays about local services at a shopping mall
- holding a sporting event focusing on disabled athletes

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS SAY?

Seventy five percent believe that persons with disabilities often face employment discrimination.

Seventy five percent say the average cost of hiring a person with a disability is about the same as the cost of employing a person without a disability.

According to firms who have hired them, persons with disabilities are, more often than not, highly safety conscious, reliable, loyal and motivated employees who perform well on the job, and who tend to keep their jobs. (U.S. Department of Labor).



WHAT WILL THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT DO?

EMPLOYMENT

Bans job discrimination and requires employers to make "reasonable accommodations" for workers with disabilities unless it causes "undue hardship." Becomes effective July 26, 1992 for employers of 25 or more... and on July 26, 1994 to employers of 15 to 24.

TRANSPORTATION

Requires all new buses and rail cars to be made accessible to people with disabilities. These requirements become effective January 26, 1992.

TELECOMMUNICATION

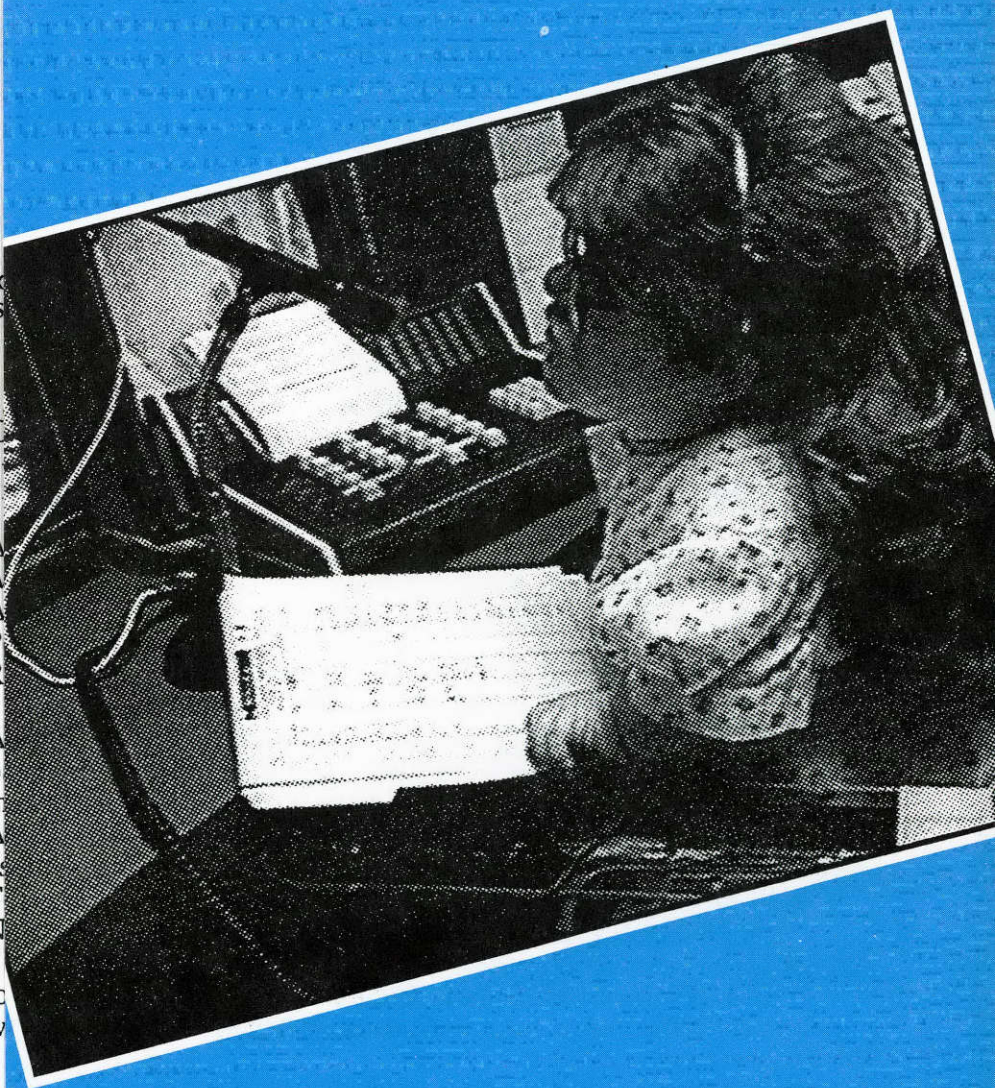
Requires telephone relay services allowing communications between people who are hearing impaired and those who hear. Sprint Services won the Texas bid for relay services.

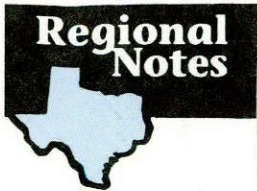
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

Provides equal access to restaurants, hotels, amusement parks, gas stations, dry cleaners, grocery stores, hospitals, stadiums, theaters and all other retail or service establishments.

Flap photo - Cathy Grigsby, TRC client working as a telephone operator in Corsicana, Texas.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month





Region IV

Region IV is having an Employee Appreciation Recognition Program in Houston on November 19. Employees who used to work in Region IV that are still employed with TRC but now work in another area will be recognized.

Area Manager, Larry Smith from the Houston Field Office was featured in the Summer edition of *Rehabilitation Voice*. The article, "Diving Disabled," discusses the opportunity of scuba diving for the disabled.

A farewell luncheon was held for Counselor James Murray, Clear Lake Field Office. Murray began working at the Texas Department of Mental Health Mental Retardation Big Spring State Hospital on September 9.

Region VI

Karen Lafon, liaison technician at the Dallas Northeast unit, was selected for the Management Support Specialist position in the Dallas Northwest Field Office.

Central Office

Mike Brevell, program specialist, was selected as the Inquiries and Hearings Manager in Special Services. Brevell worked as a counselor in the Wharton and Victoria Field Offices before coming to Central Office.

Rosemary Vaughn is the new entry level grant/contract specialist in the Special Services Office.

Martha George Withers accepted the Journalist position in the Publications

John Burns, staff representative with the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons, will fill the Planner vacancy in the Planning Office.

On October 1, Charles Bailey began work as the new Director of the Office for Civil Rights.



EYE ON THE 90S

With the number of working mothers reaching new heights in the 1990s, finding quality childcare has become an increasingly difficult challenge to many families.

In 1989, the Texas Child Care Development Board was created to oversee the development and administration of child care services for state employees. The board's first goal was to establish a child care center in the Capitol complex. That center is scheduled to open in January 1992.

Stay tuned to how this will effect TRC in the future.

This could happen to you!

TRC has again been inflicted with a computer virus, this time in the Baytown Office. Scans of all floppy and hard disks in the area have been requested by the regional office. No out of the ordinary checks are necessary in other regions at this time.

This year alone, computer viruses will infect over one half a million computers in this country and cost over \$2 billion in down time, lost information and recovery costs. Large companies or agencies such as TRC are especially susceptible to these viruses.

Employees are the only line of defense. The only sure way to guard against viruses and its potentially costly consequences is to keep non-TRC software out of agency computers. We urge all TRC employees to follow established procedures for non-TRC disk screening and approval. The procedures are effective only if we have the discipline and management expectation to adhere to them.



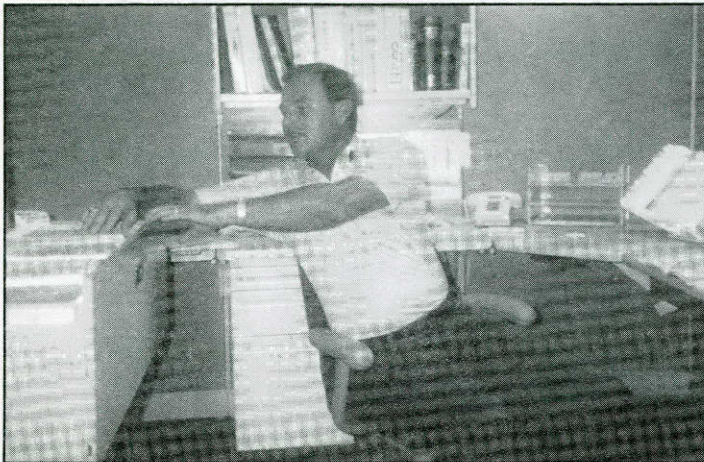
TRC Today is published by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission for distribution to its employees and retirees throughout the state. We welcome submissions for publication, but reserve the right to edit or screen materials according to newsletter policy. Address submissions or inquiries to Randy Jennings, Public Information Office, Texas Rehabilitation Commission, 4900 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas 78751-2316; or telephone (512) 483-4421.

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Big news at DDS

This is real progress. DDS has a remote sight for 99 examiners and support staff in Building K, 4175 Friedrich Lane, Southpark Office Park, Austin, Texas.

The director's office, occupied by Fred Olson, is smaller than that of his secretary, or any other support staff in the building. Is he concerned? If he is he doesn't show it as he bounds around his spaciouly designed building area, pointing out special features with obvious pride.



John Aultman, of DDS working in his new office.

"We have 18,000 square feet of office space for just under 100 employees...more space than any directorate has had before...and we are loving it," says Olson. "We are very fortunate to be able to pilot a specially design open office environment for examiners and support staff for the move to the new DDS building in 1992." But, that is not the half of it. Not only is this office big, it has all of the conveniences -- wide hallways, convenient parking, conference rooms, break rooms, mail room, help desk and fax machine.

"This radical improvement in our work environment has given us more pride in our work habits," says Jack Linder, supervisor of Unit 9. "I am confident that this office will help us be more productive."

"You think I am not happy," says Disability Examiner San Juanita Canales, "Because I was a rookie, I had the smallest office in the old building... now look at this."

This radical improvement in our work environment has given us more pride in our work habits...

TRC program and product information

Current description

There are 390 counselors in 115 offices across the state.

Counselor to general population ratio stands at 1-to-45,000.

More than 86,300 people were served during FY 1990 ... representing approximately 4 percent of the disabled population in Texas.

Of the 62,623 eligible clients served in FY 1990, 16,767 were successfully

rehabilitated into employment.

Approximately 80 percent of the clients placed in employment in FY 1990 were severely disabled.

One out of every five referrals to TRC was a worker injured on their job, 3,500 injured workers were returned to employment.

The benefits

For every \$1 spent in rehabilitation, \$13 are returned to the economy through client earnings.

The average employed client requires approximately \$6,500 in service costs. A recent TRC study shows that this amount is repaid in taxes within 14-18 months.

Successfully rehabilitated persons earn an average of six times more than they did prior to receiving services.

Tony Mendoza, TRC hearing impaired client and employee at the DDS mailroom, and interpreter Janie Escobedo explain why they appreciate the closed captioned news broadcast provided by KVUE-TV, Channel 24 of Austin. The occasion was a TRC central office celebration, with the Austin Area Rehabilitation Association, for National Rehabilitation Week, September 15-21.



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