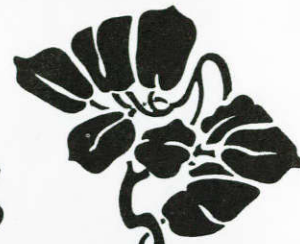


TRC TODAY

a late bloomer



Talk about your late bloomers...

Gladys Van Dyke graduated from high school in 1932, and started to college in 1990, 58 years later.

Deaf since mastoid surgery as a teenager, Gladys is now starting her career following graduation with an associate of arts degree in Human Development with an emphasis on teaching the elderly – incredibly ambitious for a 76-year-old graduate.

In 1946 she was a vocational rehabilitation client in Los Alamos, New Mexico, where she started a business of re-weaving clothes while her husband worked at the Atomic Energy Laboratories. Now, two husbands, grown children and 52 years later, she is a VR client, and starting over again.

“One of the first things she said to me was, ‘I’ve got to do something with my life,’” says her TRC

Such
a
zest
for
living

counselor, Yolanda Montoya. “She has such a zest for living, she will never retire.”

Not many wanted to give her another chance at a career, even if it was to teach the elderly who are deaf and hard of hearing. At her advance maturity, many encouraged her to just retire and enjoy her twilight years – except her TRC counselor and the City of El Paso who employed Gladys as a teacher at a Senior Citizen Center. “Whatever Yolanda says goes,” recalls Gladys of her early confidence in her counselor. “I liked her attitude.”

What future plans does Gladys have? You guessed it. She has another goal — to work with people in the 40-55 year age range who are just beginning to lose their hearing. “Gee,” she chuckles, “I guess I am going to need a long life.”

Here’s hoping, Gladys. 🌹



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U.S. Congressman speaks to examiners

"We need to do better," was the message U.S. Rep. Jake Pickle relayed to DDS employees during a Texas Association of Disability Examiners (TADE) meeting in September.

He cited lengthy waits for decisions in disability claims and increasing backlogs as problems that need to be addressed and solved.

Pickle then announced a new bill he would introduce to Congress that would require an initial decision to be made in 60 days and, if

the claim is appealed, 60 days for reconsideration. Ninety days would be given for arbitration by an administrative judge if needed.

Examiners responded by giving Pickle a dose of reality — the bill would not work unless significant changes were made to the Social Security system and increased funding was given to handle the escalating number of claims.

"It's just not logistically possible the way it works today," said one examiner. "It usually

takes us at least six weeks to two months to receive medical records needed to process a claim."

Examiners also informed Pickle of recent improvements at DDS which are causing backlogs to decrease rather than increase.

Pickle ended his speech by encouraging examiners to call or write him with information on ways to improve the system. "It's our job to make this work. That's what the public pays us for."

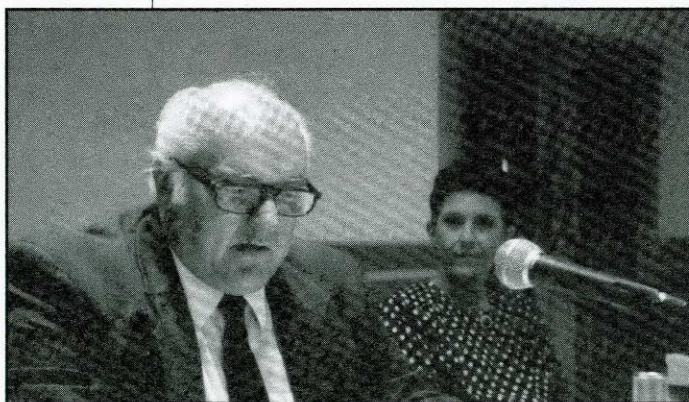
Ladd reaches out in public forums

Dick Ladd, the new czar of Health and Human Services in Texas, is now familiar with the size of the state and the nature and quality of health and human services in Texas.

After conducting 11 public forums during the month of September, from El Paso to Nacogdoches, he now knows why the Commerce Department promotes Texas as a "whole other country."

Charged with the responsibility to improve and coordinate delivery of 12 state health and human service agencies and to prepare a six-year strategic plan to accomplish that, he wanted to hear directly from the people served by those agencies.

"Our mission is to make our system more user-friendly, and no one knows better how to do that than the people who receive the services," says Ladd. "I was pleased with the attendance of people at these forums as they told me what was broken and what wasn't."



HHSC Commissioner Dick Ladd and Kaye Beneke, assistant commissioner for Consumer Affairs for TRC, field questions from the crowd.

**TRC
co-hosts
forums in
Nacogdoches
and in Tyler**

Region II

10 years
Louise Fulton
15 years
Shirley Scruggs

Region III

20 years
Ziana Boudria
25 years
Margaret Guajardo

Region IV

10 years
Roxanne Cassard
Raymond Johnson, Jr.
15 years
Hazel Johnson
25 years
D.B. Harrison

Region V

15 years
Billie Merzbacher
20 years
Marjorie Brune
25 years
Olaya Solis
Alvis Brister, Jr.

Region VI

15 years
Sadie Holloway
20 years
Stanley Brummal

DDS

10 years
Tamara Miller
Doris Davis
James Carter
15 years
Ramiro Hernandez
Gail Mayfield
Margaret Contreras
25 years
Nina Saxton

Central Office

10 years
Curtis Beamus
15 years
Lydia Gamez
20 years
Ray Minyard
Gloria Fuentes



ADA ... GET THE MESSAGE

TRC, in cooperation with the Texas State Library, has distributed manuals on the Americans with Disabilities Act to over 500 public libraries throughout the state. The manuals, entitled *ADA — Get the Message*, include copies of the Act, an overview, answers to commonly asked questions and resource materials for additional information. Each library also received a copy of the TRC-produced video, *Meeting People with Disabilities*.

This manual can be a great resource for employers in your community. And, when you get questions on the ADA, you can now refer them to your local library.

Hot off the press...

Reauthorization of Rehab Act passes

Just before adjourning, both the House and the Senate approved the Reauthorization Bill and now it goes to the White House, where the President is expected to sign it into law.

The Bill reauthorizes, extends and amends the Reauthorization Act for five years. Many feel it means a new era for TRC. From establishing eligibility to the scope of VR services, it could mean big changes in the way TRC does its business.

Next month we will feature detailed information concerning this important new bill.

The auditors are coming to DDS

A comprehensive DDS compliance audit program will kick off in October. It is the first of its kind for DDS. A special Management Audit team, made up of DDS and Audit staff, has been working at warp speed to wrap up work on the development and testing of the program.

The management audit reviews are a supporting element to the currently active DDS Quality System. The program is designed to assist DDS managers in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the DDS program operations.

The audit will be extensive — five cases per examiner, totaling 1,600 cases by the end of FY93.

The role of Management Audit has changed throughout the years from “catching them doing things wrong” to one of working in partnership with managers and staff toward better operations.

Thus, the outcome of the audits will focus more on the unit’s performance rather than an individual examiner’s performance and will not affect anyone’s performance appraisal. Additionally, the audits will result in increased management information related to how DDS, as a whole, is complying with laws and regulations.

Audits will focus on the unit rather than the individual

Working together for

NDEAM – A SMART IDEA

Hiring people with disabilities — it's not only a fair thing to do, it's a smart idea. A recent Harris Poll (1991) shows that Americans agree putting persons with disabilities to work is "good for the economy and good for the country."

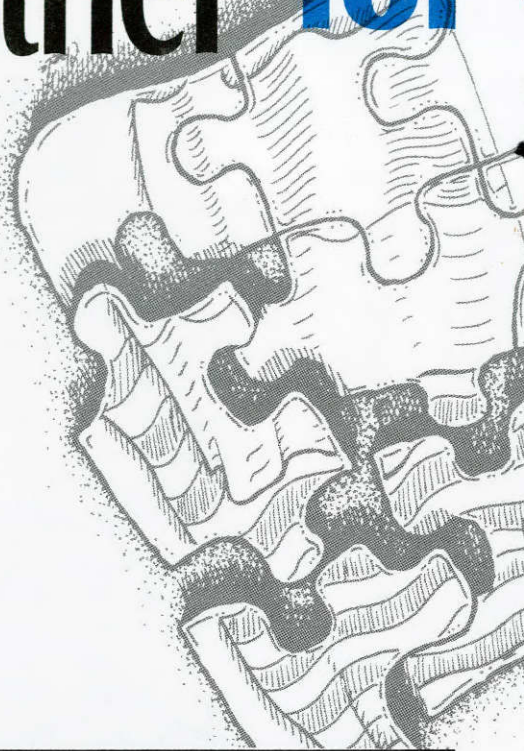
As we celebrate this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) in October, we need to remember that persons with disabilities are not a distant minority. There are about 43 million people with disabilities in this country. They could be a friend, relative or co-worker.

An example of a company having employees with disabilities making significant contributions is Du Pont. Here is what the chairperson of Du Pont, E.S. Woolard, Jr., said:

"As a group, employees with disabilities have achieved impressive performance levels in our company — and we have studies spanning more than 30 years to prove it. What's more, these people bring to their jobs an outlook and a perspective that we think enhance the workplace where diversity now is the norm."

NDEAM has been celebrated for more than eight years, but never with more excitement than now. The Americans with Disabilities Act provides people with equal opportunities at getting and keeping jobs. But change will not happen without hard work.

In each field office is a packet of information and ideas to help celebrate NDEAM in your community. Packets contain a sample press release, proclamation, statistical data, interviewing techniques and client feature. Use them, share them — just get the word out.



WHO... ME ?

- 8,000 Americans survive traumatic spinal cord injuries each year
- 420,000 survive brain trauma each year
- 20 million have arthritis
- 1.5 million have neurological disorders
- 8.2 million have visual impairments
- 16.4 million have heart disease
- 70 million suffer from back pain

Nearly one-third have persistent or recurrent chronic pain

At some point, 70 percent will suffer some type of disability that will make it impossible to climb a flight of stairs.

SOURCE: Social Security Administration

change



A VALUED EMPLOYEE

Alma Ornelas and TRC Counselor, Mary Correa don't see problems, just challenges. It's Alma's resourcefulness that allows her to do so many things that other people take for granted everyday.

It's also this resourcefulness that makes her a valued employee in the personnel office of the U.S.D.A in Brownsville, Texas. For example, when Alma could not see the top of the copy machine, did that stop her? No way, she went and got a mirror to use so she could see the buttons and operate the machine.

Other accommodations were simple, such as lower-

ing her desk and moving the files she uses most often to an easy-to-reach location.

It is not only her well practiced problem-solving ability, but her bright, lively attitude that makes Alma great to have around. And Alma likes it where she's at — "The people I work with ask me how we can work together to get the job done and are always willing to help."

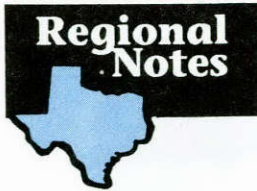
WHAT PEOPLE THINK

Harris Poll — the first nationwide survey of public attitudes about people with disabilities.

- Ninety-two percent of the public polled believe that society will benefit economically if people with disabilities are assimilated into the workforce.
- Half of those surveyed know someone with a disability.
- Nine out of 10 people polled think society will benefit by employing people with disabilities who are now receiving welfare payments.
- Only one in 10 surveyed feel uncomfortable around people in wheelchairs or people who are blind or deaf.

Gallup Poll — over 400 firms with over 25 employees were polled regarding ADA.

- Forty-two percent said they were unfamiliar with ADA or familiar in name only; only 14 percent claimed to be very familiar with the act.
- Approximately one-third of the respondents said their company had received ADA training.
- About one-half of the respondents felt it is more difficult to fire a person with a disability than a person without a disability in a similar job.



Region I

Ida Baca was selected as medical services technician in the Lubbock Field Office.

Kimberly Rose was selected as rehabilitation services technician in the Amarillo Field Office.

Renee Barraza was selected as rehabilitation services technician in the Midland Field Office.

Kenneth Farrow was selected as counselor in the San Angelo Field Office.

Shirley Austin was promoted from administrative secretary to management support specialist in the Lubbock North Field Office.

Region II

Carol Shanks, Virginia Witt and Elayne Halkias were selected as counselors for the North Fort Worth Field Office.

The REACH Independent Living Center of Fort Worth was given an award for providing "exemplary service to people with disabilities in Tarrant County" by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory Regional Rehabilitation Exchange (SEDL/RRX) in Austin.

Region III

Richard McIlveen was selected as counselor for individuals with deafness or hearing impairments for the La Marque Field Office.

Region IV

Guadalupe Juarez was selected as management support specialist for the Houston Southwest Supervisory Unit. She comes to this position with 15 years of experience with the Commission.

Region V

Anita Vykoukal, Diane Nichols and Michelle McDonald were selected as counselors for the South San Antonio Field Office.

Refugia (Cookie) Juarez transferred to the North San Antonio Field Office as rehabilitation services technician.

Region VI

James Knauss was selected as area manager for the Dallas Northwest Unit. Previously, he served as counselor for individuals with back injuries.

Gregory Ware was selected as area manager for the Dallas Northeast Unit. He had several assignments as a counselor, including ERS, VR and VI-C.

Deanna Kappelman was selected as counselor for the hearing impaired program in the Dallas Northeast Unit.

DDS

Fred Olson, operations director for Directorate 01, retired after serving 21 years with the Commission.

Joseph Schiefen, Jr., director of Quality Appraisal Services, retired after 20 years of service with TRC.

Norma Shropshire was selected as switchboard operator in Staff Services. She transferred back to DDS from Central Office where she was at the reception desk for one year.

Central Office

Loretta Williamson was selected as administrative technician for the new Health and Human Services Commission. She previously worked in both the Austin Regional Office and Central Office.

Roxanne Rios was selected as auditor in the Management Audit Division. She has a total of 15 years of experience with TRC.

Ron Trull was selected as ADA director in the Special Services Office. He brings with him 22 years of experience with TRC, most recently serving as the director of employer services for the ADA -Texas Team.

WHO NEEDS THE LOTTERY?

These DDS employees showed that ingenuity can really pay off:

Vic Kendell, CDR Unit 70, was a big winner. Through his suggestion to reformat a medical document form letter from two pages to one, he saved the Commission \$31,058. His share amounted to \$3,105.

Cora Cole Lane, Computer Data Management, received \$592 for suggesting to eliminate a duplication. Her idea was to discontinue stamping the receipt date on case folders received from Social Security since computers do this automatically. Her idea saved TRC \$5,927 in time.

Cause for Applause

Here is a portion of a letter that Gov. Ann Richards sent to some of our counselors out in the field:

I received a letter from a client concerning the assistance you provided him and wanted to add my personal thanks to his.

I am always delighted to receive such appreciative letters. You are perfect models of the "legendary customer service" providers that all of us in public service should strive to be. Bravo!

The following are portions of letters received by TRC employees from claimant/clients:

This is a letter that got the governor's attention. It is to Counselor Hardy Bell and RST Lois Nufer of the North Texas State University Field Office from a client:

I had a dream — a dream to go to college. I am a first-generation college graduate from a modest, working-class background. It is most difficult in these days of recession and budget cuts for a person like myself to get an education.

But when your health fails your dreams take a back seat to survival. At a time when I could only cling to my dream of finishing college, TRC stepped in and provided a foundation upon which I could work toward my cherished goals.

Hardy Bell and his assistant Lois Nufer, have provided impeccable service to myself and to hundreds of other students with disabilities. They were always on campus giving me kindness, confidence and respect. Not once did they give a hint of doubt as to my ability to succeed.

I hope the two understand the significance of the role they play as advocates, not only for myself, but also for the many others who might not have a chance for a better life without TRC.

This letter is to Gov. Richards from a client concerning the work of her

Counselor Richard Hopkins of the North Austin Field Office:

I wanted to share with you that last year I faced continued layoffs because of a medical condition that prevented me from keeping a job. I was informed of TRC and met with Richard Hopkins.

As a result of his persistence in securing vital information concerning my past employment and my current medical problem, I had an operation this year to correct the problem. Where last year I didn't feel I had much of a future and was even withdrawing from friends, I now feel confident that I can again contribute to make this a great state, a caring state.

Rosla Hocker and Linda Berry of the Arlington Field Office received this letter from a client:

Thank you both so much for getting me the phone line, not only once but twice!

My mind tells me you're my counselor, Rosla, and how much Linda helps you, but in my heart you are both are my good friends. Thank you for helping me keep my job.

Letters



OPENING DOORS

ADA Dallas, a task force established by the Mayor's Committee in Dallas, is offering a free one-day training workshop on the Americans with Disabilities Act on October 16 from 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. at the Infomart in Dallas.

Called Opening Doors, the workshop will feature current sessions moderated by the country's leaders on disability rights and will deal with all important aspects of ADA. The conference begins with keynote speaker, Patricia Wright of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. About 1,000 people are expected to attend.

**Don't
take
my
truck!**



The employees out at the Central Office Warehouse felt sentimental when it was time to say goodbye to this old friend. The reason — it had been there longer than most of them had been. “It’s like losing a member of the family,” says Tommy Williams, director of warehouse operations.

Custom built in San Angelo in 1975, this truck was the first delivery vehicle ever assigned to the warehouse. When the truck had gone through three motors and had logged in about 200,000 miles, most agreed it was time for it to “bite the dust”. It was replaced by a 1992 boxed van.



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