

TRC news & views

TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION

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Michel-Latta Defeated, House Starts Over on Budget

Vocational rehabilitation agencies heaved a collective sigh of relief on May 28 upon learning that the U.S. House of Representatives voted down a budget proposal that, if passed by the entire Congress, would have rescinded \$91.1 million from the vocational rehabilitation program budget. The Michel-Latta proposal, which took the rehabilitation community by surprise when it was introduced earlier in the week, would have, in effect, made the rescission retroactive to FY 1982. If that had happened, the \$91.1 million loss (nationwide) would have been absorbed in the final quarter of the current fiscal year.

Many vocational rehabilitation agencies would have had to shut their doors if the proposal had passed. In Texas, The Texas Rehabilitation Commission would probably have been able to operate with a dramatic decrease in services.

The Michel-Latta proposal came as a tremendous surprise to the vocational rehabilitation program. Only one month before, the Reagan Administration's proposal for an identical rescission was declared "null and void" after Congress refused to act on the measure. With the defeat of the proposal, the rehabilitation community had assumed

the funding situation for the remainder of the fiscal year was settled.

Within hours of receiving an alert about the Michel-Latta proposal, Texas advocates had organized an impressive telephone network. The thousands of telephone calls and mailgrams received in Congress members' offices are credited, to a large degree, to the sound defeat of the proposal.

Aside from Michel-Latta, the House defeated the only other two budget proposals before it. One of them, the Jones proposal, was the recommendation sent to the full House by its Appropriations Committee. Under the proposal, vocational rehabilitation was recommended to receive an 8% increase in Section 110 funds.

Members of the House are expected to work on a new budget recommendation during the week of June 7, following the Memorial Day recess. Observers say it is likely that whatever proposal the House finally endorses will have to be reconciled with the Senate's recommendation in a reconciliation conference committee.

The Senate, which has already agreed upon a budget recommendation, has proposed an eight percent increase for vocational rehabilitation.



Juanita Barton, a curandero from Brownsville, was one of many interesting speakers to address the recent National Rehabilitation Conference on Farmworkers in McAllen. Barton, who believes she can heal people with psychic power, demonstrated her practice before an audience interested in learning more about the rehabilitation needs of migrant workers. Participants learned that the influence of curanderos is important for rehabilitation workers to understand because they are an important part of many migrant workers' health care routines. The conference, sponsored by TRC, the Governor's Office for Migrant Advocacy and the Texas Commission for the Blind, attracted 150 participants, some from as far away as Wisconsin, California and Florida.

TRC Board Approves State Funding Proposal

At its May 7 meeting in Austin, the TRC Board voted unanimous approval of the Commission's proposed state budget request for Fiscal Years 1984-85. With the Board's approval behind it, the TRC administration can move ahead with plans to ask the Texas Legislature to appropriate more than double the amount appropriated in FY 1982-83 for the next biennium. In FY 1983, the Commission will receive \$15.4 million in general revenue funds from the state. TRC will ask the legislature for \$34.9 million in FY 1984 and \$45.9 million in FY 1985.

"It might appear," says Commissioner Max Arrell, "that the Commission is trying to build an empire. That's not at all the case. We are not trying to develop new programs. We are not adding on new employees.

We are merely trying to maintain the programs and level of service that we have now."

"We do not feel that we can rely on the federal dollar in the future as much as we have in the past," the Commissioner added. "At the same time, the population in Texas is growing by leaps and bounds, as is the cost of the goods and services we depend on. We need these additional state dollars to make sure that the disabled persons in this state continue to get the effective vocational rehabilitation services they deserve."

The Commission's budget request includes provisions for increases in employee salaries and benefits. A detailed list of these provisions, and a comparison of the Texas Public Employees Association recommendations, accompanies this story.

From the Field:

Congratulations to Howard Marnan, supervisor of the San Antonio North Field Office! Marnan was honored recently by the Board of Trustees of the Methodist Mission Home/Southwest Center for the Hearing Impaired for his many efforts in deafness rehabilitation. In a proclamation issued by the Board, Marnan was described as being "extremely responsive to the needs of multi-handicapped deaf adults while maintaining and balancing agency fiscal responsibilities during recent times." The statement concluded, "Deaf persons of Texas, especially clients of Southwest Center for the Hearing Impaired, are privileged to have the support and concern of Mr. Howard Marnan."

Region II secretaries, ADP operators and clerical supervisors gathered in Ft. Worth in April to learn more about helping counselors monitor similar benefits and the MAPS (Maximum Affordable Payment Schedule). The program was presented by Blanche Miles, Region II's Physical Restoration Technician.

The agenda covered an overview of the information counselors need to determine client eligibility for similar benefits and the secretary's role in monitoring the details and case folder documentation. In addition, attendees reviewed the proper application of MAPS and services to be covered when scheduling specialists' consultations.

In recognition of National Secretaries' Week, persons attending the workshop were presented with carnations as tokens of appreciation for their outstanding assistance and cooperation in coordinating diagnostic and physical restoration services in their areas.

APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

ISSUE	TRC		TPEA	
	FY '84	FY '85	FY '84	FY '85
1. Salary	10.2%	10.2%	13.6%	10.2%
2. Merit salary increases	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
3. State payment of employees' share of FICA	Full Payment		Full Payment	
4. Insurance	\$68 mo.	\$78 mo.	Full payment of high plan	
5. Mileage	.27 per mile	.27 per mile	.30 per mile	.30 per mile
6. In-state per diem	\$75 per day	\$75 per day	\$60 per day	\$68 per day
7. Out-of-state per diem	\$100 per day	\$100 per day	Not addressed	

EVALUATING EVALUATIONS

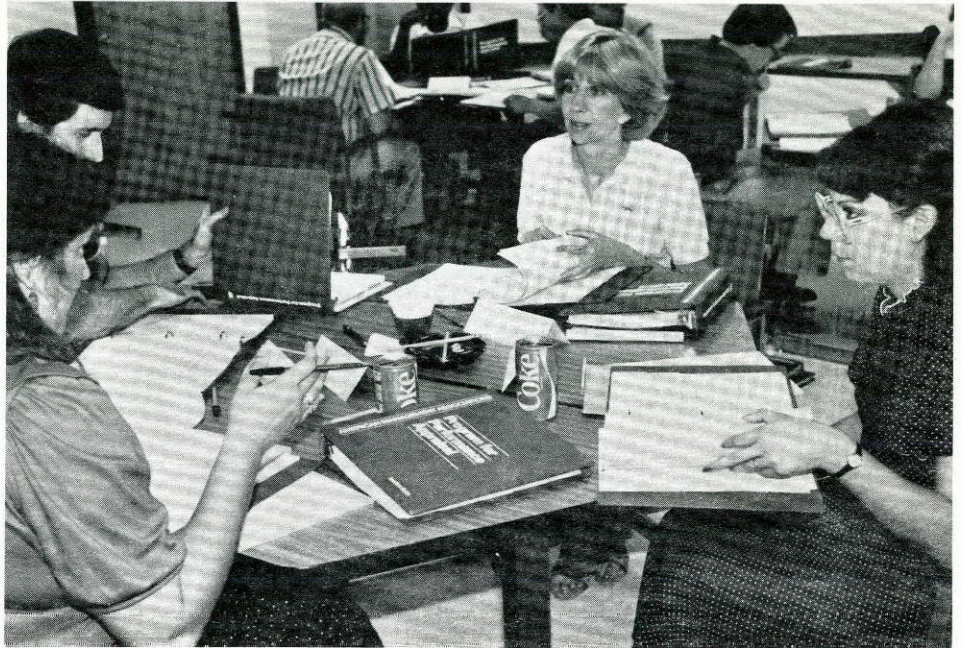
Personnel Performance System Gets an Overhaul

If you've been with TRC for any length of time, you are familiar with the routine. At regular intervals of time, your supervisor is required to evaluate your performance. The supervisor discussed with you your strengths, recommended improvement areas and specific accomplishments. You sign the evaluation to indicate it has been discussed with you and then, it's placed in your personnel file.

How useful this evaluation process is varies, depending on a number of factors. Are you aware of all of the requirements of your job? Do you know what your supervisor expects of you? Are you being evaluated by your actual job performance or your personality? Will the evaluation help you as you develop your career?

TRC officials have determined that there is a better, more useful way to conduct employee performance appraisals than the system that is currently in use. To that end, the Commission is beginning work on a new evaluation process, announced last month in a memorandum from Commissioner Max Arrell to all employees.

"In keeping with this effort," the memorandum stated, "we will also be preparing functional job descriptions for all classified positions utilized by the Commission. In each instance, the description will contain key job tasks and measurable standards of performance." The primary objective of the new procedure "will be to assist each of you in developing to your fullest potential in your current position."



Sixteen representatives from the field, Central Office and Disability Determination Division gathered in Kerrville last month for training in the new personnel evaluation program. Pictured here are (left to right) Jenny Hall, Civil Rights Office, David Tipple, Administrative Officer, Houston Regional Office; Randee Malmsten, Information Services and Esther Bailey, Disability Determination Division.

The decision to use a new system followed a report by a special committee appointed to review the Commission's current system and, if necessary, develop a new one. The committee based its recommendation for a new procedure on the results of a TRC Employee Attitude Survey and information received from several governmental and personnel advisory groups.

The first phase of implementing the new system took place in Kerrville during the week of May 17. Sixteen TRC employees, designated as Coordinators, met with Kent Wilmott of the American Management Association to receive training in the new program. The 16 employees will work with appropriate staff members to re-write 250 functional job descriptions. The new job descriptions will be the foundation of the entire evaluation process.

Gillen Scholarship to Benefit College

A scholarship fund in memory of Senior Counselor Bill Gillen has been established at Navarro County Junior College in Corsicana. Gillen, who worked for TRC for more than 13 years, died May 17 of an apparent heart attack. Survivors include his widow, Wanda, and two children, Bill Gillen, Jr., and Gail Hill.

Gillen joined TRC in 1968. He worked in the Corsicana Field Office from that time until his death. In addition, Gillen served as a part-time sociology instructor at Navarro County Junior College.

The scholarship fund is entitled "Navarro College Memorial Scholarship Endowment." Persons interested in contributing to the fund may contact Mrs. Betty Hughes, Corsicana Field Office, (214) 872-2593, TexAn 835-4221.

FROM



NON-CIRCULATING
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The Disability Determination Division Staff Development section is offering a boost to clerical employees who want to climb the career ladder. Since Sept., 1980, DDD Staff Development has offered skills training in shorthand and typing for employees who wish to become more efficient in areas that most clerical positions require.

Following a pilot program, classes have continued, almost without interruption, since Jan., 1981. Since then, more than 100 students have enrolled in the skills training classes. Although the program is conducted by DDD, students from the TRC Central Office and Vocational Rehabilitation Division have participated in the training.

The refresher typing class is designed for nine students at one time. Students enter

and remain in the class until they document the ability to type 55 net words per minute. TRC's Personnel Office administers the test needed to verify typing speed. Test results are noted in each employee's personnel file.

Refresher shorthand training is somewhat more structured because students must learn to take dictation at 80 words per minute. Again, the TRC Personnel Office tests the students and documents the results.

In conjunction with the skills training, DDD has also established a career ladder. An employee entering DDD as a Clerk Typist I, Grade 3, may, at the end of six months, be considered for promotion to Clerk-Typist II, Grade 4. Then after documenting the ability to type 55 net words per minute, the employee can be considered

for promotion to Stenographer II, Grade 5. With an additional 12 months of service in that pay grade, the employee will be considered for advancement to Grade 6. Secretary and Clerical Supervisor positions are Grade 7-- Technical Leaders are Grade 8. In several line and administrative units, there are employees who have advanced through the grade levels as they related their experience to their skills levels. The end result is beneficial to both the individual employee and the Commission.

In April, 1982, a Social Security Administration Fiscal and Administrative Management Review noted that DDD staff turnover has significantly reduced since Fiscal Year 1979. This can be attributed, to a large degree, to increased career ladder positions and skills training.

Calendar of Events

JUNE 1982

<u>June</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Location</u>
1	Security/Safety Training	TRC	Austin
8 - 10	Regional Conference - Chiefs of Services and Fiscal Officers	ARCEP	Dallas
13 - 18	Management Training for Supervisors	TSMDC	Woodcreek
14 - 16	Micrographics in Records Management	TRC/TASSCC	Austin
16 - 18	Medical Training for VR Counselors - Phase I	TRC	Dallas
27 - 7/2	Management Training for Supervisors	TSMDC	Woodcreek

Retirements:

Mildred Sevey, Counselor II, Big Spring F.O., employed July 1, 1968, retirement effective Aug. 31, 1982 (last day at work June 30).

TRC News & Views is printed by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission for distribution to its employees and retirees throughout the state. This publication is a joint effort of TRC's Public Information Office and Instructional Media Department. Inquiries may be addressed to Kaye Beneke, Public Information Office, Texas Rehabilitation Commission, 118 E. Riverside Drive, Austin, TX. 78704; or telephone (512) 445-8745, (Tex-An) 887-8745.