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REFERENCE

a **TIME** of change

reaching for the millennium

TEXAS REHABILITATION

COMMISSION 1998

ANNUAL REPORT

Working together

to create a unified vision for services

to people with disabilities into the next century . . .



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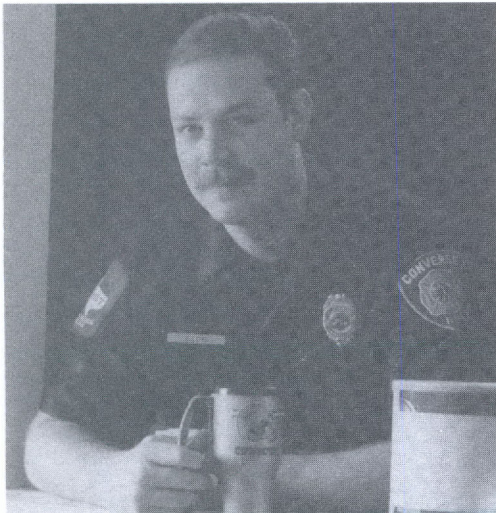
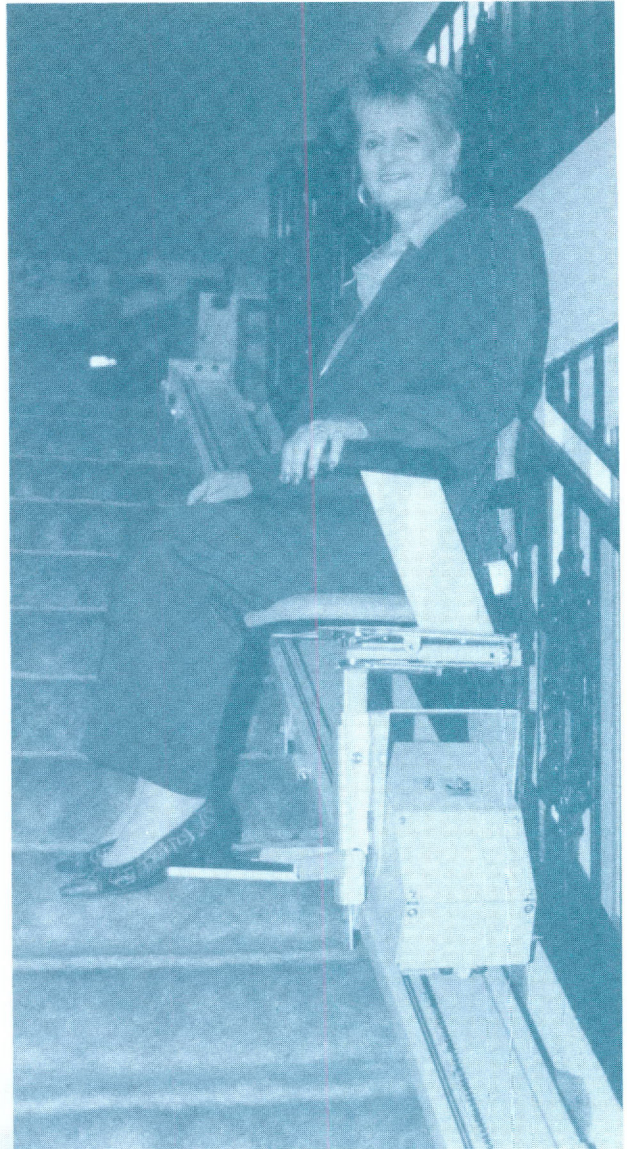
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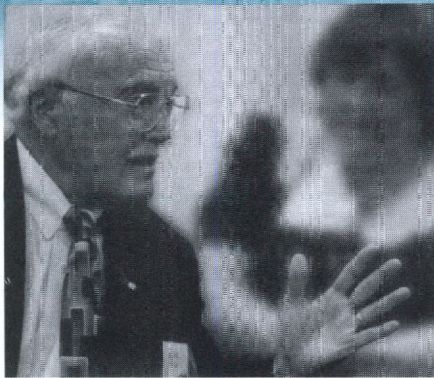


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conversation with commissioner ARRELL



Yes, the times, they are a changing ... As the year 2000 approaches, predictions of a new era abound. And the millennium invokes a milestone by which to measure achievements. Is it an important turning point in history or just another day at the office? With 17 years as TRC Commissioner, Max Arrell offers a unique perspective on where we've been, what may lie ahead of us, and its impact on people with disabilities.

QUESTION:

Commissioner, for the last several years I have heard you say TRC is in a time of great change. What do you mean by that?

ANSWER:

We have always had change but it comes quicker now because of technology and communications. As communication technology gets faster, the rate of change gets faster. With this brings the expectation for immediate response. It's not necessarily good but it's true.

I think, overall, there is a lot of unrest. I think it has to do with the fact that there is a lot of political upheaval and there are major changes going on in Texas, especially in human services. In terms of disabilities, severely disabled people are living much longer. The fact is that many will need some kind of public service for the rest of their life. That's why we're hearing so much about the

need for a long-term care agency. It makes a lot of sense but long-term care is not naturally compatible with vocational rehabilitation and the goal of TRC - which is independence for people with disabilities.

Where TRC is concerned, and I've said this time and again, people don't realize that we're in a mode now of moving. We moved from the perception of a small agency to a middle-sized agency and now to a large agency. Last year, we served over 100,000 people in our VR program, adjudicated over 238,000 cases in disability determination and worked with a large number of individuals in our other rehabilitation programs. You can lose the commonality, the personal touch with everybody and we have to rely more and more on direct line staff to do the things that need to be done.

QUESTION:

We are now considered a large agency, but isn't it still a personal business?

ANSWER:

Absolutely, TRC is a one-on-one business. A vocational rehabilitation counselor's successes come from the first two weeks of initial contact with a client. If you do a good evaluation, then that allows a good plan. If you develop a good plan, then that allows people to go into employment. A counselor really needs to be a counselor. A VR counselor needs to sit down and work with a person and give them an honest assessment of their abilities, the options, the pros and cons, and let them make a choice of what they want to do.

It's the same for the disability determination program. Every year we process more cases, but each case represents a person seeking assistance and deserves quality attention. Disability examiners must look at all the documentation, apply the standards set by the Social Security Administration and make objective and fair decisions.

QUESTION:

So, how is the role of the TRC professional changing?

ANSWER:

I've said that if we are doing rehabilitation two years from now like we are doing it today, we won't be meeting the needs of the people we serve. I can't tell you what will change but I guarantee it will change. Technology changes, research and medicine change, the type of jobs available change.

With welfare reform and process redesign, there is also a good chance that a disability examiner's job will change somewhat within the next five years.

When the demands on the front line employees change, then support services change to adapt to those needs as well.

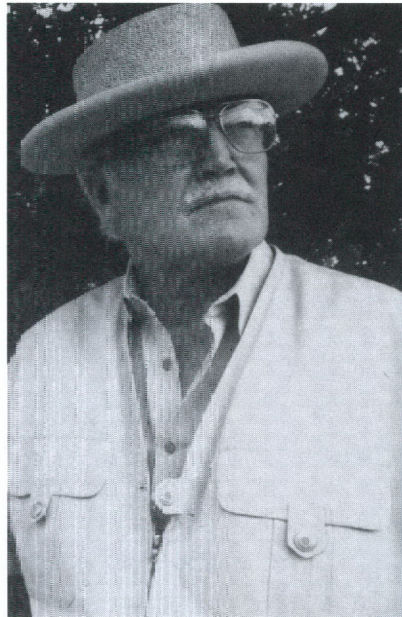
You have to stay on top of it. That means change. We continue to need people who are dedicated and who want to be here for a long time. But one thing about it, if you don't like change, you should look elsewhere.

QUESTION:

What is this agency doing to prepare for the millennium?

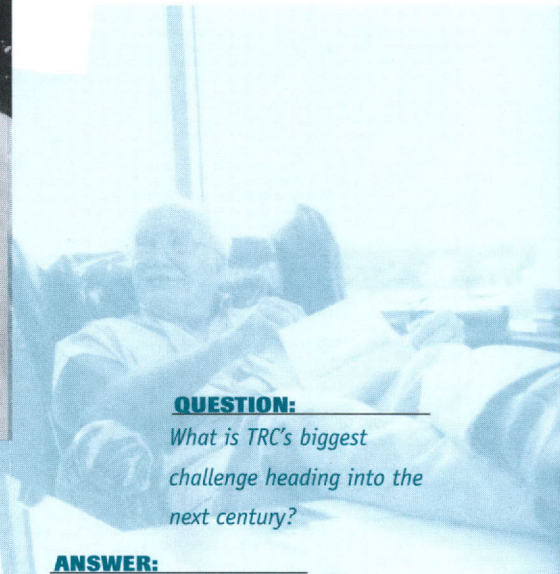
ANSWER:

Well, of course the major challenge that everybody talks about is making sure that we are technologically ready. TRC is in good shape, especially in the Year 2000 compliance issue. We started five years ago preparing for this and we are far ahead or even with anybody in the state.



But it is really more than that. Our staff must have more and more knowledge because our customers are more knowledgeable. That's a good thing but we must stay ahead of the curve. Education of our staff is a critical issue. Training can be disruptive but it's necessary to keep up and stay current. Also, with the influx of new employees, mentoring is very important.

We have gotten very creative the last several years in using automated tools to streamline service delivery and take bureaucracy out of the system. Also, so that our employees have a wealth of information at their fingertips that they can share with those we serve. Again, this is all about preparing ourselves and taking advantage of the opportunities technology brings us.



QUESTION:

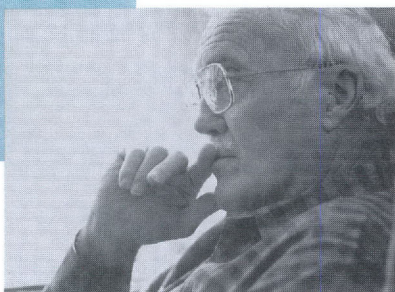
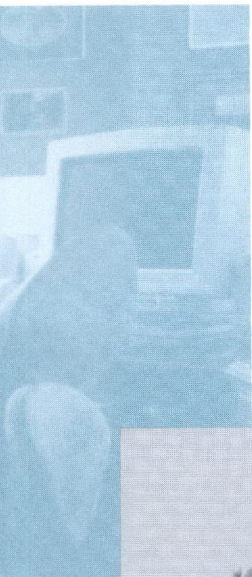
What is TRC's biggest challenge heading into the next century?

ANSWER:

Our biggest challenge right now is resources ... without a doubt. We are serving more severely disabled persons than ever and yet, we only serve a small portion of those needing our services. It's a difficult issue for legislators because there are so many needs and only so many resources.

Also, agencies are becoming much more accountable for services not only that they provide personally but that they purchase. And agencies are purchasing more services because of the emphasis on privatization and caps on full-time employees. The issues for the past several years have been streamlining and cutting back on government, but we are now to the point where we can't get any leaner without affecting services.

I think we are also in a situation where state employees in general don't feel appreciated. There has not been a meaningful pay increase over the last four to five years and the cost of living continues to rise.



The economy is such now that people do not have to stay working for the state. We are losing our institutional knowledge. And it is getting to the point that people say why should I put out all that effort if I'm not going to be rewarded. That has to be turned around.

QUESTION:
Looking back, what do you see as TRC's greatest milestones.

ANSWER:
When I came into this job, I saw gaps in services and I wanted to have what I called a continuum of services. I wanted to be able to serve somebody who was severely disabled yet who was not eligible for vocational rehabilitation. That's why, working with legislative leadership, we now have Extended

Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Rehabilitation, Deaf-Blind Services and Personal Attendant Services. It's true that it would have been easier to stay with just vocational rehabilitation but that would not have been in the best interest of people with disabilities. Looking back, perhaps this insight helped give birth to the long-term care concept we see in some TRC services today.

The other thing I am proud of is decentralizing budgets to the counselor level. We have continued to put the resources and staff to the closest point of service delivery because that is what is best for our clients. The challenge in decentralization is getting the resources where they are needed but making sure that it is being implemented consistently statewide. That is something we have been working on and will continue to work on.

QUESTION:
Commissioner, you've been known as a leader and visionary in encouraging consumer input ...

ANSWER:
Yes, I started the Consumer Advisory Committee (known today as Rehabilitation Council of Texas) long before federal law required it. Consumer advocates have long played an important role in developing the TRC Strategic Plan and voicing their priorities when it comes to services. The challenge we have right now is that there is currently no consensus within the disability community. I can understand how this comes about but it puts TRC in a position where we have to balance the conflicting

opinions. When you do that, you simply can't please everyone. Then you just have to look at the law and decide what is good rehabilitation. That's where we're at now, but I still think that consumer involvement is critical to what we do.

QUESTION:
You've talked about unprecedented change occurring at all levels in this agency. Do you think it's for the best?

ANSWER:
Absolutely. An important point to remember is that the mission of this agency hasn't changed nor do I think I will see this changing in my lifetime. For the last year or so, we have been going through Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, Welfare Reform and the Sunset Review. It's true this might cause us to do some things differently. Even so, I believe TRC's primary purpose will remain the same.

Change isn't a bad thing. I've been in rehabilitation over 40 years and I haven't seen it all yet. That's what makes it interesting. You have to take the good with the bad. Who could have predicted back then I would have a computer on my desk? But I use it everyday. There are so many opportunities for people with disabilities that we had never dreamed of and are just now realizing. That makes this all worthwhile.

patsy MCDONALD

Patsy's Bridal and More has been a fixture in the town of Groves for over 20 years. Patsy McDonald, shop owner, has personally helped countless young women and men in the area greet weddings, proms and other special occasions in style.

She is a person with bilateral knee problems and degenerative arthritis. She was in danger of having to close her store when she came to TRC for help in 1996. "When I went to TRC, I was very frightened," says Patsy. "I had surgery 25 years ago and they told me then that someday my legs would quit. At market one day, they quit. I couldn't move. I felt my life was over."

The Social Security Office in the area referred Patsy to TRC where she met counselor Tina Hutchison. "I went to three doctors and they didn't give me any hope that I would get better," she remembers. "I called TRC but was terrified to go because everyone I had talked to had given me bad news and I didn't think I could take anymore."

"I went in and Tina looked me right in the eye and said, 'anything an able-bodied person can do, you can do. You just have to do it differently.' That's the first time I

heard that. I had been thinking that I would have to move to a desk job. Being able to keep up what I was doing was a whole new thought to me."

TRC provided Patsy with a lift to make the two-story shop accessible and scooter that allows her to attend market and fashion shows to buy merchandise. "My name has been on the door a long time," sighs Patsy. "It is important that I make the girls feel good about themselves and



give them that personal attention. Now I can get everywhere in the store. The equipment is wonderful but also the service of helping me believe in myself again is what I really needed."

introduction

With this next millennium fast approaching, our greatest hope is that some day many of the devastating disabilities will no longer exist; and that people — regardless of race, religion, gender or disability — are fully included and productive in their communities.

But before we reach this point, there will be an even greater need for TRC services. People with catastrophic conditions are living longer and they are expecting to live a life of quality and productivity. Our goal is to help them achieve that.

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed to ensure equality to people with disabilities. But, we're not there yet. Social change continues to lag behind technological and medical advancements. Latest Census data shows that unemployment for persons with severe disabilities remains high at nearly 74 percent. TRC continues to serve only a fraction of those in need. And the need for our services is greater today than ever before.

To prepare for the future, we are making dramatic changes to the way we do our business. TRC is taking full advantage of new technology to streamline and improve our service-delivery system. We have shifted resources to our front-line employees to maximize efficiency. We have adapted services to best meet the individual needs of our consumers.

TRC offers a variety of services that are as distinct as the people we serve. Although we live in a time of incredible change, the goals of TRC services are as valid today as when they were created: employment, independence and dignity for persons with disabilities.

The following are brief descriptions of our programs, along with performance measures and personal stories of those who benefit from our services. We're proud of our numbers but more proud of what they represent — the positive impact TRC helps create in lives of the people we serve.

TRC programs & services

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR), a state/federal partnership since 1929, helps people with disabilities prepare for, find and keep jobs. Work-related services are individualized and may include counseling, training, medical treatment, assistive devices, job placement assistance, and other services. Eligibility criteria for this program include: the presence of a physical or mental disability that results in a substantial impediment to employment, whether the individual is employable after receiving services, and whether services are required to achieve employment outcomes.

BENEFITS

By retirement, the average rehabilitated client will repay the cost of services at least 10 times through taxes paid and public assistance.

For every dollar spent on VR, clients generate almost \$16 in personal taxable income through the remainder of their work lives.

VR is a program that maximizes federal dollars with a 73.7 percent federal and 21.3 percent state match.



Jason LLOYD

Jason Lloyd, who has a learning disability, lived in continuous doubt about his ability. He says, "I always felt like I was smart enough but I just couldn't – no matter how hard I tried – I just couldn't do the schoolwork."

TRC helped turn this situation around through the persistence of Counselor Jodie Mytro, who found the right resources needed to help Jason. TRC acquired the correct medical explanation of the learning disorder,

CURRENT DESCRIPTION *(federal fiscal year)*

There are five regions with 142 offices and 483 counselor positions across the state.

In FY 1998, 126,294 persons with disabilities were served. Of the 108,417 eligible clients, 23,548 were successfully rehabilitated, and 64,103 continued to receive services at the end of the year. TRC served 11 percent of the potentially eligible population of Texans with disabilities.

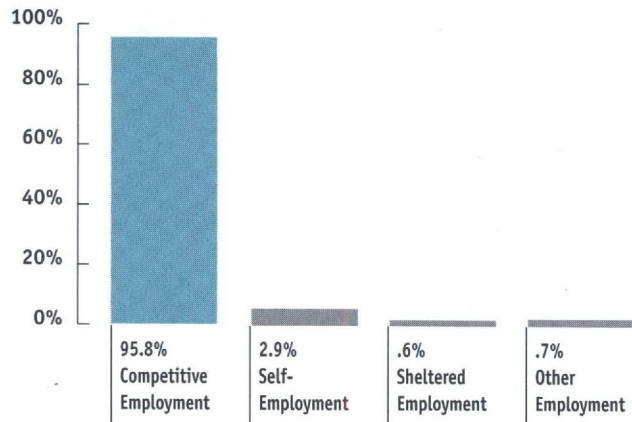
Close to 70 percent of the clients rehabilitated had severe disabilities.

Over 15 percent of all referrals were workers injured on the job. TRC returned 2,214 injured workers to employment.

Latest national data available shows that TRC received approximately 5.6 percent of the nation's federal rehabilitation funds, yet we rehabilitated 10.8 percent of those receiving services into employment outcomes.

In FY 1998, the Social Security Administration paid TRC approximately \$5 million for successful rehabilitation of social security beneficiaries.

FY 1998 PLACEMENTS



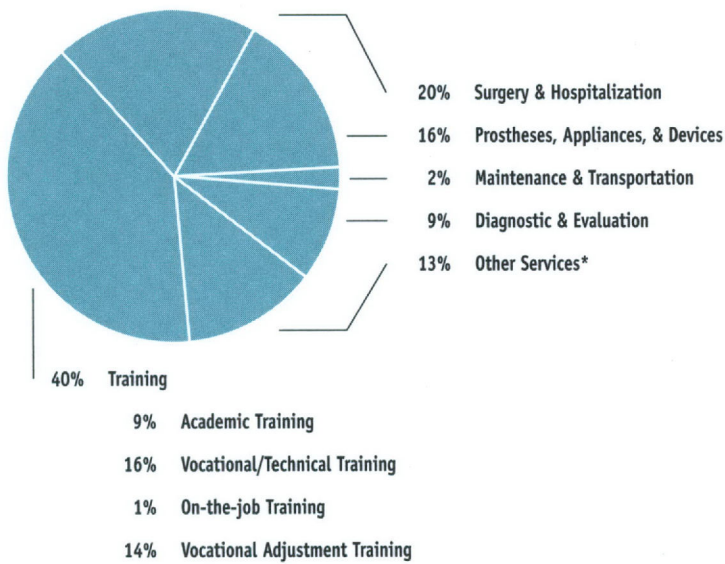
PRIMARY DISABILITIES SERVED

| | |
|---|-----|
| Musculo-Skeletal Disabilities <i>(including back injuries)</i> | 31% |
| Alcoholism and Drug Abuse | 14% |
| Deaf/Hearing Impaired | 5% |
| Mental Illness | 21% |
| Mental Retardation | 3% |
| Borderline Intellectual Functioning | 5% |
| Learning Disabilities | 6% |
| Cardiac/Respiratory/Circulatory | 4% |
| Digestive Disorders | 6% |
| Epilepsy | 1% |
| Traumatic Brain Injury | 2% |
| Other Impairments | 2% |

made sure that precisely the right medication for Jason was being used and then closely monitored the treatment. Next, TRC secured a good tutor and purchased a computer to help with the studies in his career objective. TRC also helped with school expenses and as a result, Jason found he had a wonderful chance.

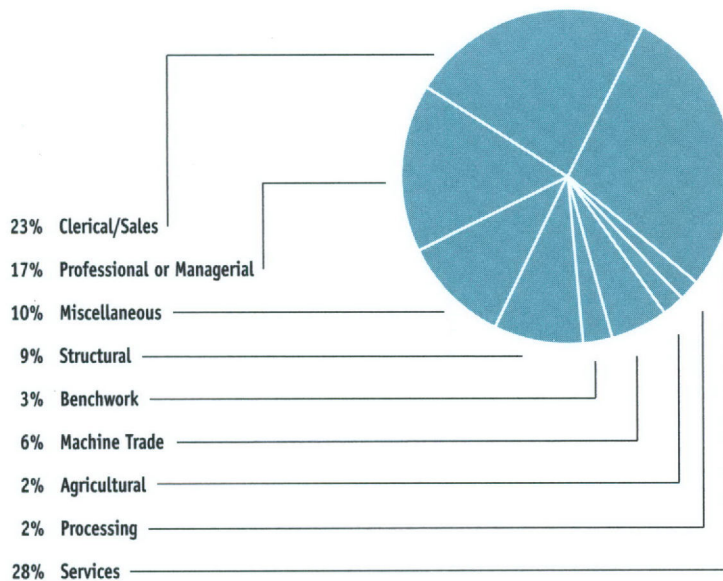
A chance was all it took! He worked as a volunteer at the Converse fire station for over a year. At the same time, he went to firefighter's school. "I knew I had to have some help and if I got it, I knew I could do the work," said Jason. He made the honors list at San Antonio Junior College, was nominated for Emergency Medical Technician of the year, and scored the highest grade in the state EMS certification for the 1998 class. He's taken a job now that many would relish. He's currently under contract as a firefighter at a foreign Air Force base, which pays \$84,000 per year.

FY 1998 SERVICES BOUGHT FOR VR CLIENTS



* Other services include interpreter services; translator services; vehicle, job-site and home modifications; personal attendant services; uniforms, tools, equipment, and computer hardware/software for employment; rehabilitation technology devices/services; other self employment services; and room and board for academic or vocational training.

TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES IN FY 1998



CLIENT SATISFACTION FINDINGS

Satisfaction with services is an important measure of our success. The best way to find this out is to go to the source: our clients. This year, 12,914 former clients were polled through a telephone survey and the results indicate:

Over 91.8 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience with TRC.

96.7 percent said they were treated with courtesy and respect.

90.5 percent said they had a part in the planning of services.

Over 93 percent expressed satisfaction with their TRC counselor.

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS

Employed clients' average weekly earnings after TRC services were nearly six times greater than before receiving services.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Supported Employment serves clients of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program who need ongoing support to maintain competitive employment. Counselors ensure that clients in this program have the opportunity and support necessary to work in their communities.

BENEFITS

TRC provides supported employment services to VR clients with the most severe disabilities who need job support services (such as job coaching) to become employed.

TRC provides the job support services leading to supported employment

outcomes. After clients are stable on the job, other entities provide the extended, ongoing job supports needed to maintain employment.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

Supported Employment funds are authorized by Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act. There is no state match required. The funds are used only for time-limited services leading to supported employment outcomes.

In State FY 1998, TRC served 4,503 clients through supported employment services; TRC served 873 more clients than expected in this program.

In State FY 1998, 1,180 supported employment clients achieved successful outcomes, 206 more than anticipated.



donald KNIGHT

His dream was to be a mechanic. Donald Knight, who has a severe learning disability and speech impediment, had a job working as a supervisor of a highway maintenance crew but he wanted more. TRC Counselor Elizabeth Oliva worked with Donald to make the transition into a career he wanted.

due to a hiring freeze. When hired, Walmart gave Donald on-the-job training. TRC has also provided ongoing job support that helps him stay successful in his employment. His job coach works with Donald and his employer on communication, job schedules and to resolve any issues that may arise.

Oliva contacted Becky Andrews, an employment specialist, and they found him a job at Walmart as a mechanic's helper. Donald stuck with it through several interviews and a three-month waiting period

"When people like Donald succeed in their vocational choice, it makes the job all worthwhile," says Oliva. "And when you get an employer like Walmart that can look beyond the obstacles to what a person can do, that's what makes it work." Says Jeffrey Dengler, Walmart Tire and Lube Express manager: "Donald had the will to want to learn and work on cars. He's good with the customers and good on the cars. We could use several more employees like him."

marion HOLLERS

Marion Hollers makes a strong statement for consumer choice. As a person with mental retardation, she had worked in a sheltered workshop environment for over 28 years in Wichita Falls. When she saw friends leave to work in a community setting, she decided that she wanted to do that too.

There were concerns that she would not be able to adjust to the stress of working with customers in a fast paced environment. Her mother was afraid Marion would be offended or hurt by those who did not understand her condition. But Marion's determination never faltered.

Through a coordinated effort by TRC, Work Services Corporation and her family, Marion went to work at Bargain Depot. A year later, Marion is thriving in her new environment. She greets customers when they come in, bags items

and helps out in the snack area. Her employer says hiring her is one of the best decisions she ever made.

"We worked hard to get Marion to a point where she could reach her dreams," says Glenda Crowley, her TRC counselor. "But the outcome is definitely worth the effort. And anyone who knows Marion agrees."



EXTENDED REHABILITATION SERVICES

Extended Rehabilitation Services (ERS) is a state-funded program that helps Texans with severe disabilities work by offering ongoing job supports. While ERS provides sheltered employment opportunities when required, the main focus of this program is on integrated employment in the community.

BENEFITS

ERS services provide the job supports necessary for clients to work.

ERS clients earn an average wage of \$4.52 per hour.

With earnings from their jobs, ERS clients can pay back a portion of their salaries in taxes.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

Located in 29 cities around the state.

34.5 full-time employees, both direct and administrative support, serve the ERS client population.

In State FY 1998, TRC served 1,348 people in this program; 975 were served in community integrated employment and 373 were served in an alternative sheltered workshop setting.

TRANSITION SERVICES

TRC VR counselors provide consultative and technical assistance to public school personnel in planning the move from school to work for students with disabilities. TRC regional transition specialists assist VR counselors in coordination with schools, independent school districts, and regional Educational Service Centers.

BENEFITS

VR counselors assist eligible students to plan for postgraduation employment opportunities.

VR counselors encourage appropriate referrals from local schools in the last two years the student is in high school.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

This program provides a framework for TRC, the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and the Texas Education Agency to coordinate

services to support transition of students with disabilities from schools and/or institutions to the community.

As a result of collaborative efforts with schools, TRC received 4,595 referrals in State FY 1998.

In State FY 1998 TRC served 11,487 eligible students in our VR program.

Each TRC region has a regional transition specialist to assist counselors collaborating with school districts and Education Service Centers.



angela LABOR

To a teenager, independence is driving a car. Angela Labor has had to work harder than most to achieve this dream. Angela was born with a severe form of osteogenesis imperfecta, which caused fragility of bones and retarded bone growth. Angela has experienced numerous broken bones and uses a wheelchair due to extreme shortness of her arms and legs.

Angela came to TRC as she completed her junior year in high school for help in transition planning. TRC Counselor Jerri Locke has helped Angela prepare for her

majoring in Social Work, specializing in child development.

Besides tuition and books, TRC provided Angela with a specialized wheelchair to help her get around campus. Most recently, TRC assisted with a vehicle modification that will allow her to get to and from her classes. Both the wheelchair and van modification has taken a lot of thought and coordination to adapt to Angela's unique needs.

future and Angela started taking courses after high school at a local community college. This year, she transferred to University of North Texas where she is

"The experience for her to drive a car has made a big difference in her life, says Glenn Labor, Angela's father. "Angie is a very bright student and very self-sufficient. What TRC has done to help her is more than we could have imagined. We'd never dreamed she would be able to drive. TRC working with Lift Aids on this modification adds more to her life than we could ever explain."

Besides school, Angela is looking forward to getting out with friends. "Since I was 16, my friends have been carting me around," she smiles. "They have told me it's now my turn to drive."



laurie SEPULVADO

Oct. 1, 1998 was graduation day for Laurie Sepulvado. She didn't celebrate it in the traditional cap and gown but with a dark blue silk and sequins ballroom dress and a slow waltz with her husband Larry. She had come a long way to get to this point and beamed ear to ear with applause from fellow students and families at the Transitional Learning Community (TLC) in Galveston.

Laurie and Larry were national country and western dance champions who owned their own dance studio in Houston when, on Aug. 21, 1997, Laurie

had a terrible car accident. At first she was not expected to survive the accident, but she did. Then it was predicted that she would forever remain in a vegetative state, yet she slowly improved.

As a person with severe traumatic brain injury and fractures to her right arm and legs, Laurie continues to defy the odds. Through intensive therapies at The Institute for Research and Rehabilitation (T.I.R.R., and the Transitional Learning Community, Laurie again learned skills we take for granted – walking, talking, getting around the kitchen, bathing ... the essentials.

COMPREHENSIVE REHABILITATION SERVICES

Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services helps Texans with traumatic spinal cord and brain injuries receive intensive therapies to increase independence. Created by the 72nd Legislature, a percentage of court costs collected for

misdemeanor and felony convictions goes into a special fund to pay for these time limited services.

BENEFITS

Timely and intensive rehabilitation is crucial for persons with traumatic spinal cord and brain injuries to reenter their communities and/or live as independently as possible.

Provides needed time limited services for persons not eligible for vocational rehabilitation or other comparable benefits.

Services include inpatient comprehensive medical rehabilitation at an accredited rehabilitation hospital, outpatient services and post-acute brain injury services.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

In State FY 1998, TRC served 504 clients in the CRS program.

Average cost of services is about \$20,071 per person served.



The cost of such rehabilitation was expensive and the Sepulvado's insurance quickly ran out. Larry was forced to close their dance studio. Through Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services, TRC was able to pay most of the cost for Laurie's rehabilitation at both TIRR and TLC. And the dance community rallied behind the Sepulvados with fund-raising efforts.

Larry chronicled Laurie's journey on a web page (www.stepnstyle.com) where, through weekly updates, readers get an inside look at the roller coaster ride of hopes and frustrations that a family faces when watching a loved one struggle with traumatic brain injury ... the memory loss, the uncontrolled emotions, the painful work to achieve small successes.

"The fact that Laurie came into TLC with a wheelchair and was actually dancing now as she was leaving was quite an accomplishment and there was hardly a dry eye in the house," writes Larry in his Oct. 7 update. "Graduation was a way of celebrating Laurie's progress while she was there."

Their next challenge is adjusting to Laurie being home again. "Essentially Laurie needs 24-hour supervision but my time at school is especially critical to get covered," continued Larry in his update. "... Surely this will all sort itself out and make sense. It's great to have Laurie home after 13 months and she loves it. The challenge is to keep her active and stimulated so that she doesn't regress. Hopefully her progress will continue."

Photo: (top right) Laurie and Larry dancing at her TLC graduation day.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

Independent Living Centers and Services promote self-sufficiency despite severe disability – providing people with disabilities with improved mobility, communication, personal adjustment, and self-direction.

Independent Living Services provides adaptive equipment, assistive devices, counseling, training and other services to achieve the greatest degree of independence possible.

Independent Living Centers are operated by and for people with disabilities

throughout the state to provide assistance through peer counseling, information and referral, advocacy support and other measures that encourage people to make their own decisions.

BENEFITS

Both IL centers and services help people with disabilities live independently at home and in the community.

Case service funds provide needed assistance to people who have no other resources.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

Currently there are 10 state-supported IL centers. Nine of the 10 receive state and federal funds; one is solely state funded.

In State FY 1998, 10 TRC independent living counselors across the state served 1,894 people.

In State FY 1998, 3,822 clients were served through IL centers.



douglas KENNEDY

In the blink of an eye, life changes. Douglas Kennedy was 24 years old and returning home one night when there was a terrible head-on collision. At first, it was not known whether he would live. He sustained a C1-2 injury that left him with only facial movements and speaking between puffs on a respirator.

Ten years later, Douglas lives with his parents in the small east Texas town of Corrigan, which is about 20 miles south of Lufkin. Through today's technology, Douglas can keep in touch with his friends and the world through a specialized computer that he can operate.

TRC was able to purchase this equipment for Douglas through Independent Living Services. Stephen Price, his TRC counselor, says finding a system to meet Douglas' unique needs took teamwork and a lot of thought. After much conferring and Douglas giving full input into what he wanted, TRC set him up with a system that operated on a sip and puff, morse-code method.

Douglas uses the new system to surf the Internet, e-mail friends or play a game of Monopoly. Price says that the computer makes all the difference for Douglas in being connected to the world.

PERSONAL ATTENDANT SERVICES

Personal Attendant Services (PAS) helps persons with severe disabilities with vital daily activities such as bathing and dressing for work, as well as shopping, eating, cooking, and cleaning. A state-funded program, TRC shares the cost of attendant services with employed clients at an amount determined by their income.

BENEFITS

This program assists persons with severe disabilities by paying for personal attendant services – the cost of which is one of the greatest obstacles to employment.

This program allows working people with disabilities to receive long-term care outside of institutional models, such as nursing homes.

PAS gradually removes dependency on public benefits and increases self-empowerment and self-support.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

The amount of co-payment is based on individual monthly incomes and ranges from \$12 to \$750 a month.

In State FY 1998, 142 people were served in four sites and 175,513 hours of service were provided.



nancy CROWTHER

throughout my college years, and my counselor had a tremendous impact on me."

When Nancy graduated from college, the next step just seemed natural. But the problem came when she had to hire her own attendants. Room, board and a van payment are a lot for someone to handle financially, especially when just starting out in the work world. "That's where the PAS (Personal Attendant Services) program at TRC helped again," says Nancy. "I provide room and board, and TRC helps pay a salary to an attendant to work 26 hours a week."

Now approaching middle age, Nancy has outlived her parents. Through technology and healthy living, many people with MD are living longer and there is not a lot of history about what to expect. Attendant care is critically important. Without family support, many end up in nursing homes.

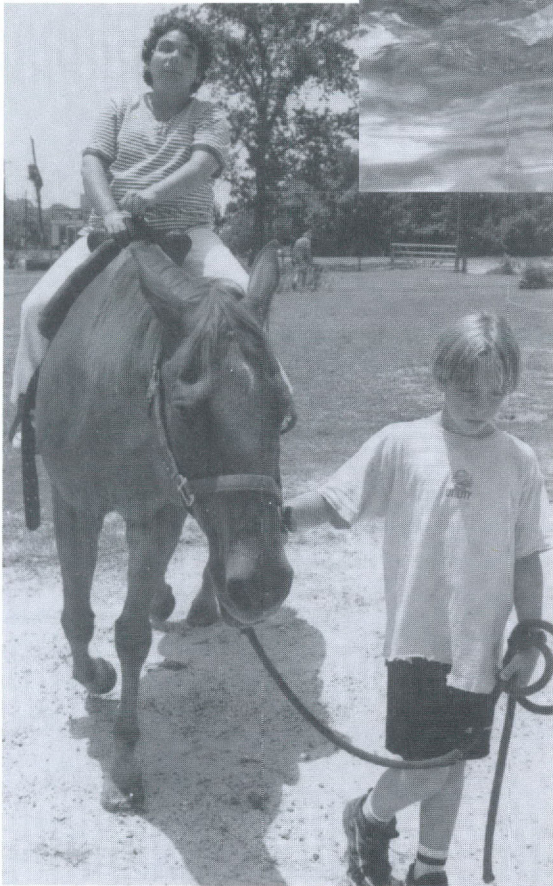
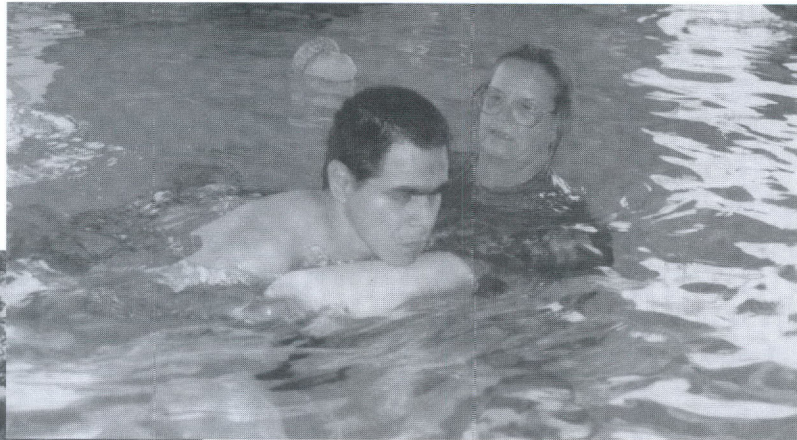
"I've got to have someone help me get up in the morning, bathe, take care of personal hygiene and cook," stated Nancy. "It's just a fact of my life that I deal with. If I have someone there with me, I stay at work. I stay out of the hospital, and everyone benefits."

Photo: Nancy Crowther (left) at home with her attendant, Lydia Pedraza.

Although Nancy Crowther uses a wheelchair, it is easy to overlook her disability. She works for Capital Metro as an accessibility transportation specialist. Nancy's coworkers don't understand the vital role her attendant has in: her being able to work. They see her as an intelligent, articulate and capable coworker.

Nancy has Spinal Muscular Atrophy, a form of Muscular Dystrophy (MD). Doctors told her parents she would probably not live past 20 and they could expect to care for her the rest of her life. When she graduated high school, she wanted to go on to college. For the first time in her life, Nancy had to have someone other than family help her with basic needs like dressing, eating, bathing, hygiene, cooking, and home management. That's when Nancy got to know TRC.

"Without someone to help me get dressed and around campus, I could never have made it," recalled Nancy. "TRC was on campus and there to help. They provided an attendant to help me



DEAF-BLIND WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES PROGRAM

The Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities Program meets the very special needs of those who are deaf and blind and have at least one other disability – providing the opportunity to increase independence and communication. Due to increased funding by the state Legislature and Medicaid, this program now serves a greater number of people with a wider variety of services.

BENEFITS

Consumers, with assistance from their families and program providers, choose from among three options for residential support.

In addition to residential support, this program offers family training and a summer camping experience to individuals with these disabilities.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

The residential support program serves about 100 persons per year.

In State FY 1998, 104 families benefited from specialized training and guidance.

In State FY 1998, 64 persons who are deaf-blind with multiple disabilities attended a special summer camp.

In TRC's Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities Program, clients are offered opportunities to enhance their quality of life and increase communication skills.

Photos: Clients of the Lighthouse of Houston, Pilin Ibarra (upper right) and Patty Salazar (above), enjoy weekly activities such as swimming and horseback riding.

Disability Determination Services

Disability Determination Services (DDS), funded entirely through the Social Security Administration, establishes eligibility for Texans with severe disabilities who apply for Social Security Disability Insurance and/or Supplemental Security Income. Texans with disabilities apply for benefits at their local Social Security Office and their applications are forwarded to DDS for determination.

BENEFITS

Federal dollars brought to Texas through disability benefits reach over \$299.6 million per month.

DDS Maintains offices in Houston, Arlington and Austin for face-to-face hearings for people who have been determined to be no longer eligible for disability benefits.

CURRENT DESCRIPTION

In Federal FY 1998, DDS processed 238,775 disability cases for Texans.

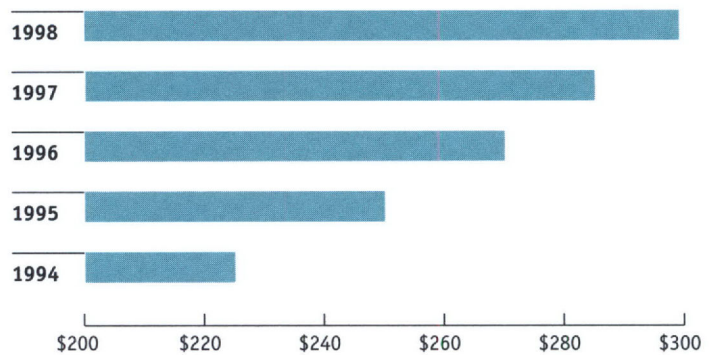
In Federal FY 1998, DDS reached a 94.5 percent accuracy rate as audited by the Social Security Administration.

Last year, SSA rated the DDS number one among the eight largest DDSs when considering key performance measures.

In 1998, DDS received the prestigious SSA Commissioner's Citation for "outstanding public service."

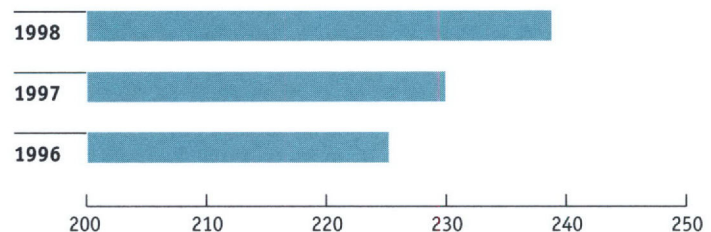
TOTAL MONTHLY PAYMENTS TO TEXANS

(in millions)



CASES PROCESSED

(in thousands)



ada GOMEZ

Ada Gomez, a Salvadoran immigrant living in Dallas, was in an auto accident at age 16 where she sustained serious head injuries. Prior to the accident Ada had been an exceptional student. Afterwards, she fought to walk again, experienced epileptic seizures and struggled to complete her high school degree. Because of her experience in the accident, Ada decided she wanted to be a physical therapist and she turned to TRC to achieve that goal.

During a neuro-psychological evaluation, it was determined that the extent of Ada's brain injury was far more severe than anyone suspected. Ada showed significant short-term memory loss. Her mother admitted her family rarely left Ada for fear she would get lost, not be able to remember her phone number or even recall where she lived. Although comfortably bilingual, many times Ada would temporarily "lock up" in Spanish and have to move to English to finish her thought. When speaking English, it was the other way around.

Through intensive cognitive retraining with Pate Rehabilitation Endeavors, Ada learned to cope with her limitations. A memory book she carried kept the important details in her life such as directions, phone numbers and sequential



steps to follow to complete tasks. Even with excellent progress, it soon became apparent to her and others that she could not perform in an academic environment. TRC Counselor Roger Felipe says that helping Ada accept this and move on with her life was critical to her success.

Upon completion of her cognitive training, Ada went to work for American Southwest Insurance Managers, Inc. where she helps track over 600 files per day. "Ada had unique challenges going into this job that we needed to work with," says Fate Placement Specialist Betty Harris. "We used a notebook to show her how to find her way around the building, how to clock in, and procedures for doing her job."

Ada no longer needs the extra assistance on the job and her supervisor is very pleased with her performance. Ada is happy as well. "I learned to work without fear," she smiled. "I am a lot freer now to do things I want to do." Roger Felipe agrees. "As Ada progressed, I noticed she was becoming more proactive and less dependent. Her mother says she has become much more like the daughter she had before the accident."

ADMINISTRATION

Vital administrative services are provided by three divisions: Financial Services, Administrative Services and Office of the Commissioner.

Financial Services provides the data, information, allocation, payment and accounting to ensure TRC fiscal accountability and efficiency.

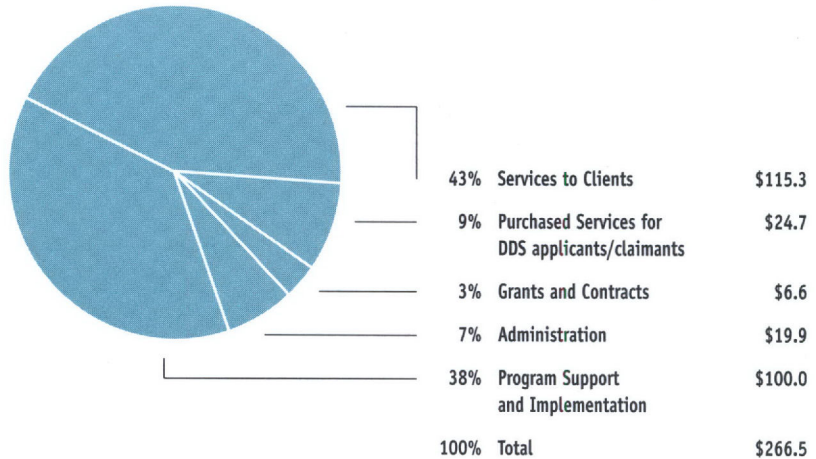
Administrative Services provides behind-the-scenes support in the following areas: human resources, staff development, buyer support, facility management, material distribution, library, and other operations support services.

The Office of the Commissioner provides the vision and executive leadership for the agency. Offices include general counsel, subrogation, management audit, automation services, civil rights, medical services, and planning.

TRC also provides administrative support to the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities. The Council is a 30 member board dedicated to ensuring that all Texans with developmental disabilities have the opportunity to be independent, productive and valued members of their communities.

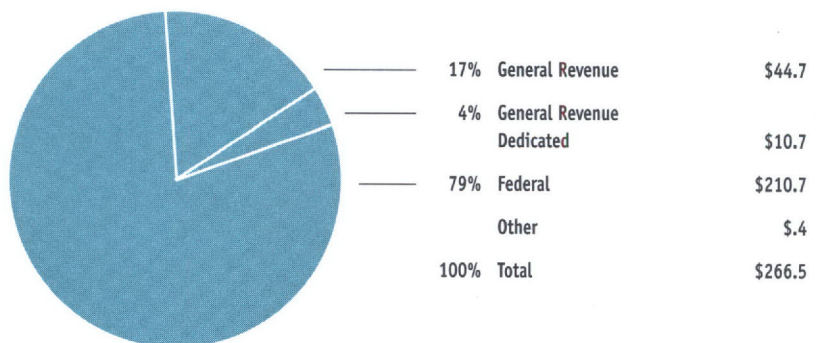
FEDERAL FY 1998 AGENCY EXPENDITURE BUDGET

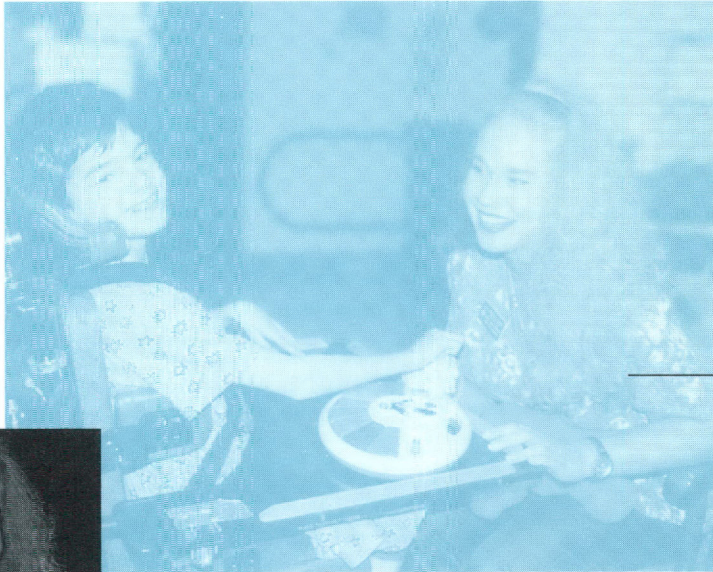
(in millions)



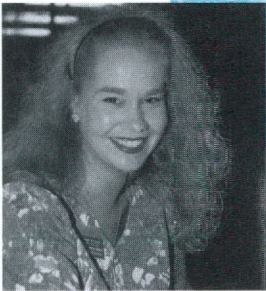
FEDERAL FY 1998 TOTAL FUNDS

(in millions)





donna CHERRY



Donna Cherry, who has cerebral palsy, came to TRC right after high school. She knew she wanted to be a speech therapist and needed

TRC's help to make that dream a reality. TRC paid her tuition and books to attend Stephen F. Austin State University where she received her master's degree. Donna says, with the large campus and her physical limitations, she would not have been able to get to her classes without the scooter TRC provided.

Donna and her TRC Counselor Patsy Heard are very close. "She knew what she wanted and went for it. Going off to college was a big step for Donna but she did very well," says Patsy. "Donna is beautiful inside and out. She is a paragon of what TRC is all about. We helped her become independent and she is helping others to do the same."

Donna now lives in Longview and works for the Easter Seals Society with the Parkinson's Outreach Program and at the Truman W. Smith Childcare Facility in Glendewater. "I share a unique bond with my patients because of my life experience," she says. "It's not just a paycheck for me. It's a way of life as well."

Photo: Donna with one of her clients at Truman W. Smith Childcare Facility.

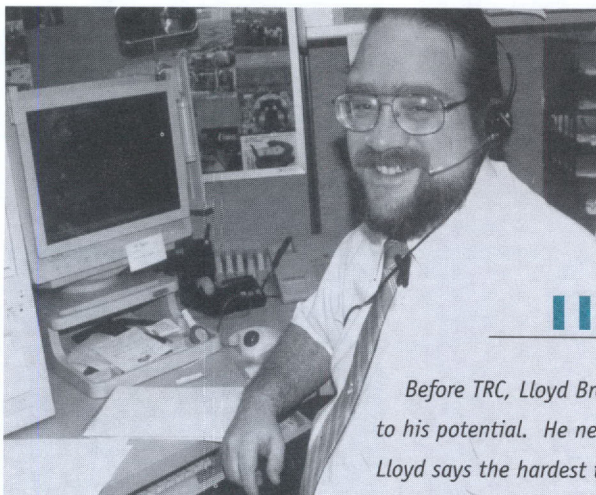


For over 16 years, William Hudson had taught high school math. In 1995, he became seriously ill with liver malfunction and joined a long list of people waiting for a transplant. In 1997, three to four weeks from death, Hudson was saying his goodbyes to loved ones. Then a miracle happened and a liver became available.

Now came life after the trauma of the illness and transplant. Hudson had not worked for two years. He was not sure what he could do physically and was at a low level both mentally and

emotionally. Due to the illness causing high ammonia levels in his blood, Hudson lost parts of his memory, including his math skills. He knew he could not return to a high school classroom because of the stress and danger of catching colds or flu.

Through a support group, Hudson found out about TRC. "The next day I called," says Hudson. "I was living on disability at the time. I had a lot of concern about the cost of retraining. I didn't know of any resources. I didn't know what I could do with the skills



Lloyd BROWN

Before TRC, Lloyd Brown, age 35, felt he had never worked up to his potential. He never kept a job for any length of time. Lloyd says the hardest thing he has ever done was to step outside the "failure loop" and do things differently. Part of doing things differently was to contact TRC.

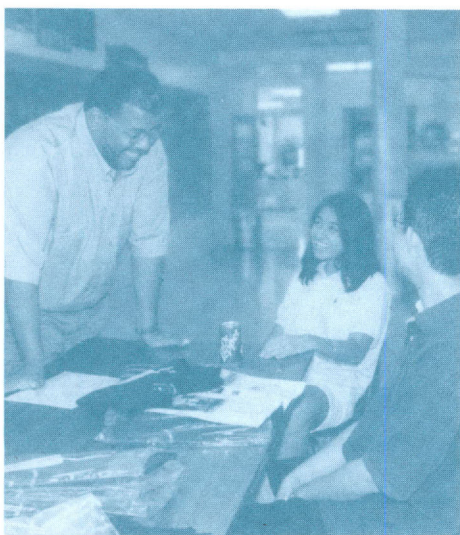
Lloyd became a TRC client in 1994. TRC provided tuition and books for computer training as well as medical expenses for treatment of depression. Lloyd says that support from TRC Counselor Laura Rook also made a big difference in his success. "I got a lot of encouragement from Laura. I will be honest with you — I don't know how successful I would have been without Laura's support. She took a personal interest in everything I did. She always returned my phone calls."

Before graduation, Lloyd looked for a job in Wichita Falls for two months without any luck. TRC sponsored a trip for him to go to the Southwest Technical Job Fair at the InfoMart in Dallas. From this trip, Lloyd received several job offers and took a job with PageMart Wireless, Inc.

As leasing and site coordinator, Lloyd says he is "absolutely suited to a tee for the job" and is exactly where he wants to be. His employer agrees. "He is developing very well professionally and I have encouraged him to further his education," says Sandra Groves, senior site acquisition manager for PageMart. "I think he has opportunity here."

"Don't ever stop and say this is where it ends because it doesn't end there," says Lloyd. "I was at the point where I didn't think anything was ever going to happen with my life. Then all of a sudden, a whole new vista opened up because I decided to take the steps necessary to make the change. I owe it all to Laura and TRC."

william HUDSON



Worth Independent School District. Now, he is assistant principal of Diamond Hill High School in north Fort Worth.

Hudson says he relishes the opportunity to work with students again. But the experience altered his life.

"This has helped me do more of what I thought I had always done: separate important things from unimportant things," he says. "There were things I thought were important before the transplant that now take a backseat."

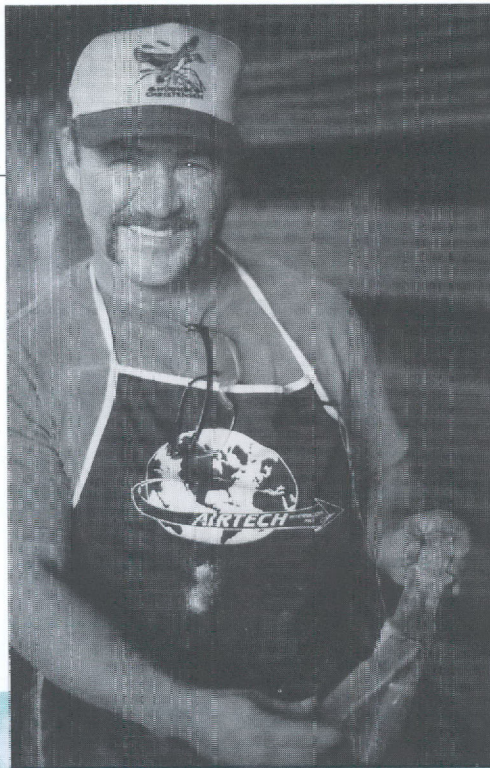
that I had. I didn't know what was possible."

Hudson credits TRC Counselor, Signe Margit, and Kathryn Craven, placement specialist, for getting him back on track and instilling confidence. Now, Hudson is back where he is needed — helping teachers and students. First, Hudson was hired as an educational specialist by Fort

roy DOSS

Before Roy Doss was shot, he never had a problem figuring out what he could do for a living. Roy grew up in the Big Spring area and even though jobs are scarce out there, knowing how to weld had always been a good skill to have. When the rifle bullet spun into his back, it took out significant pieces of his spine and it also eliminated what he'd figured was the better part of his future. What was left was a considerable amount of uncertainty.

"All you have to do is look someone in the eye and you can tell right off if they're ok... Roy's ok," says Paul Hopper, projects manager at Fibercom. He says he knew a lot about Roy as soon as Roy and



his TRC counselor, Rick Turner, had spent a few minutes in the factory. "He was completely willing to get in there and get it done," adds Hopper. "We've found that if Roy can reach it, he can work with it. We're proud of him." As is so often the case, mobility and access are critical elements to add to a good job match. TRC purchased a chair suited to what Roy needed to do and a thick leather apron so the molten splash of welding parts roll off onto the floor.

He points to his van. It takes him to his house that's miles out in the sandy hills. "I've killed six snakes so far this year around the house, the last one right over there." Roy intends to continue to live in a way that suits his nature. He's fiercely independent, responsible and productive. He nods over to his five year-old son and says: "I just want to live a decent life and take good care of that little boy over there." Then he yanks himself to the top of a four-wheeler and cranks it. It has mounts for a deer rifle and a shotgun. His son scrambles up next to him and they ride to the long shed out back. They'll weld for a while then the family will have supper.



county VR listings

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

FEDERAL FY 1998

| County | Weekly Income (average in dollars) | | Successfully Employed | Total Eligible Served |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Before Services | After Services | | |
| A | | | | |
| Anderson | 18 | 198 | 49 | 259 |
| Andrews | 15 | 312 | 17 | 56 |
| Angelina | 35 | 256 | 86 | 354 |
| Aransas | 29 | 278 | 31 | 84 |
| Archer | 91 | 270 | 20 | 81 |
| Armstrong | 0 | 234 | 2 | 6 |
| Atascosa | 15 | 236 | 19 | 148 |
| Austin | 135 | 270 | 24 | 108 |
| B | | | | |
| Bailey | 125 | 250 | 2 | 13 |
| Bandera | 71 | 252 | 17 | 109 |
| Bastrop | 69 | 311 | 59 | 377 |
| Baylor | 108 | 188 | 5 | 35 |
| Bee | 97 | 344 | 20 | 117 |
| Bell | 52 | 265 | 264 | 1,046 |
| Bexar | 33 | 258 | 1,728 | 7,409 |
| Blanco | 22 | 286 | 10 | 58 |
| Borden | 0 | 210 | 1 | 2 |
| Bosque | 29 | 316 | 12 | 86 |
| Bowie | 58 | 254 | 116 | 511 |
| Brazoria | 60 | 284 | 238 | 1,008 |
| Brazos | 104 | 307 | 146 | 789 |
| Brewster | 26 | 196 | 25 | 78 |
| Briscoe | N/A | N/A | 0 | 6 |
| Brooks | 25 | 244 | 13 | 39 |
| Brown | 34 | 280 | 46 | 258 |
| Burleson | 87 | 241 | 13 | 51 |
| Burnet | 92 | 247 | 50 | 195 |
| C | | | | |
| Caldwell | 109 | 291 | 39 | 255 |
| Calhoun | 113 | 308 | 21 | 79 |
| Callahan | 43 | 327 | 15 | 60 |
| Cameron | 61 | 242 | 342 | 1,692 |
| Camp | 31 | 350 | 9 | 52 |
| Carson | 14 | 279 | 5 | 23 |
| Cass | 65 | 205 | 46 | 182 |
| Castro | 117 | 245 | 11 | 46 |
| Chambers | 19 | 318 | 18 | 114 |

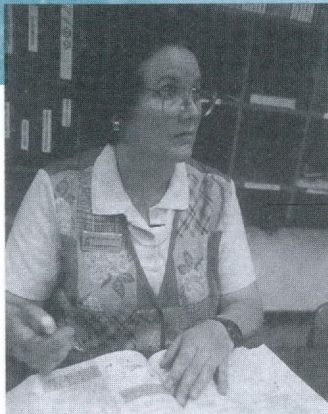
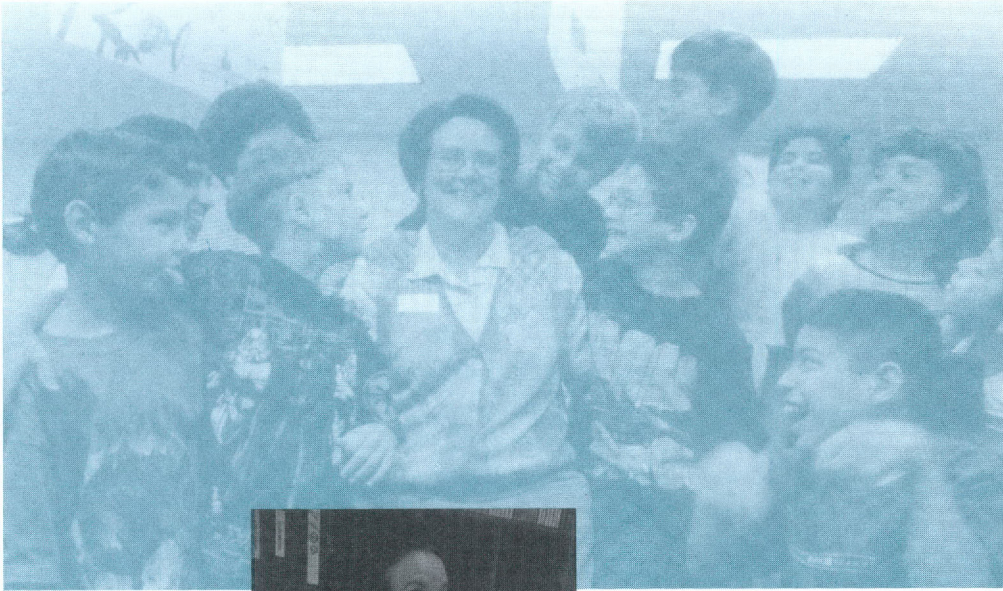
| County | Weekly Income (average in dollars) | | Successfully Employed | Total Eligible Served |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Before Services | After Services | | |
| Cherokee | 49 | 303 | 61 | 348 |
| Childress | 43 | 159 | 3 | 31 |
| Clay | 29 | 226 | 13 | 70 |
| Cochran | 138 | 305 | 3 | 11 |
| Coke | 42 | 262 | 6 | 16 |
| Coleman | 80 | 252 | 13 | 47 |
| Collin | 68 | 371 | 350 | 1,781 |
| Collingsworth | 43 | 184 | 11 | 25 |
| Colorado | 49 | 243 | 21 | 72 |
| Comal | 72 | 278 | 73 | 437 |
| Comanche | 196 | 306 | 12 | 56 |
| Concho | N/A | N/A | 0 | 5 |
| Cooke | 58 | 299 | 49 | 213 |
| Coryell | 42 | 294 | 50 | 208 |
| Cottle | 11 | 265 | 4 | 11 |
| Crane | N/A | N/A | 0 | 23 |
| Crockett | 0 | 236 | 1 | 11 |
| Crosby | 16 | 342 | 8 | 29 |
| Culberson | 68 | 196 | 5 | 16 |
| D | | | | |
| Dallam | 30 | 280 | 10 | 25 |
| Dallas | 53 | 328 | 2,561 | 11,834 |
| Dawson | 141 | 211 | 15 | 46 |
| Deaf Smith | 37 | 215 | 11 | 72 |
| Delta | 0 | 270 | 4 | 36 |
| Denton | 68 | 362 | 377 | 1,640 |
| DeWitt | 114 | 236 | 19 | 86 |
| Dickens | 150 | 283 | 6 | 11 |
| Dimmit | 86 | 153 | 8 | 40 |
| Donley | 0 | 351 | 4 | 17 |
| Duval | 58 | 267 | 35 | 110 |
| E | | | | |
| Eastland | 29 | 278 | 20 | 81 |
| Ector | 51 | 277 | 140 | 742 |
| Edwards | 25 | 220 | 2 | 8 |
| Ellis | 61 | 330 | 117 | 599 |
| El Paso | 40 | 242 | 785 | 3,001 |
| Erath | 57 | 303 | 71 | 377 |

| County | Weekly Income (average in dollars) | | Successfully Employed | Total Eligible Served |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Before Services | After Services | | |
| F | | | | |
| Falls | 16 | 174 | 14 | 43 |
| Fannin | 42 | 280 | 35 | 155 |
| Fayette | 110 | 237 | 29 | 109 |
| Fisher | 25 | 266 | 4 | 14 |
| Floyd | 116 | 278 | 18 | 38 |
| Foard | 0 | 185 | 2 | 8 |
| Fort Bend | 49 | 299 | 217 | 1,086 |
| Franklin | 22 | 236 | 9 | 38 |
| Freestone | 75 | 239 | 10 | 47 |
| Frio | 17 | 183 | 39 | 124 |
| G | | | | |
| Gaines | 46 | 256 | 5 | 26 |
| Galveston | 26 | 324 | 358 | 1,691 |
| Garza | 0 | 259 | 4 | 10 |
| Gillespie | 67 | 252 | 18 | 77 |
| Glasscock | N/A | N/A | 0 | 2 |
| Goliad | 0 | 357 | 10 | 40 |
| Gonzales | 79 | 273 | 36 | 169 |
| Gray | 28 | 223 | 38 | 123 |
| Grayson | 75 | 277 | 184 | 991 |
| Gregg | 24 | 259 | 178 | 818 |
| Grimes | 134 | 261 | 24 | 70 |
| Guadalupe | 104 | 303 | 90 | 446 |
| H | | | | |
| Hale | 81 | 252 | 67 | 217 |
| Hall | 0 | 160 | 4 | 12 |
| Hamilton | 13 | 299 | 9 | 48 |
| Hansford | 127 | 511 | 5 | 19 |
| Hardeman | 34 | 188 | 7 | 28 |
| Hardin | 28 | 316 | 39 | 173 |
| Harris | 36 | 309 | 3,634 | 16,623 |
| Harrison | 28 | 257 | 61 | 295 |
| Hartley | 0 | 326 | 2 | 3 |
| Haskell | 0 | 523 | 3 | 43 |
| Hays | 70 | 301 | 131 | 665 |
| Hemphill | 0 | 175 | 2 | 21 |
| Henderson | 45 | 298 | 81 | 411 |
| Hidalgo | 31 | 234 | 510 | 2,408 |
| Hill | 40 | 274 | 31 | 184 |
| Hockley | 77 | 328 | 13 | 64 |
| Hood | 46 | 285 | 39 | 275 |
| Hopkins | 44 | 267 | 51 | 205 |
| Houston | 102 | 250 | 26 | 118 |
| Howard | 23 | 256 | 52 | 279 |
| Hudspeth | 0 | 176 | 1 | 6 |
| Hunt | 58 | 308 | 125 | 683 |
| Hutchinson | 57 | 295 | 29 | 103 |
| I | | | | |
| Irion | 0 | 190 | 3 | 8 |

| County | Weekly Income (average in dollars) | | Successfully Employed | Total Eligible Served |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Before Services | After Services | | |
| J | | | | |
| Jack | 55 | 292 | 10 | 38 |
| Jackson | 90 | 270 | 14 | 70 |
| Jasper | 5 | 171 | 36 | 139 |
| Jeff Davis | 275 | 275 | 1 | 5 |
| Jefferson | 29 | 278 | 381 | 1,495 |
| Jim Hogg | 84 | 348 | 8 | 22 |
| Jim Wells | 16 | 224 | 59 | 190 |
| Johnson | 56 | 319 | 132 | 615 |
| Jones | 89 | 309 | 33 | 135 |
| K | | | | |
| Karnes | 108 | 260 | 26 | 113 |
| Kaufman | 34 | 318 | 45 | 226 |
| Kendall | 137 | 330 | 11 | 83 |
| Kenedy | N/A | N/A | 0 | 0 |
| Kent | 63 | 303 | 3 | 12 |
| Kerr | 83 | 277 | 67 | 278 |
| Kimble | 146 | 197 | 4 | 22 |
| King | 250 | 350 | 1 | 1 |
| Kinney | 33 | 330 | 3 | 36 |
| Kleberg | 28 | 260 | 29 | 114 |
| Knox | 53 | 306 | 5 | 26 |
| L | | | | |
| Lamar | 76 | 239 | 138 | 633 |
| Lamb | 101 | 277 | 19 | 45 |
| Lampasas | 89 | 274 | 34 | 148 |
| LaSalle | 31 | 236 | 5 | 34 |
| Lavaca | 98 | 246 | 19 | 88 |
| Lee | 87 | 382 | 13 | 47 |
| Leon | 141 | 255 | 11 | 95 |
| Liberty | 88 | 316 | 65 | 286 |
| Limestone | 11 | 279 | 20 | 86 |
| Lipscomb | 0 | 210 | 4 | 14 |
| Live Oak | 16 | 251 | 9 | 48 |
| Llano | 114 | 280 | 27 | 100 |
| Loving | N/A | N/A | 0 | 0 |
| Lubbock | 51 | 255 | 398 | 1,420 |
| Lynn | 176 | 245 | 8 | 22 |
| M | | | | |
| Madison | 91 | 233 | 11 | 39 |
| Marion | 62 | 194 | 15 | 63 |
| Martin | N/A | N/A | 0 | 10 |
| Mason | 33 | 170 | 2 | 7 |
| Matagorda | 55 | 332 | 59 | 311 |
| Maverick | 53 | 161 | 36 | 185 |
| McCulloch | 9 | 229 | 6 | 22 |
| McLennan | 58 | 259 | 217 | 1,169 |
| McMullen | N/A | N/A | 0 | 6 |
| Medina | 62 | 290 | 23 | 137 |
| Menard | N/A | N/A | 0 | 8 |
| Midland | 53 | 285 | 145 | 638 |
| Milam | 106 | 361 | 18 | 93 |

| County | Weekly Income (average in dollars) | | Successfully Employed | Total Eligible Served |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Before Services | After Services | | |
| Mills | 26 | 311 | 7 | 17 |
| Mitchell | 0 | 303 | 3 | 36 |
| Montague | 74 | 310 | 51 | 191 |
| Montgomery | 94 | 327 | 271 | 1,372 |
| Moore | 56 | 255 | 7 | 46 |
| Morris | 66 | 297 | 11 | 68 |
| Motley | N/A | N/A | 0 | 3 |
| N | | | | |
| Nacogdoches | 21 | 212 | 53 | 241 |
| Navarro | 19 | 268 | 54 | 319 |
| Newton | 19 | 251 | 14 | 36 |
| Nolan | 63 | 269 | 28 | 203 |
| Nueces | 42 | 270 | 371 | 1,442 |
| O | | | | |
| Ochiltree | 0 | 334 | 5 | 20 |
| Oldham | 0 | 245 | 2 | 7 |
| Orange | 47 | 303 | 86 | 423 |
| P | | | | |
| Palo Pinto | 19 | 324 | 32 | 131 |
| Panola | 21 | 203 | 23 | 97 |
| Parker | 35 | 314 | 94 | 454 |
| Parmer | 126 | 291 | 9 | 27 |
| Pecos | 30 | 252 | 38 | 80 |
| Polk | 60 | 211 | 38 | 187 |
| Potter | 58 | 253 | 202 | 849 |
| Presidio | 61 | 275 | 12 | 19 |
| R | | | | |
| Rains | 74 | 296 | 11 | 74 |
| Randall | 70 | 304 | 117 | 500 |
| Reagan | N/A | N/A | 0 | 22 |
| Real | 60 | 147 | 3 | 19 |
| Red River | 30 | 248 | 15 | 78 |
| Reeves | 71 | 199 | 10 | 44 |
| Refugio | 106 | 253 | 14 | 55 |
| Roberts | N/A | N/A | 0 | 1 |
| Robertson | 72 | 254 | 16 | 54 |
| Rockwall | 104 | 356 | 26 | 118 |
| Runnels | 66 | 267 | 5 | 47 |
| Rusk | 69 | 305 | 33 | 154 |
| S | | | | |
| Sabine | 50 | 297 | 4 | 19 |
| San Augustine | 57 | 186 | 7 | 33 |
| San Jacinto | 74 | 254 | 30 | 129 |
| San Patricio | 60 | 294 | 76 | 306 |
| San Saba | 96 | 246 | 16 | 41 |
| Schleicher | 325 | 683 | 2 | 19 |
| Scurry | 2 | 246 | 9 | 61 |
| Shackelford | 92 | 253 | 3 | 18 |
| Shelby | 41 | 153 | 21 | 68 |
| Sherman | 150 | 175 | 1 | 2 |
| Smith | 46 | 267 | 235 | 1,114 |
| Somervell | 60 | 271 | 10 | 57 |

| County | Weekly Income (average in dollars) | | Successfully Employed | Total Eligible Served |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Before Services | After Services | | |
| Starr | 45 | 168 | 41 | 183 |
| Stephens | 16 | 273 | 11 | 58 |
| Sterling | 44 | 282 | 2 | 4 |
| Stonewall | 100 | 223 | 3 | 11 |
| Sutton | 0 | 620 | 1 | 21 |
| Swisher | 44 | 218 | 7 | 65 |
| T | | | | |
| Tarrant | 44 | 322 | 1,806 | 9,265 |
| Taylor | 55 | 281 | 167 | 839 |
| Terrell | 0 | 208 | 2 | 8 |
| Terry | 56 | 240 | 20 | 43 |
| Throckmorton | 0 | 160 | 1 | 17 |
| Titus | 30 | 227 | 22 | 108 |
| Tom Green | 45 | 255 | 142 | 607 |
| Travis | 63 | 338 | 942 | 4,781 |
| Trinity | 44 | 237 | 22 | 92 |
| Tyler | 11 | 300 | 12 | 73 |
| U | | | | |
| Upshur | 18 | 244 | 42 | 232 |
| Upton | 0 | 315 | 3 | 22 |
| Uvalde | 61 | 316 | 30 | 137 |
| V | | | | |
| Val Verde | 43 | 173 | 50 | 173 |
| Van Zandt | 23 | 277 | 35 | 217 |
| Victoria | 94 | 276 | 147 | 659 |
| W | | | | |
| Walker | 76 | 280 | 65 | 319 |
| Waller | 42 | 302 | 24 | 83 |
| Ward | 0 | 198 | 7 | 48 |
| Washington | 96 | 269 | 20 | 158 |
| Webb | 59 | 230 | 258 | 1,101 |
| Wharton | 122 | 237 | 57 | 244 |
| Wheeler | 29 | 216 | 12 | 30 |
| Wichita | 49 | 274 | 340 | 1,482 |
| Wilbarger | 150 | 289 | 23 | 63 |
| Willacy | 18 | 159 | 18 | 124 |
| Williamson | 79 | 334 | 161 | 657 |
| Wilson | 29 | 283 | 24 | 135 |
| Winkler | 0 | 223 | 4 | 19 |
| Wise | 32 | 313 | 48 | 204 |
| Wood | 79 | 328 | 32 | 180 |
| Y | | | | |
| Yoakum | 79 | 196 | 8 | 23 |
| Young | 85 | 255 | 32 | 170 |
| Z | | | | |
| Zapata | 53 | 228 | 16 | 99 |
| Zavala | 73 | 368 | 12 | 51 |
| Totals | | | 23,548 | 108,417 |



Christina Pellegrino starts her workday wrapped up in the imagination of the children in her special education classroom. These kids with unique needs present Chris with a virtual forest of raised arms and ask her to give them some of her time, some of her extensive education, and a bit of her experience as a person with a disability. Teaching kids in elementary school was not the career she started with.

Chris started out as a registered dental hygienist and taught hygiene and dental instrumentation for many years at the university level. Then, the painful back injury (Cauda Equina

christina PELLEGRINO

Syndrome/Herniated Disk L3-4) caused significant mobility impairment, forcing her to seek help.

Trained in the sciences, Chris needed some of that pragmatism to apply to her own situation. "I had to take a hard look at my abilities and I just had to change dreams." When she took that look to discover what she really loved in life, she found that some parts of her ambitious future were important and some could be passed over and "put in perspective." "I didn't see it at first, but teaching kids with disabilities is my calling. I'm in the right place."

Chris credits TRC and her counselor, Armando Lopez, for enabling her success in this new career, "by looking at my case and seeing what resources I had and what I needed ... helping me apply for aid, providing some money for eyeglasses. They bought my books and gave me some good advice. But I didn't have a certificate from the state of Texas to teach." That's what she needed and that's how TRC helped. "I could not have done it without TRC ... no way, no way."

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**TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION
MISSION STATEMENT**

TRC exists to assist people with disabilities to participate in their communities by achieving employment of choice, living as independently as possible and accessing high quality services.