



# Highlights

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## *New grant awards*

### Projects offer range of employment-related services

Five grants to projects across the state that are involved in employment-related activities have been awarded by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission on behalf of the Texas Planning Council.

"It is of great importance to the Council that we develop programs that maximize an individual's potential for living and working in the community," says Lee Veenker, Council chairman. "What is exciting about these projects is that they broaden the continuum of services available to persons with developmental disabilities."

One end of the employment spectrum is represented by the Multi-Dimensional Support System (MSS) project, which operates as one component of Project NETS in the lower Rio Grande Valley. The program is designed to support individuals who are capable of living in the community, but who do not have the skills to move into a sheltered workshop. It is directed at persons with developmental disabilities who have not demonstrated the ability to produce at over 15 percent of the norm, or 50 cents an hour. The program provides these clients with training that may not be vocational in a traditional sense, but enables them to become more competent in the vocational environment.

The MSS program concentrates on teaching daily living skills; community living skills, such as cooking and using public transportation; functional academic skills, such as counting or making change; vocational skills, such as following one-step instructions and learning to stay on task; and other skills that enable persons to become more capable at home and at work.

"We see this as an employment-related area," says Veenker, "because it is the entry level for teaching skills that clients need in order to be successful in a vocational setting. It is our premise that these skills are trainable. And on a developmental continuum, this is where we need to start. We need to teach skills that help clients with very severe disabilities become more productive and independent and at some time in the future move into the vocational arena." The project, which began in Sept. 1986, is expected to serve 15 clients at its Edinburg site and 15 clients in Brownsville through May 1987. The project intends to serve at least 40 clients from each location by 1989. The Texas Rehabilitation Commission, as the Council's administering agency, has awarded \$202,258 to Tropical Texas Center for MHMR for the first 10 months of its multi-year grant period.

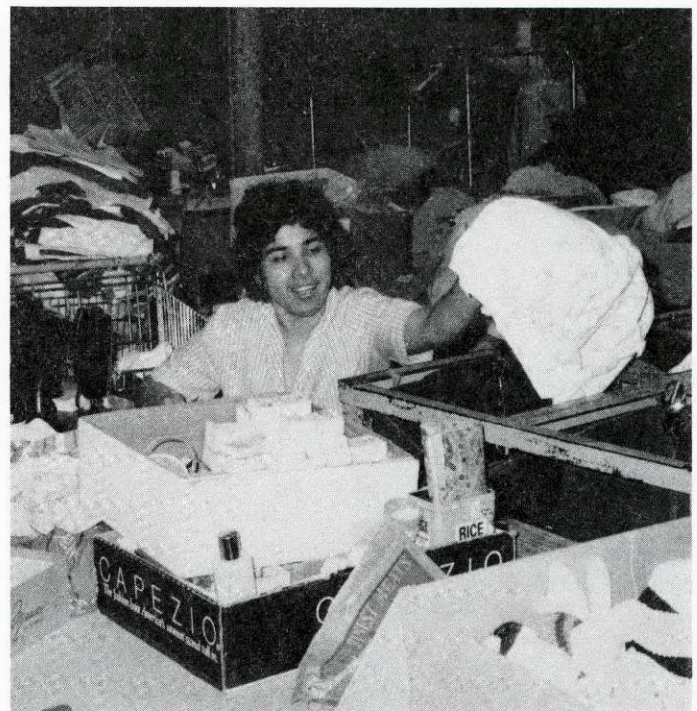
"DD funds are also supporting four projects that look at the other end of the employment spectrum," said Veenker. "The council contends that not all people who are in sheltered workshops need to be there."

Historically sheltered workshops have not had a very positive record of placement into competitive employment. For one thing, in most instances funds are available to support the employment and not the placement activities. Secondly, the traditional assumption of service providers has usually been that individuals in sheltered workshops were not capable of competitive employment.

The Council has selected four projects to demonstrate, through a variety of models, that it is possible to move from sheltered to competitive employment.

Capital Area Easter Seals has been awarded a grant of \$116,306 for the first year of a multi-year project. During the first year, the project will analyze jobs and use job coaches in

*Continued on page 2.*



*New project at Goodwill-San Antonio uses supported job activities to enable clients to transfer the skills they learn in a sheltered workshop to competitive employment.*



## Working together at grass roots and administrative levels

### Transition Services Task Force — SCR 129 —

Consumer groups and state agencies have jointly established a task force to improve services that bridge the gap between school and adult life for persons with disabilities. "The Transition Services Task Force has been organized to accomplish at the grass roots consumer level what the Senate Concurrent Resolution 129 agreement does at the administrative level," says Pat McCallum, chair of the task force. "As more people with disabilities begin living in the community, it is essential to plan and prepare for the vocational, residential, recreational, social and health care needs of these individuals."

The organization, which is statewide in scope, receives staff support from Advocacy, Inc. Its objectives are to identify areas of need, gather information and make recommendations to the Legislature and service providers. The group currently has five subcommittees: Education, Vocational and Habilitation Options, Community Resources, Public Awareness, and the "Pulling It Together," (P.I.T.) Committee.

McCallum says the task force is especially eager to have more participation from consumers and advocacy groups. "People with disabilities and their families are the ones who will be affected by the recommendations and legislative initiatives of the task force. Their participation and input are crucial to its success." For more information on the Transition Services Task Force, contact Pat McCallum or Mary Faithfull at (512) 454-4816.

In response to the directive of the 69th Legislature in Senate Concurrent Resolution 129, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and the Texas Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation have entered into an agreement to work together to provide transition services for persons with disabilities who are moving from the education system into adult services.

The interagency agreement, which was signed in February 1987, affirms that the three agencies will provide a continuous flow of services, avoid duplication and barriers to service, streamline entry to and coordination of services by sharing information, provide transition from the education system to adult services, and initiate joint agreements regarding educational, vocational and other services.

In order to demonstrate the continuum of services outlined by SCR 129, the three agencies have initiated and are jointly supporting pilot projects in Laredo and the lower Rio Grande Valley to demonstrate the effectiveness of coordinated services. The agencies expect Project NETS (Networking Effective Transition Services), which offers an array of services to persons 16 and older who have severe and developmental disabilities, to provide information for the future development and implementation of transition services throughout the state. More information about Project NETS will be featured in a future issue of *Highlights*.

## Calendar

June 2, annual conference, Rehabilitation Technology Associates, Atlanta, GA. For more information, call David Whipp, 1-800-624-8284.

June 5, quarterly meeting, Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, Radisson Hotel, Austin.

June 11-13, Transition Conference, Incarnate Word College, San Antonio. For more information, call Richard Gray at (512) 828-1261, ext. 276.

June 12-14, annual conference, Deaf-Blind Multihandicapped Association of Texas, Texas School for the Blind, Austin TX. For more information, call (512) 454-8631.

June 17-21, National Association of Developmental Disabilities Public Policy Seminar, Washington D.C. For more information, call Jopie Smith at (512) 445-8983.

June 19-21, annual conference, Texas Association of the Deaf, El Paso.

In order to be included in Calendar, information on national and statewide events should be submitted to *Highlights* three months in advance. For more information on the *Highlights* publication schedule, call Mary Jo Magruder at (512) 445-8852.

## New grant awards (cont'd)

transitional supported work for 15-20 clients who have severe developmental disabilities.

Vaughn House, Inc. in Austin has received a first-year grant of \$35,682 to establish a group work station in an Austin industry for six clients at any one time who are deaf/multihandicapped. Using an enclave model, they will provide contract services and learn the skills necessary to be competitively employed.

Goodwill Industries in San Antonio has received a first-year grant of \$125,000 to provide transitional supported job activities such as mobile crews, enclaves and job coaches to enable 30-40 clients with developmental disabilities to move from the workshop to competitive employment during its first year.

North Texas State University has been awarded \$164,635 for the first year of a multi-year project to develop a cost-effective system that provides employment training, supported employment and job placement to 30 adults with developmental disabilities this year. In addition, the project will develop a model for service delivery, help agencies coordinate their efforts and provide training for parents and professionals.

"Each of these projects provides needed employment services," says Veenker, "and also permits us to learn something about what is necessary to set up a continuum of services. Building some potential for movement into the vocational system, gives people with developmental disabilities room to grow so that they can become more fully integrated in society."



# From the Executive Director

We are happy to let you know that the Texas Planning Council is alive and well. It has been nearly eight months since our last issue of *Highlights*. We have missed the opportunity to share information with you, but had little option except to skip a few issues of the newsletter.

As many of you know, Judy DeDonato, our former Public Information Specialist and *Highlights* editor had a baby girl last fall. (Judy and her family have now moved to Columbus, Ohio).

Mary Jo Magruder started as our new Public Information Specialist in mid-March. Mary Jo has had various public information experiences with the UT-Austin Career Center and the Insurance Information Institute. We are excited to welcome her to the Texas Planning Council staff.

As most of you are well aware, we are nearing the end of a very tough session of the Texas Legislature. Human services are not expected to see major expansion of programs during the next two years; nonetheless, we are beginning to see some significant success during this session. The in-home and family support legislation represents a major step forward (see related story).

Appropriations for health and human services continue to be a major struggle. We hope that major service reductions will be avoided and may see expansion in some community-based programs. We

will summarize the major outcomes of the session in our next issue of *Highlights*.

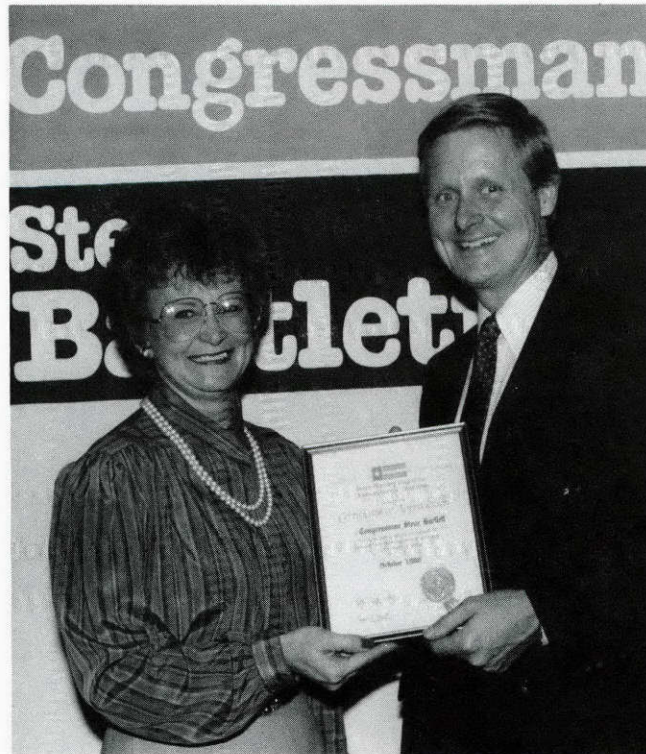
We are also very excited about new grant projects started in the past few months (see related story). The Council sees them as major "pieces of the puzzle" that need to be developed so

that we have a comprehensive array of services in Texas.

It has been a busy few months. We, like you, have had many frustrations with the current financial crisis in Texas. But we've also seen many growing successes which keep our spirits up so that we can build a better system for tomorrow.

by Roger Webb

## Council Honors Rep. Bartlett



Council Chairman Lee Veenker presents the Council's Certificate of Achievement to 3rd Congressional District Representative Steve Bartlett. Bartlett introduced both the legislation that made permanent Section 1619 of the Social Security Act and the Education for the Handicapped Amendments.

## 70th Legislature

# Appropriations, In-Home and Family Support Major Concerns of Council

The Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities has been closely monitoring the 70th session of the Texas Legislature and has offered input on a number of bills through letters, testimony and contact with members of the House and the Senate.

Of utmost importance has been the appropriations bill which determines what funding will be provided for persons with disabilities during the 1988-89 biennium. The current state of the Texas economy has made it difficult for human service advocates to hope for significant expansion of services to persons with disabilities. Thus, advocacy efforts have been largely aimed at seeing that no ground is lost and that services are maintained at least at their current funding level.

In-home and family support legislation has been a major legislative initiative of the Council this session. A bill introduced by Rep. Frank Madla (D-San Antonio) and Sen. Chet Brooks (D-Galveston) would provide for a range of services to persons

with disabilities and their families such as respite care, architectural modifications, and assistive devices, that would ease some of the burden of caring for a family member who has a disability.

Finally, the Department of Human Services, the Texas Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation, and the Texas Commission for the Deaf have been undergoing sunset review this session and the Council has closely monitored and offered input about each of these agencies.

The June/July issue *Highlights* will report on the final status of bills the Council has followed this session. In the meantime, call the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities at (512) 445-8867 for more information on these bills. To find out the status of any bill, call 1-800-252-9693.



# News You Can Use

## Kudos

Justin W. Dart, Jr. was sworn in as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington D.C. on Sept. 3, 1987. Dart, a native Texan, is a former member of the Texas Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons and the Council on Disabilities.

James C. Griffin, Ph.D., Director of Special Programs at the Richmond State School for the Mentally Retarded in Richmond, Texas received the annual research award of the Region V American Association on Mental Deficiency for work he has done concerning the extent and circumstances of self-injurious behavior by individuals with developmental disabilities or mental retardation. The research, which was funded by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission on behalf of the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, was conducted in both residential and community facilities. Griffin received the award at the annual meeting of the association in Lawrence, Kansas in Oct. 1986.

"Open the Door," a project of the Mental Health Association, has received a special recognition award from the United Nations in conjunction with the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless for its work in developing housing for persons with mental illness. The project receives funds from the Texas Rehabilitation Commission on behalf of the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities.

## Unlocking Doors

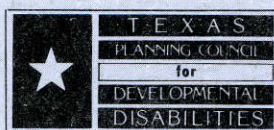
*Unlocking Doors* is a 64-page booklet designed help the parents of children who benefit from P.L.94-142 (The Education of All Handicapped Children Act) communicate their childrens' needs to educators and secure their rights. Single copies are available through PACER Center, Inc., 4826 Chicago Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55417-1055, (612) 827-2966 (voice/TDD). Multiple copies cost \$2 per booklet.

## American Planning Association

The final report of a 1985 grant to the American Planning Association has been published. *Siting Group Homes For the Developmentally Disabled* includes a review of recent literature, state and local policies, legal frameworks, proper zoning treatment, model zoning and fair housing provisions. The report also includes an annotated bibliography. Copies of the report can be obtained from the American Planning Association, 1313 E. 60th Street, Chicago IL 60637. The cost is \$16.

## Finding Respite

The Texas Respite Resource Network (TRRN) has published the *1986 Respite Directory*. TRRN is supported in part by funds awarded by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission on behalf of the Texas Planning Council. The 90-page directory contains information about respite services available in Texas, listed by city. Each listing contains a brief program description as well as the names of contact individuals, types of services offered, client age and populations served, fee schedules and special features. The directory also contains a section on other support programs, such as medical equipment, recreation programs, home care and financial assistance that are available to families who have members with developmental disabilities. The *1986 Respite Directory* is available from TRRN, Children's Ambulatory Care Center, P.O. Box 7330, Station A, San Antonio, TX 78285. Single copies are free. Each additional copy is \$3.



# Highlights

*Highlights* is produced by the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities for distribution to Council members, grantees and other interested persons throughout the state. Organizations that serve persons who have developmental disabilities are encouraged to submit news items for publication. Inquiries may be addressed to Mary Jo Magruder, editor, Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, 118 E. Riverside Dr., Austin, Texas 78704; or telephone (512) 445-8852, voice or TDD. Taped copies are available upon request. Phototypesetting and printing by Texas Rehabilitation Commission Reproduction Services.

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