

# Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind



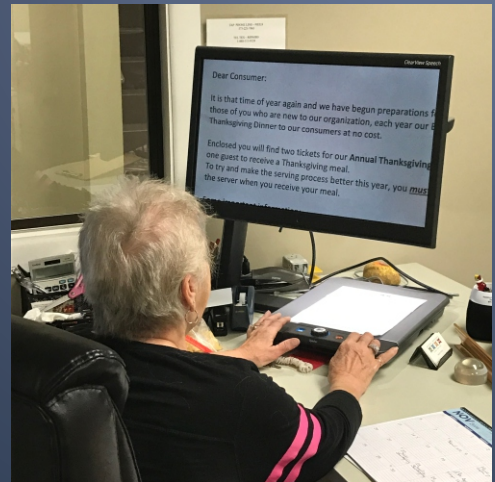
## Program Year 2017 Annual Report

Providing individuals who have a severe visual disability with valuable services that effectively address common barriers to employment.



## Table of Contents

2	Letter from the Chair, Clay Berry
3	RSB Return on Investment
4	Purpose of the SRC
5	Council Members and Committees
6	Letter from the Deputy Director, Keith Roderick
7	Highlights for Program Year 2017
8	Quisha Foster: Success Story
10	Functions
11	VR: Earnings and Funding Resources
12	Ryan Frappier: Success Story
14	Vocational Rehabilitation Services
15	PY 2017 Blind Agency
16	Brett Willhelm: Success Story
18	Standards and Indicators
19	Client Satisfaction Survey
20	Public Forums
21	The Year in Review
22	Vision for the Future
23	Quotables
24	RSB District Office Map with Addresses



I am so thankful for  
the help I received

from RSB. He was know-  
ledgeable, encouraging and  
provided excellent service.

The equipment I have  
received has changed my  
future! When I thought I  
must quit working because  
of my sight challenges, now  
I have a hope.

—RSB Client

## From the Chairman of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind



Dear Fellow Missourians:

As Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRC), it is my honor to submit the Program Year 2017 Annual Report on the status of services, in accordance with Section 105(5) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Congress in 1998. The SRC, created by Executive Order 93-01, is responsible for reviewing, analyzing and advising Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB), an agency in the Missouri Division of Family Support (DFS), on its policies and provision of rehabilitation services to Missourians who are blind or visually impaired.

The SRC is dedicated to working with RSB to assist blind and visually impaired Missourians become self-supporting and fully participating members of society. During the period of this report, the Council has worked cooperatively in many areas of interest with RSB to improve the range, scope and quality of services for blind and visually impaired Missourians. Our quarterly reviews of agency policies, procedures and operations, along with public forums and our customer satisfaction survey, have given clients a critical source of input into the rehabilitation process.

We feel this report provides an informative overview of RSB and the activities of the SRC. We would be pleased to answer any questions about this report, the operations of RSB, or the work of the State Rehabilitation Council.

The services that RSB provides are critical to this growing segment of our population.

Age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy are leading causes of vision loss in the United States and are on the rise. The American Journal of Ophthalmology estimates that legal blindness will increase by nearly 75% by 2030. The role that RSB plays in the lives of visually impaired Missourians is critical and of mounting importance. The SRC is committed to its purpose and is rising to meet the growing challenges facing our state.

Respectfully Submitted,

Clay C. Berry

Alphapointe, Director of Education & Rehabilitation  
Chairman, State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

## Program Year 2017 Return on Investment

In Program Year 2017...

Rehabilitation Services for the  
Blind **closed 187** clients' cases  
in **Competitive Employment**,  
including one homemaker.

Clients **earned annual salaries**  
totaling **\$5,875,022**  
and **paid \$691,176**  
in Federal and State **Taxes**.

In **3.5** years, these blind/visually  
impaired Missourians will  
**pay back in taxes** what it  
cost to assist them into  
**successful employment**.



“I am extremely grateful to RSB for everything! My Counselor was extremely knowledgeable regarding services and connected me to wonderful service providers. I could not do my job as efficiently without their services & equipment. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. —RSB Client



## Purpose of the State Rehabilitation Council

The Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind was established in February 1993 by Executive Order 93-01 to:

Act as a forum through which citizens with blindness, parents, providers, and other interested Missourians can voice their opinions and constructive criticisms, make recommendations, and give public recognition for services being performed on their behalf by RSB;

Serve jointly with RSB in its activities to improve the services, programs, and facilities for individuals with blindness and visual impairments;

Receive from RSB information concerning the intents and objectives of RSB so that the Council, in turn, can pass this information on to individuals with blindness.

“I truly believe that without RSB I would not have made it through college. I am so thankful for everything RSB has done. Thank you so much. You are all amazing.”  
—RSB Client



Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind  
615 Howerton Court  
P. O. Box 2320  
Jefferson City MO 65102-2320  
Phone: (573) 751-4249  
Fax: (573) 751-4984

## Council Members

The membership of the Council is comprised of no more than 21 individuals appointed by the Governor, with the following representation mandated by the Rehabilitation Act.

At least one representative from each of the following:

- Statewide Independent Living Council
- Parent Training and Information Center
- Client Assistance Program
- RSB Vocational Counselor
- Community Rehabilitation Program service provider
- State education agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities
- State Workforce Investment Board
- Disabilities group representing individuals who are blind
- Representative of individuals who have blindness, have multiple disabilities, and have difficulty representing themselves due to disability
- Business, labor and industry
- Advocacy groups for individuals with blindness or other authorized representatives of individuals with blindness who are unable to represent themselves
- Current or former recipients of VR services
- And the Deputy Director of FSD/RSB as an ex-officio member.

## Committees

### Evaluation Committee

Evaluates the performance and/or operation of RSB, such as surveys and annual reports.

### Governmental Affairs Committee

Works on things happening at the state and federal level and that are governmental in nature.

### Planning Committee

The state plan and any other planning operation of the Council, including the business network issues.

### Program & Policy Committee

Handles new policy and or program items from RSB rather than waiting until the next Council meeting.



## From the Director of Rehabilitation Services for the Blind



This annual report, presented to you from the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind for Program Year 2017 provides information on the Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) Vocational Rehabilitation program.

RSB is a core partner of the Missouri workforce system, including Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy, and the Division of Workforce Development. Combined partners include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Community Services Block Grant with the Family Support Division. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has strengthened our partnerships and together we have become national leaders in the implementation of WIOA.

RSB completed another successful year assisting 187 individuals to achieve their vocational goal. In Program Year 2017 the Missouri workforce system served on a national cohort on performance measures for services to employers and a second cohort regarding co-enrollment across partner programs. RSB was recognized by our federal partners, Rehabilitation Services Administration, for assisting them in testing and validating the new 911 report data elements and submission portal. RSB was one of the first states to submit the report error free.

There are many different alternative techniques and skills used by blind and visually impaired individuals to overcome barriers to independent living and vocational success. The process of instructing individuals who are blind and confronting the issues and visual demands of everyday life requires separate and categorical agencies serving the blind to assist individuals in maximizing their potential. This includes highly trained, committed personnel who deliver specialized services and the commitment of the separate State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, whose members demonstrate a thorough understanding of blindness and the resultant issues in our society.

RSB will continue implementation of WIOA as part of the Missouri workforce system in collaboration with our core partners. RSB has implemented major changes in our operations and is in the development phase of migrating to a new electronic case management system that will revitalize our organizational infrastructure. As we move forward, RSB will continue to provide the quality services blind and visually impaired Missourians expect and rely upon to reach their vocational goals that result in economic sustainability.

In closing, I offer our sincere appreciation for your interest and support serving blind Missourians.

Sincerely,  
Keith Roderick, Deputy Director  
Rehabilitation Services for the Blind



## Highlights of Program Year 2017

### Individuals Served

**4,065** individuals with blindness/visual impairments served in Program Year 2017.

### Older Blind Independent Living Program

**1,283** individuals were served in the Older Blind Independent Living Program,  
and **604** were closed successfully rehabilitated.

### Prevention of Blindness Program

**463** individuals received case management services in the Prevention of Blindness Program,  
screening **2,124** individuals for intraocular pressure and other eye conditions.

### Vocational Rehabilitation Program

**1,555** individuals served in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program,  
closing **187** in successful employment.

### Children's Services Program

**499** children received services in the Children's Services Program.

### Independent Living Program

**265** individuals were served in the Independent Living Program,  
and **81** closed successfully rehabilitated.

### Business Enterprise Program

**34** Business Enterprise Program facilities, including **1** military installation,  
**23** managers, employing **982** people, with gross sales at **\$42,894,192**.

## Success Story Quisha Foster

Quisha Foster was born in 1984 with a series of health problems that have complicated her life but have not defined it, as she has worked hard to transcend her health issues to become a vibrant contributor to society. Quisha was born premature, weighing in at 1 lb and 6 ozs, and had Retinopathy of Prematurity (causing vision loss), heart defects, and serious gastrointestinal complications that have led to surgeries and continue to affect her to this day. Her current visual diagnosis is severe myopic retinal degeneration that affects her visual acuity and peripheral vision, such that she has acuity levels of 20/400 OS and 20/25 OD but only 10 degrees peripheral vision, which makes her legally blind.

Despite her health complications, Quisha worked hard, earned her high school diploma, and applied to different jobs in the community. She notes that at times she struggled with determining whether to disclose her disabilities as employers might be afraid to hire her due to health issues and not knowing how to address her accommodation needs. She struggled with being able to read printed materials and worried that using or asking for magnifiers might scare employers away. And her other health problems affected her ability to lift items or stand for long periods of time. Though she did do these things, they weren't the healthiest choices for her long term well-being. At the age of 17, she started working at Schnucks as a cashier, doing floral arrangements, and helping with a variety of other tasks. After eight years with Schnucks, she found a fulltime job with Enterprise as a Customer Service Expert. She responded to loyalty calls, resolved customer issues, assisted with training, mentoring, and supporting coworkers, and documented customer transactions. She also worked weekends as a Human Resources Recruiter with Furniture and Mattress where she screened job applicants, conducted job interviews, and maintained employee databases. While doing all this, she went on to earn a Bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management at Fontbonne University in 2016. She later returned to work at Schnucks, but wanted to do something that related more to her education and involved less physical exertion.

Just because a person has a disability doesn't mean one cannot succeed in life. Take my story as an example: I could have given up at age three by not being able to see anything. Instead, I kept pushing my way back to the top of what one calls life!

Lead by example, keep the faith, never quit, and you too will have success!" —Quisha Foster

To help her with this, Quisha sought assistance from Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB). She was hoping they could help her find another line of work and help with visual aids, as it was becoming more difficult to see fine print. She first received a handheld magnifier to help her as a cashier while working at Schnucks. As she continued to work at Schnucks, she applied for other positions in the community.

With the help of RSB, she applied to the IRS and was hired for a seasonal position. But before that job started, an opportunity arose with the Lighthouse for the Blind, which was looking for a fulltime customer service representative. That position paid much more than her Schnucks job and better fit her health and visual needs. Quisha applied and was hired in September 2018.

As a customer service representative for Lighthouse, she answers questions and inquiries from customers regarding product information; records, reviews, and edits orders; maintains company files of processed orders; coordinates special orders and pricing for contract packaging; operates Microsoft Office software, inventory control software, and office equipment. To carry out these duties, Quisha uses a variety of visual accommodations including contact lenses, a handheld magnifier, a CCTV to enlarge whole pages, dual monitors to maximize her ability to zoom in on multiple charts and documents simultaneously, and a large print keyboard. These accommodations were

provided through the Rehabilitation Services for the Blind after an assessment of her workplace needs. Quisha says she, "Really loves working for Lighthouse due to them providing services to individuals who are visually impaired."

Quisha's message to others is: "Just because a person has a disability doesn't mean one cannot succeed in life. Take my story as an example: I could have given up at age three by not being able to see anything. Instead, I kept pushing my way back to the top of what one calls life! Lead by example, keep the faith, never quit, and you too will have success!"



## Functions



“I cannot thank you enough for the services you have provided me. It was God-given. As promised I will go on working as long as I can. I will be forever grateful. God bless RSB. —RSB Client



The SRC's functions include, but are not limited to, acting in partnership with RSB to:

- Review, analyze, and advise RSB regarding RSB's performance of responsibilities under Title I of the Act, relating especially to eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services; the extent, scope and effectiveness of VR services that RSB provides; and functions performed by State agencies that potentially affect the ability of blind individuals to achieve rehabilitation goals and objectives.
- Assist RSB with the development and review of the State goals and priorities; assist in the preparation of the State plan.
- Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, VR services and other functions performed by State agencies and other public and private entities responsible for performing functions for blind individuals.
- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor of the State of Missouri, to the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the U. S. Department of Education, and to the Director of the Family Support Division (FSD).
- Coordinate with other councils within the State.
- Provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between FSD, RSB and the Statewide Independent Living Council and Centers for Independent Living in Missouri.
- Select a pool of individuals to serve as impartial hearing officers for VR applicants and recipients who wish to appeal a decision of RSB.

## Vocational Rehabilitation: Earnings and Funding Resources

RSB opened **334** new VR cases in Program Year 2017,  
and served a total of **1,555** clients.

The average annual earnings **\$31,586**  
for a successfully Rehabilitated Client

The following information is based  
on the above amount:

**MO State Taxes Paid** **\$1,004**  
per Rehabilitated Client

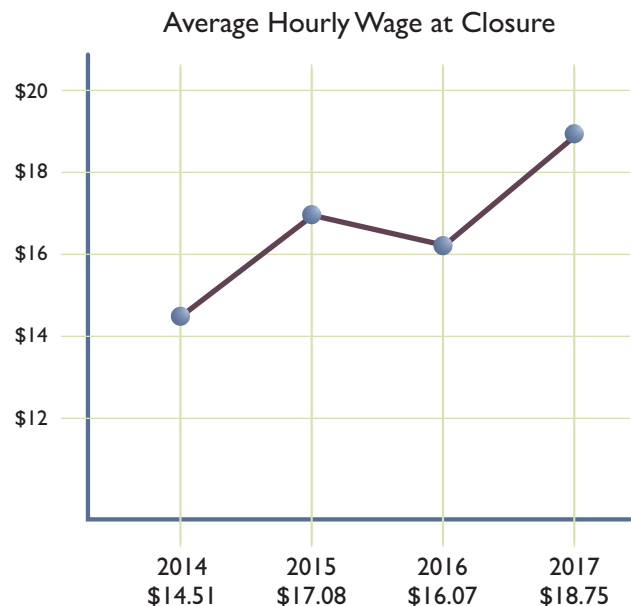
**Federal Taxes Paid** **\$2,712**  
per Rehabilitated Client

**Total Taxes Paid** **\$3,716**  
per Rehabilitated Client

Total **Combined Yearly** **\$694,892**  
**Taxes Paid** by all Rehabilitated Clients

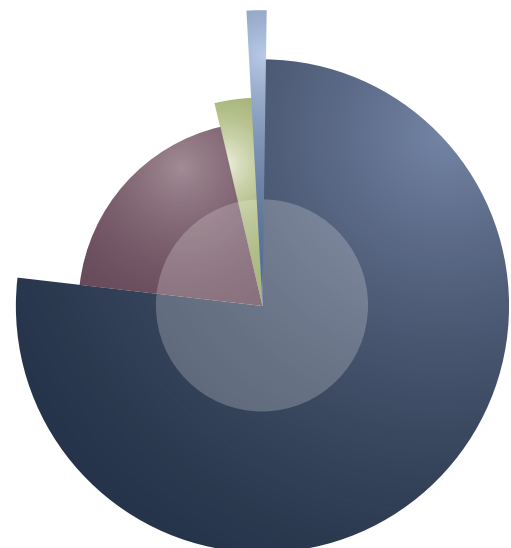
### PY 2017 Average Hourly Wage

**\$18.75**



## State Fiscal Year 2018 Missouri Funding Sources

- Federal Funds . . . . . 78.1%
- GR Funds . . . . . 18.5%
- BEST . . . . . 2.7%
- Donations . . . . . .07%

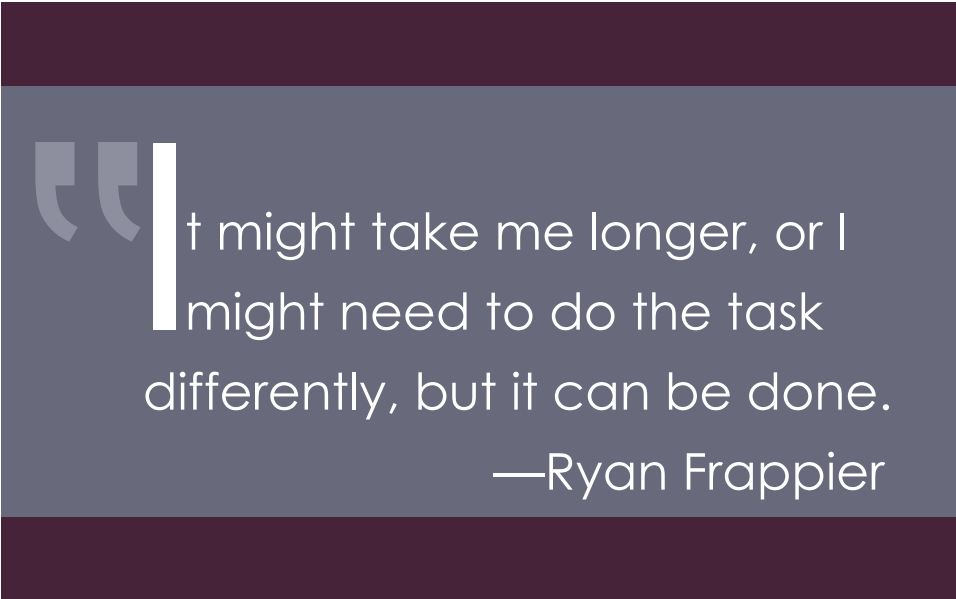


## Success Story **Ryan Frappier**

Ryan Frappier was born on May 12, 1994, eight weeks early, and one minute after his twin, Matthew. Ryan's APGAR scores were 0 and 1. He spent one month in the NIC Unit. Among other physical conditions, Ryan was born with Congenital Maculopathy, Nystagmus and High Myopia.

Ryan's mother recognized the importance of early intervention and made certain that Ryan and his twin Matthew received intensive services as toddlers. When it came time to enroll her children in public schools, it was suggested that they, along with all low vision/blind students, go to a central location in order for them to obtain services from a teacher for blind students. Ryan's mother refused and began advocating for her children to attend courses at the grade school where they lived.

Today Ryan lives in California and works for Google earning a six-figure salary. The journey to this employment end is just as amazing as the employment accomplishment. Ryan acknowledges the incredible amount of work it took to get to his goal, but he also attributes much of his success to having parents who have high expectations of him, early accomplishments that bolstered self-esteem, and his own determination.



It might take me longer, or I might need to do the task differently, but it can be done.

—Ryan Frappier

Ryan encountered barriers to successful employment much earlier than the age of filling out applications for employment. Early barriers included attempts at keeping him out of courses that interested him due to teachers being uncomfortable with teaching a blind student or with teachers having pre-conceived notions of what blind children could or could not accomplish.

Thanks to having early advocates, Ryan was able to participate in industrial technology, soccer, and stayed active in multiple high school activities. At the age of 15, Ryan began applying to different area businesses for an after school job. However, he was not able to find employment until after he graduated high school. He never stopped looking, but he states it was “very discouraging.”

Ryan began receiving Children's Services from Rehabilitation Services for the Blind during early childhood. In his sophomore year of high school, Ryan transitioned to the Vocational Rehabilitation program. Ryan already had an idea as to what he wanted to study in college. What Rehabilitation Services for the Blind provided was discussions about his rights to accommodations, what was a reasonable accommodation, and how best to strategically apply for the best careers. Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind also provided Ryan with all the necessary

equipment needed for succeeding in school and work. RSB further provided four years of training in computer science.

Ryan and his brother Matthew both obtained multiple scholarships upon high school graduation, including the Presidential Award at Columbia College where they both attended. The Presidential Award goes to only five recipients; two went to Ryan and Matthew Frappier.

In college Ryan majored in computer science, where he ran into barriers such as national exams not being in large print, tools associated with testing, such as rulers, not being available in an

enlarged state, and on-line testing not being accessible. Despite challenges such as these, Columbia College worked with Ryan and his brother to provide all accommodations needed. In return, Ryan worked to give back to his community by volunteering to work with the Columbia Area Career Center and with various minority groups, as well as joining and becoming an officer in the computer club at Columbia College. Ryan also interned at Columbia College with one of his professors, as well as worked on campus.

With a stack of recommendations and a 4.0 GPA, Ryan applied for an internship with

Google through a program designed for minority groups. After a series of interviews, Ryan was hired for the first of two summer internships with Google. The first internship was difficult due to issues with the public transportation in that area. Once the bus did not announce his stop and he wound up walking several miles on unlit streets with no sidewalks to get home.

Regardless of difficulties, Ryan loved his work and applied for an internship at Google headquarters in California the next summer. Ryan found that the California job site fit his low vision needs, as well as having a shuttle to assist workers in getting to the office. Upon graduation from Columbia College with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Google offered Ryan a job, starting at a six-figure salary per year with bonuses, which he happily accepted. Ryan states that he would like to serve as an inspiration to other youth with visual impairments. Ryan says, "It might take me longer, or I might need to do the task differently, but it can be done."



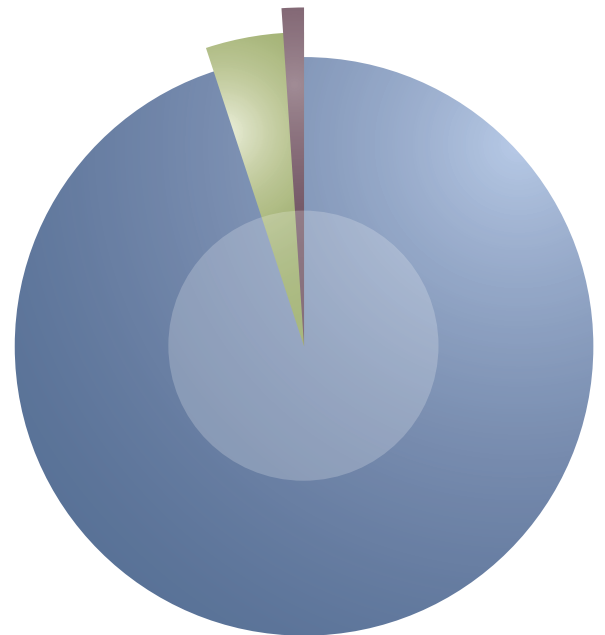
## Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Individuals who have a severe visual disability encounter some common barriers to employment. Common barriers recognized are: access to print information, transportation, negative attitudes regarding the skills and abilities of the blind, and marketable 21st Century job skills. Rehabilitation Services for the Blind provides valuable services that effectively address these barriers and others.

In program year 2017, RSB successfully rehabilitated 187 Missourians in pursuit of their employment goal. The following data profiles show those successful closures:

Rehabilitation Rate . . . . . 71.92%

- Competitive Employment 168 . . . . 90%
- Homemaker . . . . . 2 . . . . . 1%
- Self- Employment . . . . . 17 . . . . . 9%



In PY 2017, through the services of RSB, 187 individuals have been able to gain or retain employment. Their occupations are as follows:

Management . . . . .	28	Food Preparation and Food Serving . . . . .	11
Business and Financial Operations . . . . .	11	Building and Grounds Cleaning . . . . .	9
Computer and Mathematical . . . . .	10	Personal Care and Service . . . . .	10
Architecture and Engineering . . . . .	2	Sales and Related . . . . .	11
Community and Social Service . . . . .	16	Office and Administrative . . . . .	18
Legal Occupations . . . . .	2	Farming, Fishing and Forestry . . . . .	3
Educational Instruction, and Library . . . . .	11	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair . . . . .	2
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media . . . . .	22	Production . . . . .	11
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical . . . . .	8	Transportation and Material Moving . . . . .	2
Healthcare Support . . . . .	9	Homemakers . . . . .	1



## PY 2017 Blind Agency Summary of RSB Performance

Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of States and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served. RSA has used their transition authority under WIOA Sec. 503(a) to designate primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators in the first plan submission. The actual performance data reported by States for indicators designated as “baseline” in the first two years of the Unified or Combined Plan will serve as baseline data in future years.

During this transition period, RSB is utilizing the following measurements for state level performance reporting:

Individuals who achieved integrated employment,  
who had significant Disabilities **36.56%**



Percentage of Individuals Achieving Self-Sufficiency  
(Relying Primarily on Their Own Income)  
After Successfully Completing the Program **87.1%**



Vocational Rehabilitation Rate of Successful  
Rehabilitation **91.9%**

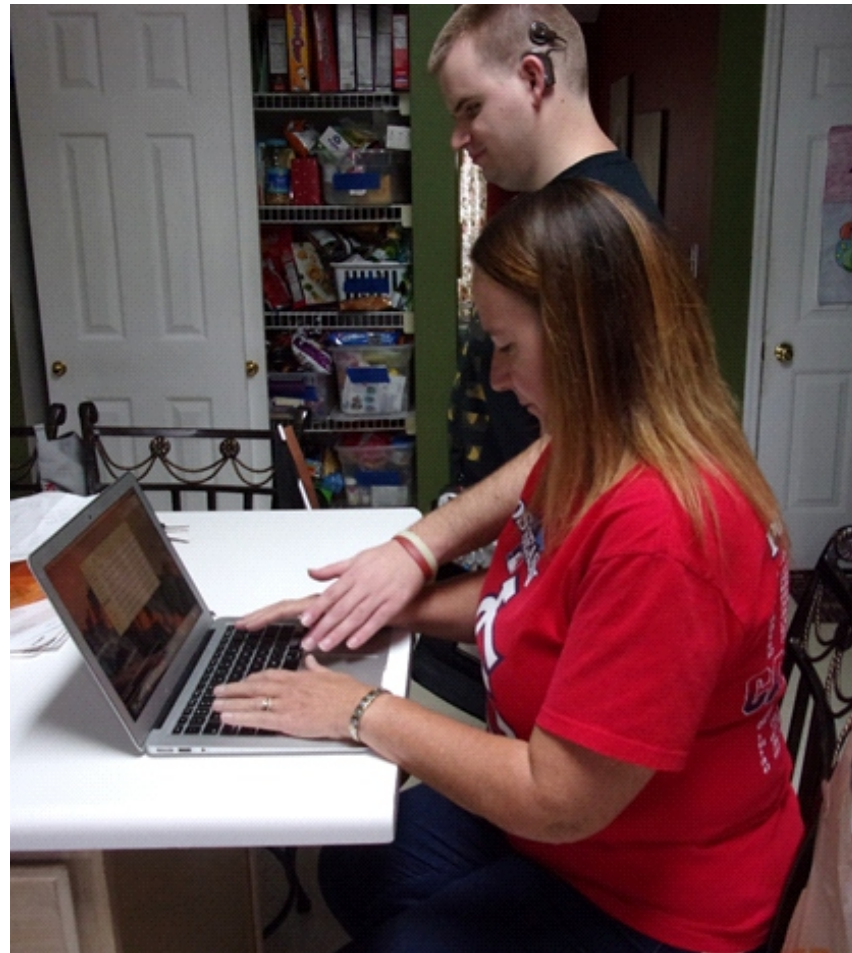


## Success Story **Brett Wilhelm**

Brett Wilhelm, who is both legally deaf and blind, began his journey with Rehabilitation Services for the Blind in 2010 while he was still in high school. Brett came to us with a love of technology. With this love in mind, he met with his Vocational Rehabilitation counselor, Katherine Cronin, to set his employment goal into place. Brett's goal was to be able to teach his love for technology to other visually impaired people so that they can do what they want to do in their lives. To be able to achieve this goal, Brett needed to first become more of an advocate for himself, obtain independent living skills training, and orientation and mobility training.

In 2015, Brett worked with RSB's Rehabilitation Teachers and Orientation and Mobility Specialists in areas of independent living. Brett was also connected with Beth Jordan and the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC). This center had a program named "National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution." This program would mentor Brett and have him become a certified national trainer/assessor himself. He also received independent living skills training at HKNC as well. In working with Brett, Beth Jordan was able to set Brett up with a program called "I Can Connect." This program enabled Brett to get experience in working with other visually impaired clients in assisting their needs in learning programs on their computers and other assistive technology devices.

With these trainings and opportunities, Brett expressed an interest in setting up a small business to teach visually impaired clients on how to access their computers and other related technology devices. In 2016, RSB provided Brett with a client business plan model. After looking it over, Brett was put in contact with the Center for Specialized Services. At CSS Brett worked with Matt Jannings, the Director of Planning and Placement, on developing a business plan.



In 2017, Brett purchased a web domain and worked with Beth Jordan and the I Can Connect program to network and make connections with new clients. Brett also networked with St. Charles Community College while he took a few classes there. He worked with a few classmates there as well.

In March of 2017, Brett underwent a cochlear implant. It was a success, but he needed to take some time off from his work to get acclimated to the new device. He also underwent more O&M training to adjust to the new sounds he was now experiencing. By April, Brett was back training clients on their computers, phones and any other device that they needed help with.

While working with the I Can Connect program here in Missouri, Brett was able to network and make a connection with the same I Can Connect program stationed out of Iowa. Brett signed a contract with them to begin working with and teaching four new clients once a month for two to three days at a time over a week period. He will also continue to work with his established clients here in Missouri.

“All I want to do is provide the training necessary for visually impaired clients to use the equipment they have to do what they want to do in their lives. –Brett Wilhelm

So far Brett has worked with eight clients and is looking forward to working with and training more. He loves what he is doing and states, “All I want to do is provide the training necessary for visually impaired clients to use the equipment they have, to do what they want to do in their lives.” Brett's case was successfully closed with RSB September 2017 and we wish him well in his endeavors with his new business.

## Standards and Indicators

### General Information

There are a total of 80 state vocational rehabilitation agencies or commissions that provide rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities in the United States and associated territories.

Currently, 24 states have a separate vocational rehabilitation agency or commission that provides services exclusively for consumers who are blind or visually impaired. The alternative skills of blindness are markedly different from the skills required by other disabled persons. The methodology of instructing the blind and confronting the issues of blindness in our society require the development of specialized service programs, with service delivery by specialized personnel.

Served in VR Program	1,555
Achieved Employment	187
Net Gain Over Last Year	5
Total Annual Wages after Services for Employed Vocational Rehabilitation Clients	\$5,875,022

## Client Satisfaction Survey

Client Satisfaction Surveys are administered to individuals after closing their Vocational Rehabilitation case with RSB.

Of the **187** clients closed in competitive employment,  
**43** of the clients returned their survey  
 rate of return **23%**

Of the **73** clients closed in a status **other than** competitive employment  
**4** returned their survey  
 rate of return **5%**

## Client Satisfaction Survey Questions

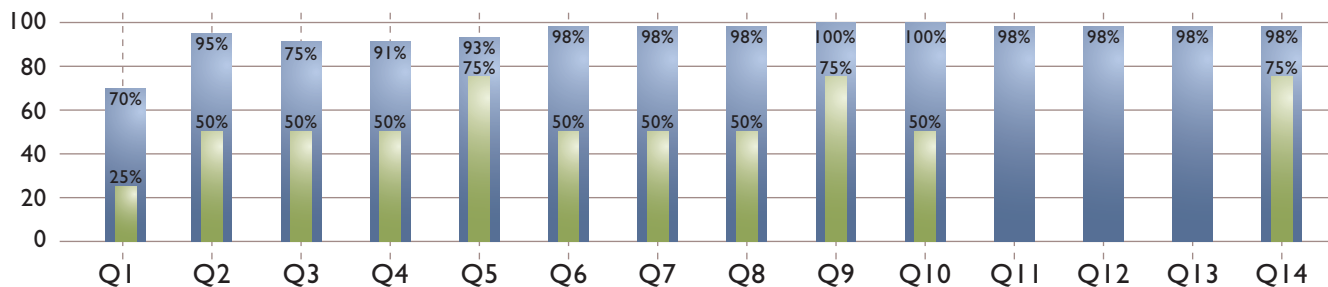
Two different surveys are given:

a 14-question survey is sent to individuals whose cases are **closed in competitive employment;**

and;

a similar 11-question survey is sent to individuals whose cases were **closed in any status other than competitive employment.**

1. I was employed when I applied for services from RSB.
2. The choice of services available from RSB was sufficient to meet my needs.
3. I had the final say in the selection of service providers.
4. I received services from RSB in a reasonable amount of time.
5. RSB staff returned my phone calls within 1-2 business days.
6. RSB staff was knowledgeable about my needs as a person who is visually impaired/blind.
7. RSB staff helped me build my confidence in my abilities.
8. My rehabilitation plan was individualized to meet my goals.
9. I had the final say in the selection of my vocational goal.
10. Upon completion of my vocational rehabilitation plan, I was prepared to seek/maintain employment.
11. The services RSB provided were sufficient to help me secure/continue employment.
12. As a result of the services provided by RSB, my present work situation is better than it was before I began the program.
13. The support I received from RSB following my employment was adequate to ensure continued success.
14. I am pleased with the overall outcome of my experience in the vocational rehabilitation program provided by RSB.



Source: Satisfaction surveys

## Public Forums

The SRC continued to hold public forums throughout the state, allowing individuals to voice opinions and concerns about the services of RSB. To assist those with difficulty traveling, the Council provides phone conferencing as well.



**August:** St. Louis, Mo – Brenda Whitlock and Ian Shadrack talked about popular assistive tech apps that are IOS based. Apps discussed included; Guard app, learning ally, social media apps such as twitterific, be my eyes app, and for transportation apps, they discussed uber and lyft.

**November:** St. Joseph, Mo – Robert Honan described the five core independent living services provided at MERIL. Which included services such as, consumer directed services, youth programs, soft skills, interviewing skills and transportation assistance.

**February:** Springfield, Mo – Shannon Porter and Amanda Primm demonstrated a number of low vision adaptive aids, demonstrating their uses and explaining their importance as adaptive aids.

**May:** Jefferson City, Mo – Mid Missouri district VR Clients spoke about the services they have received from RSB and how those services have improved their everyday lives, helped them become and maintain independent and reach their employment goals.

## Year in Review

The SRC analyzed the results of client satisfaction surveys, which were received from RSB clients at the time of case closure. Comments and concerns expressed in the surveys were discussed by the SRC.

RSB continued to update the SRC on the Workforce Innovations Opportunities Act (WIOA), including WIOA's influence on Youth in Transition, Pre-Employment Transition Services, Competitive Integrated Employment, and how RSB collaborated with and created partnerships with other state agencies.

The SRC committees reviewed the Annual Report, reviewed goals and strategies for the new combined State Plan and gave advice on the updated VR policy manual.

SRC has encouraged RSB to do more for outreach to employers. The council has pushed for RSB to make a presence in social media. RSB is now active on the DSS Facebook page.

Public Forums were held quarterly in various locations across the state.

RSB kept the SRC updates on the vacancies within RSB. Issues with difficulty in recruitment were discussed, as well as how accessible the application process is for the blind and visually impaired.

RSB also gave the council updates on the new case management system that they are working to begin in PY 2018 and how that will affect staff, training periods, budgets and improvements to the flow of case management for staff.



## Vision for the Future

As RSB strives to create opportunities for the personal and vocational success of blind and visually impaired Missourians, the SRC believes that with the proper training, alternative skills and assistive technology, those individuals who are blind can be vocationally, socially and economically competitive.

The SRC will continue to work cooperatively with RSB to improve the services offered to meet what we consider to be the unique rehabilitation needs of clients with visual disabilities. The following top five strategic priorities were developed by the SRC to ensure ongoing success for visually impaired Missourians:

1. Promote the full inclusion, participation and integration of Missouri blind and severely visually impaired in the economic, social, cultural and educational mainstream of society.
2. Through the SRC's advisory capacity assure that appropriate education and rehabilitation services increase the employment rate of blind and visually impaired in Missouri.
3. Promote and assure the continuation of specialized vocational rehabilitation services to consumers who are blind and severely visually impaired through specially trained professional staff with unique skills and knowledge of blindness.
4. In partnership with RSB, develop, agree to, and review the annual state goals and priorities, including strategies to address the unprecedented turnover the agency has experienced in recent years to ensure Missourians who are blind receive high quality service from qualified personnel.
5. In partnership with RSB, the SRC will work to implement new procedures congruent with the expectations of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, in order to ensure coordination of all entities involved, increasing access of blind Missourians to today's job market.





# “Quotables

“When it comes to everyone from RSB, they all were very helpful and listened to my needs.

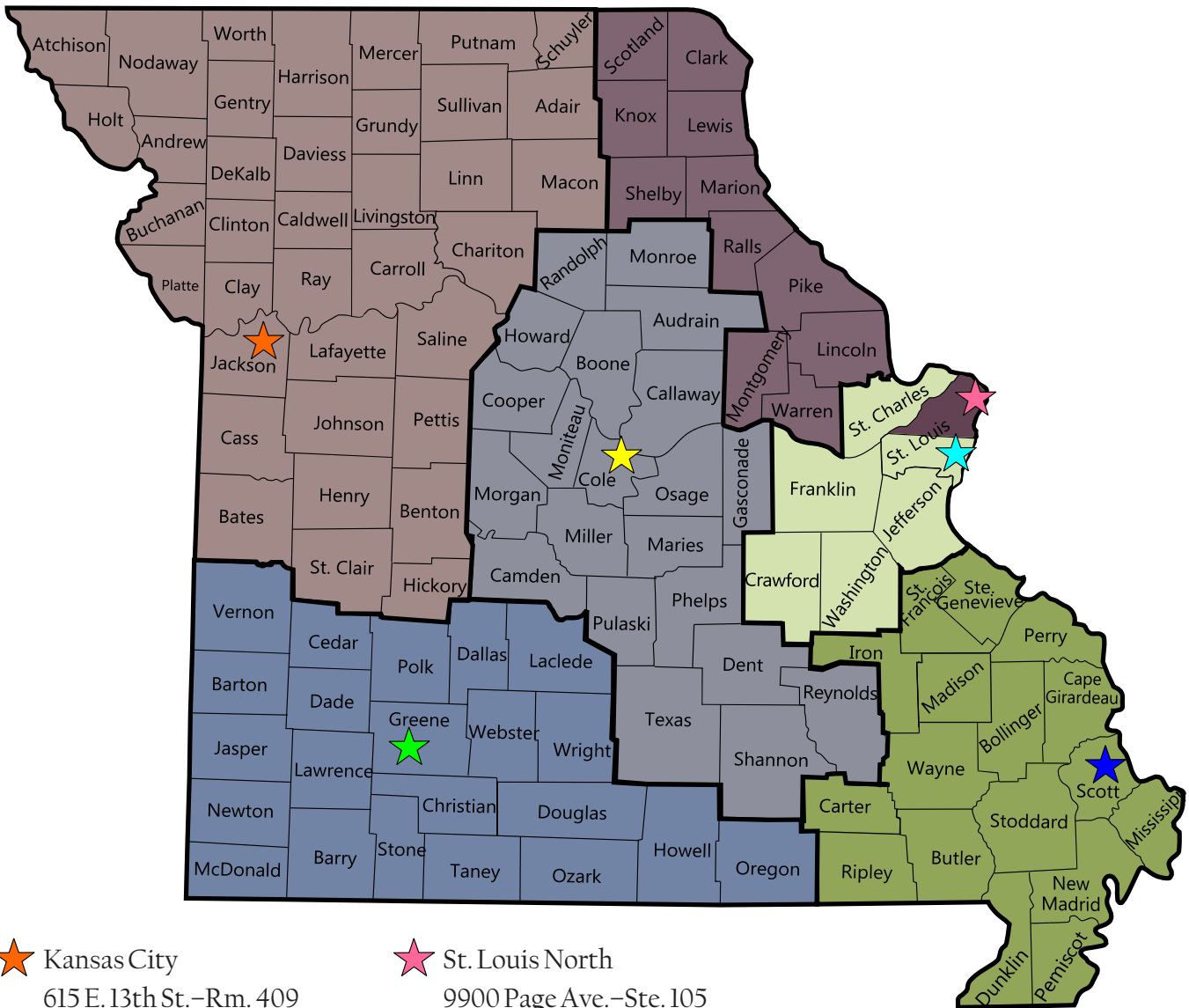
“I am extremely grateful to RSB for everything! Vicki Yovich is extremely knowledgeable regarding services and connected me to wonderful service providers. I could not do my job as efficiently without your services & equipment. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.


“I was very thankful for help your services provided me. Genny Asher and Jim Brinkman are awesome.


“I would like to say that I have been truly blessed by the help that I have received from you all. I was employed with White River Marine when I received the help with my eyes and I am still employed there and doing well. Everyone was so helpful and polite. All of you are a blessing from above!


# Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind


## 800-592-6004





 Kansas City  
615 E. 13th St.–Rm. 409  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
816-889-2677

 St. Louis North  
9900 Page Ave.–Ste. 105  
St. Louis, MO 63132  
314-264-7601

 Southwest  
149 Park Central Sq.–Rm. 640  
Springfield, MO 65806  
417-895-6386

 St. Louis South  
3867 Magnolia Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63110  
314-933-7311

 Mid-MO  
3418 Knipp Dr.–Ste. A-2  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
573-751-2714

 Southeast  
106 Arthur St.–Ste. E  
Sikeston, MO 63801  
573-472-5240

**RSB Administrative Office**  
615 Howerton Ct., PO Box 2320  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-2320



# Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

---

## Program Year 2017 Annual Report

---

RSB Administrative Office  
615 Howerton Ct., PO Box 2320  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-2320  
Toll Free: 800-592-6004  
PH: 573-751-4249  
Fax: 573-526-4984