

Contemporary Rehab

The Newsletter of the National Rehabilitation Association

April 2009, Volume 65, No 2



The NEW Ticket to Work: *A Tool for Tough Times*

By Barbara A. Butz, Daniels and Associates/PMRO and
Sallie Rhodes, CESSI/PMRO Ticket to Work Program Manager for
Recruitment and Outreach (PMRO)

Unrestricted Resources and Opportunities

The NEW Ticket to Work (Ticket) program brings important resources to community rehabilitation efforts across the country at a time when budgets are tight and support for people-serving organizations from cities, counties, and states is shrinking along with charitable giving. In the first two months of 2009, the Social Security Administration (SSA) paid State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies, service providers and employers functioning as Employment Networks (ENs) over \$2 million for their efforts in helping Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities connect to work and maintain employment.

From SSA's perspective, these payments are totally unrestricted funds and can be used for any organizational need –

continued on page 3

SAVE THE DATE

2009 National Rehabilitation Association
Annual Training Conference
September 10-13 Louisville, Kentucky
See Page 6 for registration information

Government Affairs Summit Emphasizes Effective Advocacy

by Patricia Leahy, Director of Governmental Affairs and Public Policy

The National Rehabilitation Association was proud to present its 28th Annual Government Affairs Summit on March 8-10, 2009, at the Hilton Old Town Alexandria Hotel in historic Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.

The theme of the Summit this year was “The 3 Rs of Effective Legislative Advocacy: Relationships, Return on Investment and Results.”

Effective advocacy — especially with your elected officials — is one of the hallmarks of any great organization, which the National Rehabilitation Association recognized 28 years ago when it conducted its First Annual Government Affairs Summit.

Since its founding in 1925, the National Rehabilitation
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Government Affairs Summit, from page 1

Association has attracted some of the best and the brightest in the rehabilitation field to its membership and to the Government Affairs Summit. This year, was no exception to that tradition.

As in past years, NRA's Government Affairs Summit provided an opportunity for networking with some of the most influential individuals on disability policy in the Congress, in the Executive Branch, and with Department and Agency officials who draft and implement the regulations to accompany legislation and public policy important to all of us.

This year, we began our Summit with a greeting from the National Rehabilitation Association's new Executive Director, Ms. Beverlee Stafford. Beverlee's greeting and welcoming remarks were followed by NRA's 2009 President, Commissioner Butch McMillan, who continues to share his enormous political and policy prescience with all of us.

And last, but never least, our Immediate Past President, Dr. Ray Feroz, with whom I had the distinct pleasure of working last year, expressed his gratitude to all in NRA for assisting him in meeting the many challenges that 2008 presented, as well as the many opportunities that arose from those challenges to make the NRA a stronger organization.

On behalf of NRA's Executive Director, Beverlee Stafford, NRA's 2009 President, Butch McMillan and NRA's 2008 Immediate Past President, Ray Feroz, I would like to thank the 2009 Co-Chairs of the Government Affairs Committee, Dr. Ralph Pacinelli and Ms. Kathy West-Evans for the terrific work that they and the 2009 Government Affairs Committee did in drafting and presenting NRA's 2009 Issues Statements.

These Issues Statements are always important but may be even more timely this year since it is becoming increasingly apparent that the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, may in fact be realized this year given the enormous number of job losses that Americans have experienced and will continue to experience for some time to come.

I want to thank Beverlee Stafford for assembling a great panel of our Federal partners, the U.S. Department of Education, very well represented by Rose Ann Ashby, Carl Dobak and Tom Finch, and the U.S. Department of Labor, very well represented by Richard Horne and Randee Chafkin.

The Congressional Panel that followed the Federal partners' panel is always one of the most popular panels and this year was no exception.

All on the Congressional Panel, comprised of Dr. Connie Garner of Senator Kennedy's HELP Committee,

Ms. Sharon Lewis of Chairman George Miller's Committee on Education and Labor and Ms. Gerri Fiala of Senator Patty Murray's Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety (which Subcommittee is taking the lead in the Senate on the reauthorization of WIA) cautiously predicted that the Workforce Investment Act (and VR) would be reauthorized by the end of this year. Indeed, some in Washington are predicting that the reauthorization may occur before the Fall.

The Senate HELP Committee is in the throes of conducting "Listening Sessions" on the reauthorization of WIA and VR. The National Rehabilitation Association had the pleasure of presenting on November 17, 2008, as well as on Tuesday, April 7, 2009, before the Senate HELP staff on our priorities for reauthorization. There are three additional Listening Sessions scheduled for this week (the week of April 12, 2009) on Dislocated Workers, Transition, and Performance Measures.

Turning to the House side, the House Committee on Education and Labor has held two hearings and expects to hold additional hearings on the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act. The VR witness for the most recent WIA hearing was Steve Wooderson, State VR Director in Iowa, who gave a strong statement of support of the VR program and its consumers. Mr. Wooderson, whose delivery was flawless, presented very succinctly and substantively on the Rehabilitation Act.

The Business Panel was moderated by Kathy West-Evans, who is the Founder and Director of the National Employment Team (the NET) and is the Director of the VR Business Network for the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR).

We were so pleased to have Carol Irwin, Regional Senior Manager of Recruiting of the Convergys Corporation and NRA's very own John Ficca (a long-time NRA Member) Executive Director of Hands On Education/Hyatt Hotels, as well as Tara Pickett, Cook III of the Grant Hyatt in Tampa Bay.

It is individuals like Carol Irwin and John Ficca who give opportunities and hope to individuals like Tara Pickett, who has graduated to the Cook III level. The National Rehabilitation Association is so pleased and proud to showcase caring employers who appreciate the talent and contributions of all people.

The Business Panel was followed by Stacy Cervenka, a Legislative Assistant to Senator Sam Brownback (R.KS.), who shared her personal story of how she got to Capitol Hill, as well as sharing her expertise on how to advocate effectively on Capitol Hill. Ms. Cervenka was both terrific and inspiring to all at the Summit. We will continue to follow her career on Capitol Hill and beyond because she is so inspiring to all.

Contemporary Rehab

Published by
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Ticket To Work, from page 1

an important resource in today's fiscal environment. An EN can potentially earn over \$21,000 for each Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiary successfully served and over \$20,000 for each Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient successfully served.

What makes the Ticket program really unique is the fact that it offers an unrestricted opportunity to secure funding because there is no limit on the number of beneficiaries that an EN can serve and there is no cap on how much SSA can pay out under the Ticket program. This is because the ultimate goal of the Ticket program is to reduce reliance on Social Security disability benefits which translates into savings to the Social Security Trust Fund and to the General Revenue Fund.

Regulatory Improvements Have Unleashed the Ticket's Potential

Changes in the Ticket regulations in July 2008 have unleashed the potential of the Ticket program. These improvements are so significant that everyone is referring to this as the NEW Ticket to Work program. Since March of 2008, over 300 new ENs have joined the program across the country. Today, over 40 new ENs sign up each month! And

with these new ENs, we are also seeing increases in payments to ENs per month.



The NEW Ticket Program Features

The new Ticket program features more choices for beneficiaries with disabilities as they seek to

enter, re-enter, or advance in employment.

This represents a new approach to work that encourages self-sufficiency but allows beneficiaries to blend benefits and earnings as they work towards their employment goals. In fact, ENs may now receive Milestone payments while beneficiaries have earnings below the level that SSA defines as Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA).

Improvements to the EN payment structure and processes make participation in the Ticket program more viable for service providers. SSA has improved their business practices by:

providing Milestone payments more often, earlier in the employment process, and at higher rates; and

streamlining the EN payment process to ensure faster

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Executive Director's Message

Well, I have been your Executive Director for four months now. I feel that I have taken some baby-steps and that there is still a lot more to be done! As I said in the February issue, I want to elaborate on my priorities as I take on this challenge. I also want to bring you up-to-date on some of the things that I have done to make NRA a more viable organization.

I mentioned three of my five priorities in the last issue: *grow the organization, take the lead in the next reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, and increase partnerships.* I would like to tell you a little bit about my two other priorities in this issue.

First, I want to make certain that NRA continues to provide its membership with exciting *opportunities for training and lifelong learning.* I feel that one of the most important benefits that NRA provides its members is the opportunity to learn and to earn those critical continuing education credits (CEUs) to keep up certifications. The two main ways that NRA supports those efforts is through our annual Government Affairs Seminar and the Annual Training Conference. However, with new technologies available to us, we hope to offer more training opportunities via teleseminars and other web-based activities that will cut travel costs but still provide opportunities for you to learn and to earn CEUs.

My fifth priority is to *continue a strong advocacy role for NRA.* Patricia Leahy, our Director of Governmental Affairs, does an excellent job in keeping the membership informed of all the activities on Capital Hill and within the Administration. She and I both are involved in various task forces of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities — a Washington, DC-based organization of many disability related entities. We worked really hard on getting information out to all of you on the stimulus monies. We will also continue to work hard to ensure that those extra funds will help improve the employment and independent living of people with disabilities.

I also want to give you some information about changes that will affect you. As you can see, *Contemporary Rehab* has

a new look! I hope that you like it. We are now working with Washington Information Source Co. to put together the newsletter. We hope to have a broader range of articles than we have had in recent past. As mentioned in the February issue, both the June and December issues of *Contemporary Rehab* will be electronic.

Please make certain that we have your most current e-mail address on file here at the national office. Also, if you do not have an e-mail address, please let us know so that we can get you a printed copy of the issue. You can contact us at the general numbers: (703) 836-0850 or 1-888-258-4295 or e-mail me at Beverlee@NationalRehab.org.



.....
I want to make certain that NRA continues to provide its membership with exciting opportunities for training and lifelong learning.
.....

NRA is also moving to a new web-based membership software program called WebLinkCONNECT. The transition from our old LAN-based software to this web program will take 3-4 months. Once it is available, members will be able to renew directly on-line with a credit card. Other payment arrangements (as currently available) will still be available but will not be as quick and easy as the credit card payment. This new software will also allow us more options regarding the NRA website and on-line registration for conferences and teleseminars. Look for more details as we get closer to full implementation! I'm very excited about this advancement and hope that it will allow us to better meet the needs of our membership.

Thanks for this opportunity to give you an overview of my activities. I look forward to meeting you at various conferences and events that I will be attending in the next few months!

Beverlee Stafford

President's Message

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Andrew Carnegie

In preparing my letter for this month's issue of *Contemporary Rehab*, I searched for a good working definition of teamwork that would apply to our organization. Wikipedia defines "teamwork" as a joint action by a group, in which each person contributes with different skills and subordinates his or her individual interests and opinions to the unity and efficiency of the group in order to achieve common goals. It further states that the most effective teamwork is produced when all the individuals involved harmonize their contributions and work towards a common goal. In my last message, I stressed the importance of teamwork in the tough economic times we are facing, and again, we must remember that the prize is the growth and success of our organization. I am pleased to say that we are heading in the right direction and making many strides towards achieving our goal.

One recent example of great teamwork by our organization was the fantastic job Patricia, Beverlee, and the entire NRA staff did on the Governmental Affairs conference in March. Although budgetary and travel restrictions played a role in fewer attending, the topics, presenters, and information was timely and noteworthy. Congratulations to the group on what I consider a successful event.

Again, I would like to stress the importance of teamwork in recruiting new members. Sara Sundeen has taken a lead in her role as Chair of the Membership Committee. Thanks to Sara for accepting the challenge of chairing this hard working committee. Each of the committee members understands the importance of maintaining the membership and developing initiatives to not only sustain but grow the membership during the tough economic times. In order to

do this, we need to market our member benefits to those we wish to join and those we wish to keep. Recently, the NRA board voted to purchase new membership software. Our current system required a lot of man hours to keep updated and didn't always meet our needs. The new system will be more efficient which frees our time to work on membership strategies and new marketing ideas.

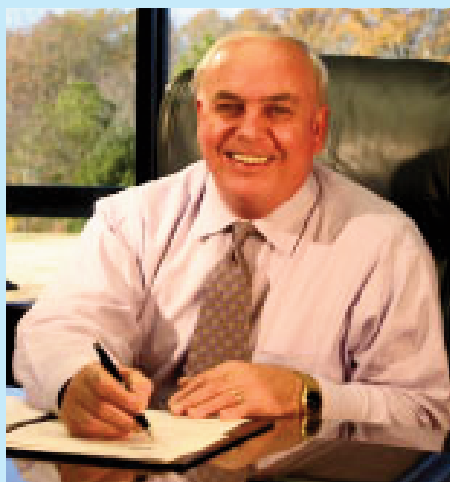
Lastly, as you know, the state agencies that administer the federal vocational rehabilitation programs and the state independent living centers are eagerly awaiting the arrival of stimulus funds. It appears the Rehabilitation Services

Administration will begin releasing information regarding the arrival of the funds and the technical guidance affiliated with these one time monies at the end of March. More information on this subject will be forthcoming next month.

In closing I remind you that each of you are an important part of our team. We need your support, we invite your input, and we value your assistance. The national leadership may be calling on you to assist in certain tasks to make sure we maintain and grow our place in national recognition.

Thank you for your continued support.

H.S. "Butch" McMillan



.....
The most effective teamwork is produced when all the individuals involved harmonize their contributions and work toward a common goal.
.....

NRA Annual Training Conference and Exhibits 2009

Marriott Louisville Downtown, Louisville, KY Sept. 10-13, 2009

REGISTRATION FORM

(Please Print)

Name _____ Employer _____

Name for Badge _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____ Fax () _____

Email Address _____

NRA Member # _____ Expiration Date _____
(Required for member rate)

Special Needs Hearing Assistance Interpreters Large Print Braille Dietary Other
 (please describe on line below)

(Deadline to arrange for any special services is August 17)

National Certifications *(Please Circle)*
 CRC CDMS CCM CWA CVE

Full Conference

(Registration includes: Materials, Certification Processing, Refreshment Breaks, NRA Awards Dinner, President's Reception and entry into Exhibition Hall)

Members \$225 Postmarked before August 1 \$ _____
 \$275 Postmarked on or after August 1 \$ _____

Nonmembers \$335 Postmarked before August 1 \$ _____
 \$385 Postmarked on or after August 1 \$ _____

Includes 1 year complimentary NRA membership

Student Registration – (With copy of student ID (Includes Materials, Certification Processing, and Refreshment Breaks))

Full-Time Student/Member (\$95) \$ _____ Full-Time Student/Nonmember (\$125) \$ _____

Single Day Registration (Does not include meals)

Member (\$105) Nonmember (\$145) Date: _____ \$ _____
 Student Member (\$65) Student Nonmember (\$85) Date: _____ \$ _____

NARL PRE-CONFERENCE - September 10, 8:30am-3:30pm

Situational Leadership – Sabrina Harmon, NISH

NARL Members \$40 \$ _____ Nonmembers \$60 \$ _____

NASPPR PRE-CONFERENCE - September 10, 12:30pm-4:00pm

Out Front by a Nose: Ethical Rehabilitation Practice —

Dr. Mary Barros-Bailey (presenter)

NRA/NASPPR Members \$45 (early bird); \$70 (regular/late) \$ _____

NRA Member \$65 (early bird); \$90 (regular/late) \$ _____

Non-Member \$90 (early bird); \$115 (regular/late) \$ _____

NRA Student \$25 (early bird); \$50 (regular/late) \$ _____

KENTUCKY REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION PRE-CONFERENCE September 9 & 10

KRA Members \$45 \$ _____ Nonmembers \$65 \$ _____

NRA/KRA Awards Dinner, Saturday, September 12 (7:00pm-10:00 pm) Please check if attending _____

NARL/NASPPR/KRA/ Pre-conference attendees may take a 20% discount off NRA conference registration if registering for both. Total \$ _____

Please Note: Cancellation Prior to September 1, 2009 Subject to \$25 Cancellation Fee.

For any other information regarding this conference, please call 1-888-258-4295, fax (703) 836-0848.

No Refunds After September 1, 2008.

Return Registration Information to:

The National Rehabilitation Association (NRA)
633 South Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-4109

Make checks payable to NRA
Phone: (703) 836-0850
Toll Free: (888) 258-4295
Fax: (703) 836-0848

Direct Bill/Purchase Order – Organization _____

(Purchase order must be included with the registration form)

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Master Card

Visa

Signature _____

NOTE: NRAJPD is also planning a pre-conference meeting. Check the NRA website www.NationalRehab.org for more details as they become available.

Ticket To Work, from page 3

payments for ENs, including making Outcome payments based on third party records which eliminate the need for monthly verification of earnings in some situations.

In the table below, the total monthly Outcome and Milestone payments made under the new rules are charted. This information showcases the progress that is being made in beneficiaries returning to work.

The monthly increases in payments are exciting as they represent beneficiaries finding employment and coming off the rolls.

Furthermore, we see a significant increase in activity since the beginning of the program. With over a quarter of total EN payments coming since the release of the new regulations, the Ticket program is clearly a NEW opportunity for ENs and for beneficiaries.

NEW Opportunities for VR/EN Partnerships

The new regulations also include strong incentives for State VR agencies and ENs to work together to meet the long-term employment needs of beneficiaries with disabilities. As of July 21, 2008, a beneficiary may receive sequential services from both a State VR agency and an EN, and the VR agency may seek compensation through the traditional Cost Reimbursement program and the EN can seek available Milestone and Outcome payments. By eliminating the need for a Ticket to be assigned to the State VR agency as a prerequisite for payments under the Cost Reimbursement program, any perceived competition over Ticket assignment is gone. Referred to as

Partnership Plus, this new service delivery option, which is only available when a VR agency chooses to serve a beneficiary under the Cost Reimbursement program, creates exciting new opportunities for partnerships between VR agencies and community rehabilitation providers and employers.

Partnership Plus has many advantages, including the fact that it:

- Emphasizes collaborative relationships by encouraging partnering between VR and ENs, rather than competition;

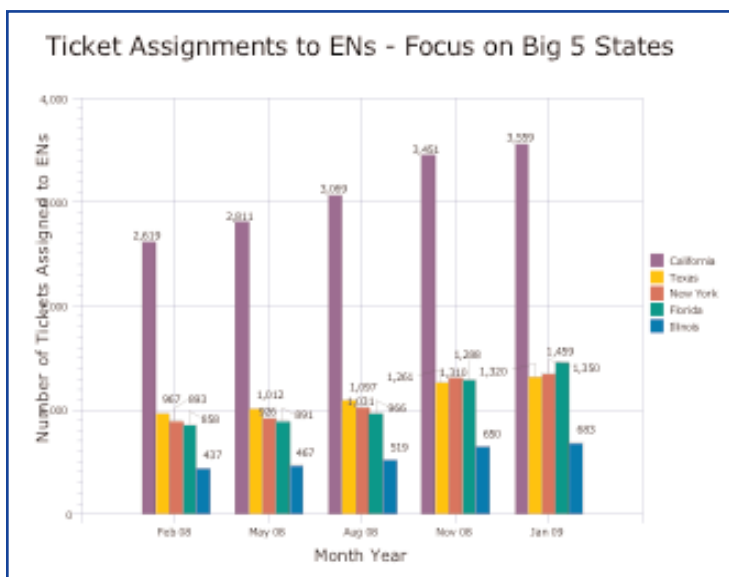
- Facilitates an expanded scope of services available to

- beneficiaries and improves the coordination of services;

- Increases choice for consumers to access long-term employment supports;

- Assists beneficiaries to maintain and advance in employment, thereby increasing the number of beneficiaries for which VR agencies can submit Cost Reimbursement claims; and

- Strengthens all partners in the system by increasing resources system-wide by increasing Cost



Reimbursement program income for VR agencies and increasing Milestone and Outcome payments to ENs.

For more information on this exciting new option, contact partnershipplus@cessi.net.

Opportunities for Your Agency, Your Partners and the Individuals You Serve

If your agency mission is to help individuals connect to work and careers, then Ticket to Work is a wonderful opportunity for you. It comes with a performance-based revenue stream and a national support network. It is an

important tool for your network partners as they struggle to maintain sufficient funding to continue to provide services to your mutual clients and consumers. Remember Partnership Plus allows VR agencies to work with a SSA beneficiary, place them in employment, meet the retention requirements and receive Cost Reimbursement payments. Then the same Ticket Holder can

Total Monthly Outcome & Milestone Payments Made under New Rules

Paymt Mo.	# of Payments		Paid Amounts		Totals
	Outcomes	Milestones	Outcomes	Milestones	
July 2008	1	0	\$392.00	\$0.00	\$392.00
Aug 2008	42	21	\$14,443.39	\$23,893.00	\$38,336.39
Sept 2008	334	87	\$106,410.94	\$99,927.00	\$206,337.94
Oct 2008	560	98	\$179,581.20	\$111,750.00	\$291,331.00
Nov 2008	584	240	\$209,842.00	\$272,292.00	\$482,134.00
Dec 2008	686	584	\$289,640.00	\$605,557.00	\$895,197.00

receive on-going support services from a partnering EN who can receive Phase 2 Milestone and Outcome payments as the beneficiary attains the required levels of work and earnings.

Access the National Ticket to Work Support Network

If you represent a community rehabilitation provider, an employer, or another entity that is involved in getting people into the workforce and you are interested in becoming an EN, contact CESSI, the Program Manager for Recruitment and Outreach for the Ticket program. Call 1-877-743-8237 or e-mail CESSI at tickettowork@cessi.net or visit www.cessi.net/ttw.

If you represent a current or new EN and want to learn more about how to incorporate Ticket to Work into your business model, contact MAXIMUS, the Operations Support Manager. Call 1-866-949-ENVR (36887) or visit www.yourtickettowork.com.

For general information on the Ticket program, including the newest fact sheets, forms, publications and updates, visit SSA's Work Site at www.ssa.gov/work.

Ticket Assignments in the Five Most Populous States

There has been a nearly 16 percent national increase in Ticket assignment between November 2008 and early March 2009. To look at the Ticket assignments in the five most populous states is even more interesting:

- California: 15 % increase
- Illinois: 31 % increase
- New York: 30 % increase
- Texas: 20 % increase
- Florida: 51 % increase

With increasing numbers of beneficiaries assigning their Ticket and with close to \$20.5 million paid out under the Ticket program since its inception in 2002, isn't it time for you to get involved?

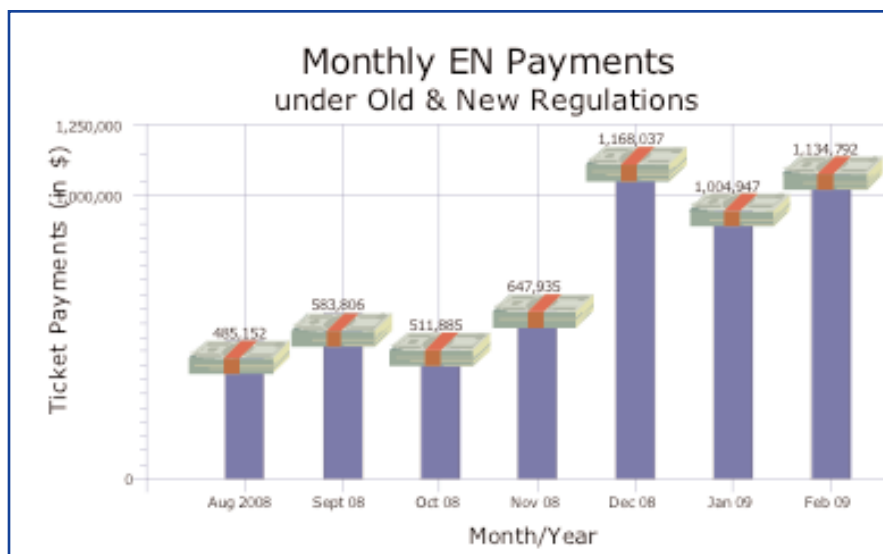
As of February 28, 2009, close to 327,000 beneficiaries have taken advantage of the Ticket to Work program. SSA has invested over \$21 million dollars in payments to ENs for rehabilitation and employment services to SSA's benefi-

ciaries with disabilities. Between February 2002 and December 2008, a total of 5,272 Ticket Holders had earnings that generated EN payments. Of these, 2,450 beneficiaries have had their cash benefits suspended and/or left the rolls due to work and earnings. This represents 41,247 months for which disability benefits were not paid. In addition to representing payments to ENs and VR agencies, this represents a significant savings to the Social Security Trust Fund and the General Revenue Fund.

An EN has the potential to earn up to \$21,905 for each SSDI individual successfully served and \$20,990 for

each SSI individual successfully served (2009 rates). Even if VR served a beneficiary first under Cost Reimbursement and closed the case with the beneficiary in employment, an EN can secure the beneficiary's Ticket assignment and potentially earn over \$17,000 for successfully serving a beneficiary receiv-

ing SSDI and over \$16,000 for successfully serving a beneficiary receiving SSI (i.e., Phase 2 Milestone and Outcome payments). Since SSA paid for beneficiary successes under either the Cost Reimbursement program or the Ticket program under the prior regulations, but not both, this represents new funding that was not available under the prior regulations.



WISE Seminars

Work Incentive Seminars, better known as WISE Events, are held across the country each week. Hosted by Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Projects (WIPAs), these events bring ENs together with beneficiaries and benefits counselors to discuss work options. Nearly 1,900 beneficiaries attended WISE Events in 2008. SSA has expanded the seminar series this year and anticipates nearly 200 events hosting over 3,000 beneficiaries who are seeking information on returning to work. These free and voluntary sessions are great opportunities to build improved community networks. Visit www.cessi.net/wise to register or email wise@cessi.net to learn how to participate.

Changes to Levels of Membership in NRA

Attention NRA Members!

During the past several years, the respective NRA Boards and Membership Committees have deliberated the development and addition of alternate levels of membership in NRA. Consideration for alternate levels of membership came at the request of members/leaders in a variety of NRA arenas, and focused on the current challenges faced by Chapters and Divisions for recruitment and retention of members.

Good News ~ the 2008 NRA Board of Directors voted to approve a "NEW" level of membership : **AFFILIATE**

The **AFFILIATE** level will be available to *non-credentialed rehab service providers, support/technical staff, or retirees (professional or non-professional)*. Members at this level will have access to all the benefits of membership except the *Journal of Rehabilitation* and the ability to hold a seat on the NRA Board. The dues for this level will be \$96.00/ year (or \$8.00/month via automated checking debit, or payroll deduction where available).

Another level of membership was defined and approved by the NRA Board, this one related to students. At present, the graduating student member has an option to retain membership in NRA at a reduced rate for 1 year following graduation. This option has been around for several years, but is not widely recognized. Therefore, at the recommendation of the 2008 Membership Committee, the NRA Board voted to label this membership status as "**NEW PROFESSIONAL**".

The **NEW PROFESSIONAL** level will be available to *recent graduates who were Student members of NRA the previous year; it is available for one single year period and member benefits remain the same as for Student*. Membership dues for this level were established at \$96.00/yr.

In order to make these levels of membership available, a few language changes will need to be made to the NRA Constitution. Those changes are posted in this issue for your review. In about 30 days, the 2008 Delegates will be asked to vote on the changes. Please take a few minutes to review the changes and let your state chapter delegate(s) know if you support the recommendations.

For your reference, below find detailed information regarding the levels of NRA membership, Member Benefits, and Dues Payment options:

Member: available to professional or non-professional;

access to all member benefits: Dues -\$132/yr

***Affiliate:** available to non-credentialed rehab service providers, support/technical staff, or retirees (professional or non-professional); does not receive *Journal of Rehabilitation*; cannot hold office on NRA Board.

Dues- \$96/yr

***New Professional:** available to recent graduates who were Student members of NRA the previous year; available for one single year period; access to full member benefits.

Dues - \$96/yr

Student: available to full time students with faculty verification; access to all member benefits. Dues- \$42/yr

Organization: available to facility director/CEO and 4 designated employees; access to full member benefits for all 5. **Dues-** \$600/yr

**approved by NRA Board as defined; not yet available..*

Member Benefits: Automatic membership in State Chapter, *Journal of Rehab*, *Contemporary Rehab* Newsletter, *Washington Wire* Newsletter, Division Membership (add'l fee), Voting privileges, Member Conference Rates, and Continuing Education opportunities.

Membership in NRA affords additional, albeit less tangible, benefits such as expanded networking opportunities, professional growth and development, access to liability insurance, and leadership opportunities within Association at State/National levels.

The benefits of YOUR membership are defined by the reasons you joined and remain a member. We hope that with these additional options more of our colleagues will discover their own benefits of membership in NRA.

Dues Payment Options: NRA Membership dues may be paid using one of the following options: Check, Credit Card, Credit Card Installments, Payroll Deduction (where available), or ACH (automatic monthly checking acct debit).

If you need additional information regarding NRA membership, please contact Beverlee Stafford, NRA Executive Director, at beverlee@nationalrehab.org

Thank you for your continued support of and membership in the National Rehabilitation Association!

Pat Murphy
2008 Membership Committee Chair
Past President - NRA

JOIN NRA TODAY

or renew your membership by going to <http://www.nationalrehab.org>

or calling the NRA office at 1-888-258-4295

NASPPR News

President's Message

In fulfillment of one of this year's key organizational goal – Support and Promote Training Opportunities, the Conference Committee (Chris Spaulding, Tony Newbauer, Pat Murphy and John Lui) has put together thus far these sessions at the NRA Conference in Louisville, KY in September of this year:

- Pre-Conference on Thursday, September 10, 2009 - "Out Front by a Nose: Ethical Rehabilitation Practice" by Dr. Mary Barros-Bailey – a timely topic especially with the newly revised CRCC Code of Ethics
- Concurrent Session – "Forensic Rehabilitation 101" by Chris Spaulding and Dr. John Lui
- Concurrent Session – "Rehabilitation Counselor Supervision in the Private Sector: An Examination of the LTD Setting" by Dr. Cherie King
- Concurrent Session – "Managing FMLA Absences" by Tony Newbauer

• Pending Concurrent Session – "Abnormal Findings of Normal People" by Russell Travis, M.D.

We hope that you will join us at the Pre-Conference and these current sessions, and our Membership Social event.



As mentioned in the previous Newsletter, the Board is interested to maintain and improve communication with you. Therefore, our big help in providing us YOUR e-mail address is vital. Besides the fact that it is a greener method to maintain dialogue, it will also drive savings in postage expenses. Please send that to me at luij@uwstout.edu or 715-232-5580 (fax) or send that to the NRA Office ASAP.

Remember, we are only as strong as the membership. GET INVOLVED!!

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!!

John W. Lui, Ph.D., MBA, CDMS, CRC
NASPPR President

Are Economic Concerns Prompting Employees to Return to Work Too Soon?

*By Lisa Scotton, RN, CDMS, COHN, CCM, CPDM
 Commissioner, Certification of Disability
 Management Specialists Commission*

When an employee is off work due to a non-occupational illness or injury, the absence is typically covered by short-term disability or other paid leave. Economic challenges and rising unemployment, however, may be prompting employees to return to work before they are medically ready, or to delay seeking care or treatment, which poses risks and safety concerns in the workplace.

Short-term disability benefits are typically between 60% and 70% of an employee's salary, and a prolonged absence can cause an employee significant financial hardship. Thus, employees recovering from an illness or injury may be prompted to return to work too soon out of fear that their employers will not take them back if they are not 100%. As a result, employees may be pressuring physicians to release

them back to work sooner than medically advisable. A sympathetic health care provider who wants to honor a patient's wishes may acquiesce, telling the employee to "just be careful" and follow certain restrictions such as "not lifting anything too heavy" or standing for prolonged periods of time.

Once back at work, however, an employee who is concerned about appearing productive may ignore instructions from the physician. This sets up a scenario for a relapse or re-injury—and potentially a workers' compensation claim. A second injury may result in a prolonged, costly absence—and all because the employee pushed to come back to work too soon.

Although there is no hard data to quantify how frequently this is happening, there is anecdotal evidence that suggests disability managers and other rehabilitation professionals must be aware of the potential problem. Supervisors and front-line managers should also be on the alert for signs from an employee who seems over-eager to come back to work earlier than expected, anxious about the perception of how long he/she has been off due to an illness or injury, or questions about job security during absence.

There is clearly a distinction between an employee who comes back to work too soon with advice to "be careful" or "take it easy," and a safe and timely return-to-work (RTW) program that is managed by a certified disability manager. A modified duty RTW plan provides for work hardening to

continued on page 13

NRA News

NRA Leaders Wanted!

Throughout this great country, we have many excellent leaders who could make a difference at the national level. Please consider nominating yourself or another member for the 2009 NRA ballot. We are soliciting nominees for three positions on the 2010 NRA Board — President-Elect, Treasurer, and Board Member-at-Large.

Each of the positions requires a three-year commitment to the association. The Board meets in-person three times per year and conducts other meetings via teleconference. If you are interested in finding out more about these opportunities, please contact me via e-mail at rferoz@clarion.edu or phone at (814) 393-2052. If you are interested in running or in nominating someone, please send a brief bio, a platform statement of 100 words or less, and a digital photograph. The absolute deadline to receive all materials is June 1, 2009. Thank you!

**Ray Feroz, Past NRA President &
Chair, 2009 Nominations & Elections Committee**

NARL Call for Nominations

The National Association for Rehabilitation Leadership is pleased to announce a call for nominations for officers for 2010. Positions available include president elect, secretary, several regional representatives and a variety of committee chairs.

Please submit your nominations or letters of interest to:
Dr. Pam Mobley
Post Office Box 19888
Homewood, Alabama 25209
drpammobley@msn.com

Call for Proposals

See the February 2009 edition of *Contemporary Rehab* for information on the call for proposals for the 2009 NRA Annual Training Conference. Check our website at www.NationalRehab.org for more details. Proposals due to NRA national office by June 1, 2009!

NRA on Facebook

Join the National Rehabilitation Association group on facebook. Keep up-to-the-minute with NRA news and views! www.facebook.com

NRA 2009 Awards Program



Nominations accepted through June 10, 2009 for the following Award categories:

- E. B. Whitten Silver Medallion Award
- Max T. Prince Meritorious Service Award
- NRA Organizational Award
- W.F. Faulkes Award
- Bell Greve Memorial Award
- Excellence in Media Award
- Graduate Literary Award
- Yvonne Johnson National Leadership Award
- Sylvia Walker National Multicultural Award
- NRA Chapter of the Year Award

See the February 2009 edition of *Contemporary Rehab* or the NRA website for more details about award criteria, nominations and procedures: www.NationalRehab.org Awards will be announced at the 2009 Annual Training Conference in Louisville, KY.

Teleseminar with Connie Garner



Save the Date --

NRA is hosting a teleseminar with Dr. Connie

Garner, Senior Disability Policy Advisor to Senator Edward Kennedy, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The teleseminar will be held on Friday, June 12, 2009, from 1:00-3:00 pm (Eastern). Details about registering for the teleseminar are available on the NRA website at www.NationalRehab.org.

Dr. Garner will discuss several important legislative issues including a report on the ongoing Congressional discussions on universal health care, as well as the forthcoming reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), with an emphasis on the programs administered under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Continuing education credits will be available for participation in the teleseminar. The cost for participating is \$29 for NRA members and \$39 for non-members.

Return to Work, from page 11

help condition employees as they transition back to full-time employment. This plan can include modified duties and/or hours, preferably to the employee's own job, or transitional assignments elsewhere in the company.

Traditionally, a modified duty RTW plan has been open to employees with occupational illnesses and injuries as a way of reducing workers' compensation costs. Ideally, the RTW program should be open to employees with non-occupational illnesses or injuries as well. An integrated RTW program covering all absences, regardless if the cause is job-related or not, may help address the needs of employees who require surgery or other medically necessary treatment—giving them the assurance that there is a program to help them come back to the workplace as they recuperate and heal. Otherwise, employees may be tempted to delay treatment, including surgery, because of employment security fears—no matter how unfounded.

If employers do not have an established RTW program, now is the time to implement it. Further, best practices in disability management highlight the benefit of conducting job analyses to identify the essential physical and cognitive job functions *before* an absence occurs. This will assist the employer in determining whether a worker who is recover-

ing from an illness or injury or recuperating from surgery is able to perform his/her tasks, or if job modifications are necessary.

Finally, the case for awareness around non-occupational injuries and illnesses in the workplace comes down to a matter of safety for all involved. Employees who put off having necessary surgeries or workers who come back too soon not only put their own health and safety at risk, but also those of their colleagues. Helping employees with a non-occupational illness or injury to come back to work safely requires a proactive plan and effective communication. Employees need to understand the objective of an integrated RTW program, and the company's commitment to returning them to the workplace in a safe and medically responsible way.

Unless employees know what their options are, they may be tempted to take matters into their own hands—which could put themselves and their co-workers at risk and potentially cost the company money to pay claims that could have been avoided.

Lisa Scotton, RN, CDMS, COHN, CCM, CPDM, is a Commissioner of the Certification of Disability Management Specialists Commission (CDMSC), the only nationally accredited organization that certifies disability management specialists.

Frank Westphal Dies at 86

Frank Westphal, 86, March 26 at Rockford Memorial Hospital.

Mr. Westphal was born on Oct. 17, 1922. He received his bachelor degree from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and his master's degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology. He began working for the State of Illinois in the Vocational Rehabilitation division in 1950, after being recruited by Adlai Stevenson, Sr. In 1951, he became a member of the National Rehabilitation Association, an organization that promotes ethical and state of the art practice in rehabilitation with the goal of the personal and economic independence of persons with disabilities.

Receiving numerous awards, he was the Elkins Counselor of the year in 1967. He was employed for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a counselor for more than 55 years. Throughout his career he helped thousands find jobs and inspired many others to persevere despite their physical limitations. Until recently, he was still attending seminars and

sharing his expertise, and participating in fundraising events for local schools and church.

He is survived by four daughters, Yvonne "Robin" Fielder of Des Moines, Iowa, Michelle (Stan) Schneider of Pensacola, Fla., Sandra Westphal of Peru and Theresa (Robert) Powell of Bull Shoals, Ark.; one son, Frank (Ella) Westphal, Jr. of Oglesby; 29 grandchildren and 46 great-grandchildren.



He was a member of the First Lutheran Church in Granville, the Founder of the National Rehabilitation Association, co-founder of the Illinois Vocational Rehabilitation Association, charter member of the National Rehabilitation Association, Charter member of the Illinois Rehabilitation

Association, LaSalle County Historical Society, active in Democratic Party Politics.

Memorials may be directed to the Illinois Valley Animal Rescue.

NRAJPD News

2009 NRAJPD Award Nominations

Each year NRAJPD recognizes two professionals in the field at the Award Banquet at the NRA Annual Conference.

The Margaret E. Fairbairn Award recognizes one individual's outstanding accomplishments and distinguished service in job placement to persons with disabilities. This is our opportunity to recognize excellence in rehabilitation.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Have knowledge of the limitations imposed by various disabilities.
2. Have demonstrated the development and use of techniques designed to minimize limitations which capitalize on employment assets.
3. Have demonstrated an understanding of labor market trends specifically in relation to physical demands and working conditions.
4. Have demonstrated knowledge of, and provided information about, the rehabilitation process and placement in particular to employers and to the public.
5. Have demonstrated positive community relations and support through involvement in the placement process.
6. Have implemented effective follow-along and follow-up services to employers and employees.

Procedure for Nomination

Sponsors should submit nominations in narrative form along with supporting statements from persons with disabilities, their employers, or individuals and/or organizations who have knowledge of the nominee's accomplishments and contributions to the field of job placement. Note: Nominees need not be members of NRA or NRAJPD.

NRAJPD Research Award honors and recognizes high quality research in areas of interest to the rehabilitation placement profession and the National Rehabilitation Association of Job Placement and Development and to stimulate future research.

Nomination deadline for both awards is Friday August 7, 2009. For full details on nomination criteria visit our new website at www.nrajpd.com. Click on links and look under Flash Zone or contact Sara Sundeen, sara.sundeen@courage-center.org or 763.520.0509.

Roger Carter
NRAJPD President

Congratulations 2009 NRAJPD Grant Awardees



The Michigan JPD Division will use their grant money to help fund an all day training on May 1, 2009 with keynote speaker Richard Pimentel in Lansing Michigan.

The Illinois JPD Division will use their grant money for a Job Development Seminar using Research Development, published in the Journal of Rehabilitation to help train rehab professionals and assist customers in obtaining and maintaining jobs. Look for this, summer 2009.

The Minnesota JPD Division will use their grant money to support their membership drive. This is a recruitment luncheon prior to a half-day training on Job Placement strategies on May 21, 2009

We encourage you to look for grant application information this fall for 2010.

Thanks again to the states who submitted applications and congratulations Michigan, Illinois and Minnesota.

Sara Sundeen, MS, CRC
Grant Chair, NRAJPD

Illinois JPD Hosts Training Seminar

The Illinois Job Placement Division is pleased to announce a training opportunity for anyone interested in job placement of individuals with disabilities. This one day conference will be held on Friday July 17, 2009 at the James R. Thompson Center, 9th Floor, Room 031. The address is 100 W. Randolph St., Chicago, IL 60601.

The cost for attendance is \$50 and that includes the CRCs. Featured Speakers include Dr. Jon Larson with the Illinois Institute of Technology speaking on the Topic of "User Friendly Motivational Interviewing and evidence-based supported employment tools for practitioners."

Also on the agenda will be Joseph Chiappetta and Selima Ani of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce-disabilityworks Department "How to get face time with employers" Again CRCs will be available on site.

For further information please and registration material please contact: Susan Taylor, Illinois Job Placement Division President Email: susan.taylor@illinois.gov; Phone: 217-785-7762

Contemporary Rehab

2009 – 2010 Advertising Rates (for color or black and white)

Commissions and Discounts:

Size	1x	2 - 3x	4 - 6x
Spread	\$1,275	\$1,155	\$935
Full Page	815	739	599
2/3	665	605	495
1/2	539	489	399
1/3	489	445	365
1/4	425	389	325
1/6	395	359	299
1/8	329	305	255

Rates are gross, 15% commission to recognized advertising agencies only when payment is received within 30 days of invoice date. Discounts for multiple buys of two to three consecutive issues and four or more consecutive issues. **Preferred Positioning:** Requests for special positioning will be honored without charge on a first come basis at the discretion of the publisher, whenever possible. Add 10% of space cost to guarantee reservation for a preferred position.

Contract Requirements

Contract year is six consecutive issues. Insertion orders may not be canceled by the advertiser after the closing date for art deadlines. Advertisers indemnify and save the publisher harmless against any expense arising from actions against the publisher because of contents of an ad.

Contemporary Rehab 2009 Art & Copy Deadlines

June *—June 1, 2009

August—August 1, 2009

October—October 1, 2009

December*—December 1, 2009

* *Electronic Issues*

NARSS Takes on a New Image

NARS – National Association of Rehabilitation Secretaries – was created as a division to represent secretaries who work in the field of rehabilitation. When it was created secretaries were an essential piece of the work done in rehabilitation.

As job duties changed, the division changed its name to NARSS – National Association of Rehabilitation Support Staff to better reflect the tasks, duties and titles that had evolved in the field.

Since that time roles have again changed dramatically. A lot of the changes are due to computers and the opportunities of different classifications that have resulted from the technical skills required.

Many classifications have evolved in the field; such as, vocational rehabilitation technicians, administrative specialists, counseling assistants, as well as some of the ones that

have continued of support staff, account clerks and secretaries.

Many discussions occurred in trying to determine a name that would better identify the division members and provide a division that members would find rewarding and a place to grow in their careers. As a result NARSS is changing their name to ARTS – Association of Rehabilitation Technicians and Specialists. The name change was approved by the NRA board at the March, 2009, meeting.

ARTS will be reaching out to state chapters to encourage them to recruit staff in their states who would be a natural to be a part of this division and help to make the ARTS division a viable part of the NRA organization.

If you have questions, you can contact the following:

Jean Evers, ARTS President 2009

(612) 302-7050

Jean.Evers@state.mn.us

Pat Bienfang, ARTS Representative to the NRA Board 2009

(651) 259-7353

Pat.Bienfang@state.mn.us

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CONTINUING STUDIES

Contemporary Rehab is going Electronic in June!

Do we have your email for delivery?

Dear Subscriber:

Don't miss out on your newsletter from the National Rehabilitation Association. Starting in June, the June and December issues will be delivered by email ONLY. No more print mailed edition.

So, we need a current email address to send you your newsletter. We also would appreciate a phone and fax number for our records.

Please email us your email, phone, fax and current address to: info@NationalRehab.org, or fax this form to us at (703) 836-0848

Thank you!

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