

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the Arkansas State Capitol building in Little Rock. The building is a grand, classical-style structure with a prominent central dome and a portico supported by many columns. The scene is captured at sunset or sunrise, with a sky of vibrant orange, yellow, and blue. The building's lights are on, and the sky is reflected in the water in the foreground. The text is overlaid on this image.

Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council

2024 Annual Report

In partnership with
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services,
Division of Workforce Services,
Department of Commerce.

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A Message from the Chair

November 30, 2024

On behalf of the entire Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and in accordance with Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, please accept this as our FY 2023 Annual Report. I am pleased to share the multiple achievements of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and the SRC.

This year, along with ARS staff, I have been working with the Governor's office to address appointments to the State Rehabilitation Council. With four vacancies to fill, I am thrilled to welcome four new members who bring fresh perspectives and ideas to complement our dedicated current members. I am excited about the opportunities ahead and look forward to the incredible contributions this newly strengthened council will achieve.

Throughout the year, we have had the privilege of hosting several events that highlight the vital contributions of Arkansans with disabilities in the workforce. In October, as part of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we organized an event at the Capitol Rotunda featuring a diverse lineup of speakers. The program included inspiring stories from Arkansans with disabilities sharing their work experiences, testimonials from employers who have embraced inclusive hiring practices, and remarks from state leaders and advocates.

Additionally, we hosted the Business Inclusion Summit during the same month, an event dedicated to engaging businesses across Arkansas and showcasing the many benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. We are proud that these two impactful events have become annual celebrations, reinforcing our commitment to fostering a more inclusive workforce in our state.

On a personal note, I have had the privilege of serving two terms on the SRC, which makes this my final year. It has been an honor to serve as a Board Member and as Chair and I am proud of the work we have done together. I know that I am leaving the SRC in the capable hands of the new Chair, Frank Hellmer. I have no doubt that Frank and the Council will continue working towards the inclusion, integration, and independence of Arkansans with disabilities.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Taylor

Jonathan Taylor
Chair
Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council

Greetings from Commissioner

Greetings,

As 2024 comes to a close, Chairman Jon Taylor and I are pleased to present the Annual Report of the State of Arkansas Rehabilitation Council. The collaboration between the State Rehabilitation Council and ARS plays a vital role that goes beyond mere federal compliance. Their insights are instrumental in ensuring that ARS's initiatives are thoughtfully aligned with delivering successful vocational outcomes for Arkansans with disabilities. By integrating the perspectives of key stakeholders, their contributions help us make informed decisions and focus on utilizing our resources most effectively. This year, we are proud to highlight some significant achievements:

WIOA State Plan

This past year, ARS successfully submitted a new WIOA State Plan to the RSA, which received approval. We want to acknowledge the incredible effort and dedication of our ARS team members who worked tirelessly on this achievement, as well as the invaluable contributions from the State Rehabilitation Council in shaping the plan.

New Case Management System

ARS continues to advance and enhance our new case management system, a project of considerable scale and complexity. This transition has required immense dedication, with countless hours of effort contributed by many ARS employees. Their hard work and commitment have been instrumental in driving this initiative forward.

ARS Annual Meeting

For the first time in several years, we reunited most of our ARS team from across the state at an annual meeting held in May. It was a pleasure to host an in-person conference for our employees, featuring engaging speakers, informative sessions, and a variety of training opportunities. This gathering provided a wonderful chance to reconnect with familiar faces, welcome new team members, and finally match names with faces we'd only known through emails. We are thrilled to revive this annual event, as it allows us to recharge, foster camaraderie, and renew our shared commitment to the ARS mission.

These highlights represent just a portion of the achievements and ongoing efforts by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services over the past year. We eagerly anticipate each new year and the opportunities it brings to enhance our services and continue serving as a vital resource for the people of Arkansas.

Sincerely,



Joseph Baxter, Commissioner
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

Responsibilities of the Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council

- Reviews, analyzes, and advises Arkansas Rehabilitation Services regarding the performance of its responsibilities under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act as it relates to program eligibility (including order of selection) and the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided;
- In partnership with the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services helps develop the Arkansas State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program;
- Submits an annual report to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) commissioner and Governor that highlights vocational rehabilitation services goals and achievements and make the report available to the public;
- Helps coordinate working relationships between Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, the State Independent Living Council (SILC) and centers for independent living;
- Coordinates activities with other councils to avoid duplication of effort and help increase the number of individuals served;
- Performs other functions consistent with the Title I of the Rehabilitation Act as the Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate; and
- To the extent feasible, reviews and analyzes Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' vocational rehabilitation program effectiveness including an assessment of consumer satisfaction with rehabilitation services provided.

Meeting Dates

FY 2024 Meeting Dates

December 21, 2023
March 21, 2024
June 20, 2024
September 19, 2024

Proposed FY 2025 Meeting Dates

December 19, 2024
March 20, 2025
June 19, 2025
September 18, 2025

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

During the December 15, 2022, State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) meeting, the survey currently used to measure client satisfaction was discussed. Following discussion, a workgroup of Council members and select Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff was formed to review the existing survey and make recommendations regarding any needed changes. Following multiple meetings, the workgroup presented a new client satisfaction survey process to the Council at its March 16, 2023, meeting.

The four-step process would include measuring client satisfaction after application, after plan development, at annual review/during/after service provision, and after closure. Following discussion, the SRC voted to adopt the new survey process, with ARS agreeing to implementation on a pilot basis. The four surveys are as follows:

Survey for After Application

- 1) Once I turned my application in, I was able to schedule an appointment to meet with my counselor within:
 - 1 Day
 - 2-3 Days
 - 4-7 Days
 - 7+ DaysIf longer, please explain:

- 2) Staff at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services were nice to me during the application process.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

- 3) It was explained to me that Arkansas Rehabilitation Services helps Arkansans with disabilities get and or keep a job.
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

- 4) My counselor told me about the Client Assistance Program
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

- 5) The office was accessible; it was easy to move around in.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

6) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

- Happy
- Neutral
- Not Happy

7) Comments

Survey for after Plan Development

1) I was able to reach my counselor or another Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff member any time I had a question about my case within:

0-3 Days

4-5 Days

6-7 Days

7+ Days

If longer, please explain:

2) I feel I was able to partner with my Counselor in choosing a work goal, services I would need, and the people providing those services.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3) I feel like my counselor listened to what I had to say including what I liked and didn't like.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 4) I feel like my counselor understands my disability, what I need and what I am unsure about.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 5) My counselor gave me all the information I needed to make the best decision for me and reminded me of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) if there was a disagreement or concern.

Yes

No

Unsure

- 6) I am _____ with the plan my counselor and I came up with to meet my work goal.

Happy

Neutral

Unhappy

- 7) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Happy

Neutral

Not Happy

- 8) Comments

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

Survey for Annual Review/During/After Service Provision

- 1) I felt my counselor contacted me enough during and after services were provided and I was happy with the talks.

Yes

No

- 2) I am _____ with the services provided to me from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Happy

Neutral

Not Happy

- 3) I feel like my counselor understands my disability, what I need and what I am unsure about.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 4) Each service/equipment I needed was provided to support me in a timely manner.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 5) I am _____ with the services provided to me from my service provider.

Happy

Neutral

Not Happy

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

6) My Counselor reminded me about the Client Assistance Program.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

7) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

- Happy
- Neutral
- Not Happy

8) Comment

Survey for after Closure

1) I was able to tell my counselor what I needed and wanted.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2) I was _____ in planning my goal for getting and/or keeping a job.

- Very Involved
- Somewhat Involved
- Not At All Involved

3) I feel like Arkansas Rehabilitation Services wanted to help me reach my goal.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Sample

4) I was advised of my right to contact the Client Assistance Program (CAP) at each stage?

Yes

No

Unsure

5) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Happy

Neutral

Not Happy

2-14-23

6) My counselor explained to me any programs/services that can support me at work, if needed.

Yes

No

Unsure

7) Comment

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

***A sample of survey results during the past year is as follows.**

The Survey for After Application had a total of 102 responses.

Survey for After Application

- 1) Once I turned my application in, I was able to schedule an appointment to meet with my counselor within:

1 Day
2-3 Days
4-7 Days
7+ Days

If longer, please explain:

- 1 Day – 35 (37%)
- 2-3 Days – 32 (34%)
- 4-7 Days – 19 (20%)
- 7+ Days – 8 (9%)

This question had a total of 94 responses

Reasons given were agency issues, third party miscommunication and availability of rehab, had to wait for next available appointment, you guys were changing systems so I had to wait on that, 4 months, later, internal system change over now, and convenience of time.

- 2) Staff at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services were nice to me during the application process.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

- 93 strongly agree (91%)
- 8 agree (8%)
- 1 neutral (1%)

- 3) It was explained to me that Arkansas Rehabilitation Services helps Arkansans with disabilities get and or keep a job.

Yes
No
Unsure

- 102 yes (100%)

- 4) My counselor told me about the Client Assistance Program

Yes
No
Unsure

- 100 yes (98%)
- 2 unsure (2%)

- 5) The office was accessible; it was easy to move around in.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

- 100 yes (98%)
- 2 unsure (2%)

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

6) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Happy
Neutral
Not Happy

- 100 yes (98%)
- 2 unsure (2%)

7) Comments

- Excellent service and communication
- Very kind and helpful
- Look forward to working with this organization

The Survey for After Plan Development had a total of 44 responses.

Survey for after Plan Development

1) I was able to reach my counselor or another Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff member any time I had a question about my case within

0-3 Days

4-5 Days

6-7 Days

7+ Days

If longer, please explain:

- 0-3 Days – 44 responses (100%)
- If longer than 7+ days above, please explain
 - o They did amazing on time
 - o Easy to get ahold of
 - o N/A, Judy always reached out ASAP!
 - o Never took that long
 - o Never more than a day
 - o Not longer than 7 days so I'm good
 - o Satisfied
 - o I was able to reach her same day
 - o Less than 3 days (x2)

2) I feel I was able to partner with my Counselor in choosing a work goal, services I would need, and the people providing those services.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 38 Strongly Agree (86%)
- 6 Agree (14%)

3) I feel like my counselor listened to what I had to say including what I liked and didn't like.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

- 40 Strongly Agree (90%)
- 5 Agree (10%)

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 4) I feel like my counselor understands my disability, what I need and what I am unsure about.

Strongly Agree

- 38 Strongly Agree (86%)
- 6 Agree (14%)

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 5) My counselor gave me all the information I needed to make the best decision for me and reminded me of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) if there was a disagreement or concern.

Yes

- 44 yes (100%)

No

Unsure

- 6) I am _____ with the plan my counselor and I came up with to meet my work goal.

Happy

- 44 Satisfied (100%)

Neutral

Unhappy

- 7) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Happy

- 44 Satisfied (100%)

Neutral

Not Happy

- 8) Comments

- Understand my concerns
- Very fast working and helpful staff.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

The Survey for Annual Review/During/After Service had a total of 39 responses.

- 1) I felt my counselor contacted me enough during and after services were provided and I was happy with the talks.

Yes

No

- 38 Strongly Agree (97%)
- 1 Agree (3%)

- 2) I am _____ with the services provided to me from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Happy

Neutral

Not Happy

- 39 Satisfied (100%)

- 3) I feel like my counselor understands my disability, what I need and what I am unsure about.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 36 Strongly Agree (92%)
- 3 Agree (8%)

- 4) Each service/equipment I needed was provided to support me in a timely manner.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

- 37 Strongly Agree (95%)
- 2 Agree (5%)

- 5) I am _____ with the services provided to me from my service provider.

Happy

Neutral

Not Happy

- 39 Satisfied (100%)

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

6) My Counselor reminded me about the Client Assistance Program.

Yes
No
Unsure

- 34 - Yes (87%)
- 3 - Unsure (8%)
- 2 - No (5%)

7) Overall, I am _____ with my experience at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

Happy
Neutral
Not Happy

- 39 Satisfied (100%)

8) Comment

- Fantastic counselor! I'm so glad I am able to work with her!
- Very kind and easy to deal with. Makes sure I understand everything going on and if I have to pause on services. Checks in on me regularly throughout the process.
- Very thankful for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

Additional comments collected from the survey:

- I have truly had a wonderful experience.
- My counselor explained everything to me, she was very helpful, and extremely kind.
- Receive good service. The RC was thorough with her explanation of services and expectations
- Everyone was respectful and kind.
- Very helpful and friendly!
- Very helpful each time I Come!
- I think my counselor gave me great instructions and help with my case!! Thanks!
- We talked about a plan and now we're putting it into motion can't wait to continue working with my counselor.
- I was provided with everything I need for the school year including materials to help me get a better understanding of course materials.

State Rehabilitation Council Membership

Jonathan Taylor
Chair
Conway

Kesha Pilot
Co-Chair
Hot Springs

Frank Helmer
Chair Elect
Benton

Courtney Leach
Co-Chair Elect
Conway

Tom Masseau
Maumelle

Benjamin (Ted) Scallion
Little Rock

Kelley Sharp
Farmington

Addie Edwards
Camden

Alex Scott
Arkadelphia

Leah Garvin
Sherwood

Carol McDearmon
Greenbrier

Kimberly Clayborn
Jonesboro

Dr. James Grover
Little Rock

Wensday Kraemer
Conway

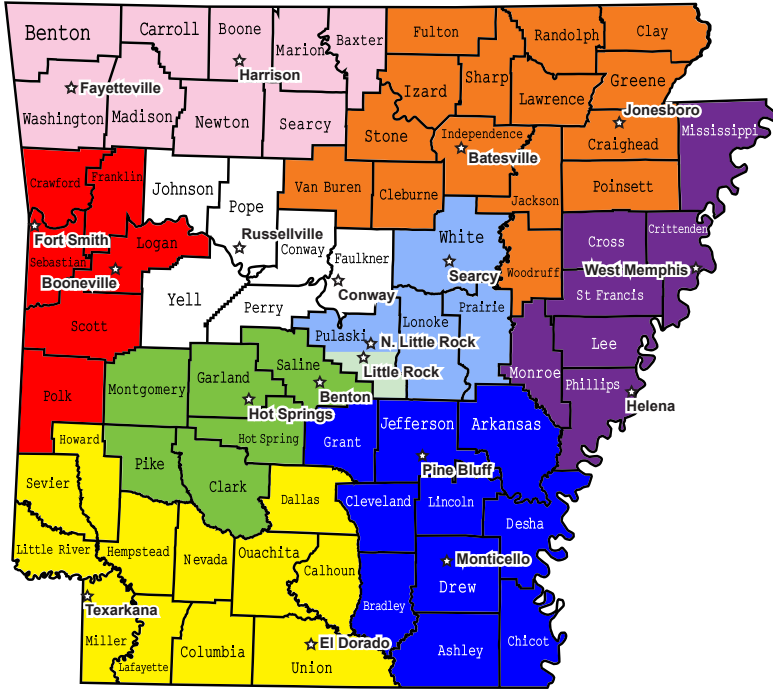
Jennifer Carlin
Sherwood

Bradley Leatherwood
Cash

Joseph Baxter
ARS Commissioner
(Ex-Officio)

The Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a citizens' advisory council, appointed by the Governor, to provide guidance to the state's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. Its members help shape policy, engage in strategic planning, and provide guidance to promote increased employment for individuals with disabilities. Members report annually to the Governor and the U.S. Department of Education on the status of the VR program. The SRC spearheads customer satisfaction surveys, participates in the preparation and review of the comprehensive needs assessment, and co-hosts public hearings and forums. The council includes individuals with disabilities, community rehabilitation program employees, vocational rehabilitation counselors, advocates, and representatives of the business community.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Field Office Map



Arkansas Division of
Workforce Services
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services



Field Services Leadership

Carl Daughtery, Chief of Field Services
Gaye Jones-Washington, Deputy Chief of Field Services
Kimberly Clayborn, Deputy of Field Operations
Kristen Sutterfield, Rehabilitation Program Manager

Region 1
 Jennifer Ragsdale, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Fayetteville: 479-582-1286
 Harrison: 870-741-7153

Region 2
 Kim Childress, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Jonesboro: 870-972-0025
 Batesville: 870-793-4153

Region 3
 Everett Adamson, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 West Memphis: 870-735-4725
 Helena: 870-338-2753

Region 4
 Dana Byrum, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Fort Smith: 479-755-3300
 Booneville: 479-675-3835

Region 5
 Andrea Gilliam, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Russellville: 479-890-5751
 Conway: 501-730-9725

Region 6
 Valencia Butler, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Hot Springs: 501-623-4479
 Benton: 501-317-1390

Region 7
 Monica Alcorn, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 North Little Rock: 501-833-1490
 Searcy: 501-268-4542

Region 8
 LaVennier Brown, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Texarkana: 870-773-2807
 El Dorado: 870-862-5451

Region 9
 Ronald Neal, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Pine Bluff: 870-534-2404
 Monticello: 870-367-9669

Region 10
 Darlene Owens, Rehabilitation Area Manager
 Little Rock: 501-686-2800

Field Offices: Counties Served

Batesville: Independence, Cleburne, Van Buren, Stone, Izard, Jackson, Sharp, Woodruff, Fulton

Benton: Saline

Booneville: Logan, Franklin, Polk, Scott

Conway: Conway, Faulkner, Perry

El Dorado: Ouachita, Calhoun, Dallas, Union, Columbia

Fayetteville: Benton, Washington, Madison

Fort Smith: Crawford, Sebastian

Harrison: Baxter, Boone, Marion, Newton, Searcy, Carroll

Helena: Lee, Phillips, Monroe

Hot Springs: Clark, Hot Spring, Montgomery, Garland, Pike

Jonesboro: Clay, Craighead, Greene, Lawrence, Poinsett, Randolph

Little Rock: Pulaski [south]

Monticello: Ashley, Desha, Bradley, Lincoln, Chicot, Drew

North Little Rock: Pulaski [north], Lonoke, Prairie

Pine Bluff: Jefferson, Cleveland, Grant, Arkansas

Russellville: Johnson, Yell, Pope

Searcy: White

Texarkana: Howard, Lafayette, Nevada, Hempstead, Miller, Sevier, Little River

West Memphis: St. Francis, Crittenden, Cross, Mississippi

Goals and Priorities

As required by the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act** (WIOA), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) submitted its portion of the Arkansas combined State Plan in FY2022. Within that State Plan are specific goals and priorities for ARS that were developed in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council to address both WIOA requirements and ARS's ability to better serve its customers.

Our goals and priorities are as follows:

Goal 1: ARS will meet State and Federal accountability and performance requirements.

- Priority 1: ARS will meet and monitor established performance accountability measures on a quarterly basis to determine progress in meeting federal/state requirements.
- Priority 2: ARS will provide career counseling to 14(c) program participants to meet Section 511 requirements.
- Priority 3: ARS will implement additional strategies focused on RSA identified areas of weakness to strengthen data verification requirements.
- Priority 4: ARS will ensure current ARS policy aligns with Federal Requirements.

Goal 2: ARS will reserve and use a portion of its funds for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

- Priority 1: ARS will develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan.

Goal 3: ARS will provide pre-employment transition (Pre-ETS) and transition services to students with disabilities as outlined in WIOA.

- Priority 1: ARS will continue to expand Pre-ETS services through initiating engagement of students prior to the age of 16.
- Priority 2: ARS will transition at least 15% of the students served to VR.
- Priority 3: ARS will expand Pre-ETS, utilizing data, to unserved/underserved populations across the state.
- Priority 4: ARS will increase the number of students engaged in Work-Based Learning, Pre-apprenticeships, and On-the-Job trainings by 15%.

Goals and Priorities

- Priority 5: ARS will increase the number of Transition students that enter employment by having students work-ready upon completion of high school and/or postsecondary training by a target goal of 50% of the total students served and exiting high school.

Goal 4: ARS will increase competitive integrated employment for Arkansans with disabilities.

- Priority 1: ARS will increase the utilization of apprenticeships and on-the-job trainings by 10%.
- Priority 2: ARS will increase referrals by 10% through collaborative partnerships with WIOA partners.
- Priority 3: ARS' Business Engagement Unit will increase referrals from businesses by 10% annually.
- Priority 4: ARS will increase utilization of VR funds to 90% or higher of the authorized funding.
- Priority 5: ARS will increase services provided to employers by increasing referrals to the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) program by 10% with the goal of retaining employees with disabilities on the job.
- Priority 6: ARS will provide training to field service staff on the appropriateness and implementation of assistive technology and services throughout the rehabilitation process.
- Priority 7: ARS will increase services provided to unserved/underserved populations by 15%. Services include transportation, access to technology, and expanding business and services provider network to bridge gaps.
- Priority 8: ARS counselors will maintain at least a 90% rate for IPE development.

Goal 5: ARS will increase successful employment outcomes utilizing Community Rehabilitation Program and Supported Employment vendors.

- Priority 1: ARS will reach the national average for supported employment closures by PY2027.
- Priority 2: ACDC will increase its number of competitive integrated employment outcomes by 10%.

Arkansas National Standing in PY2023

Measurable Skill Gains Rate by State – PY 2023

National Measurable Skill Gains Rate: 52%

Virginia	81.1%	Indiana	62.8%	Montana	53.5%	Florida	41.7%
West Virginia	77.6%	Delaware	60.6%	New Mexico	53.3%	New Jersey	39.0%
Missouri	75.6%	New York	60.0%	Texas	53.2%	Colorado	38.7%
Ohio	73.8%	Connecticut	59.6%	Michigan	51.4%	Wyoming	37.7%
Oklahoma	72.5%	Idaho	58.9%	Maine	48.5%	Kentucky	35.6%
Mississippi	70.9%	Minnesota	57.0%	Nevada	47.5%	North Carolina	35.4%
Illinois	67.0%	Utah	56.7%	Georgia	47.4%	Oregon	34.8%
South Dakota	66.9%	Louisiana	56.5%	Massachusetts	46.6%	Hawaii	33.3%
Tennessee	66.5%	Puerto Rico	55.8%	Dist. Of Columbia	46.0%	Arkansas	32.6%
North Dakota	66.3%	Vermont	55.7%	Maryland	45.4%	California	31.8%
Alaska	65.4%	Alabama	55.0%	Washington	44.6%	Kansas	31.5%
New Hampshire	63.9%	Iowa	53.8%	Pennsylvania	44.2%	Rhode Island	28.8%
Wisconsin	63.2%	South Carolina	53.6%	Nebraska	43.4%	Arizona	25.3%



2nd Quarter Employment Rate by State – PY 2023

PY 2023 National 2nd Quarter After Exit Employment Rate: 56%

Michigan	70.3%	Nebraska	59.5%	Virginia	56.3%	Delaware	50.8%
West Virginia	69.4%	Illinois	58.9%	Massachusetts	56.2%	Rhode Island	49.7%
North Dakota	67.5%	South Dakota	58.6%	Colorado	55.9%	New York	48.9%
Missouri	64.8%	Iowa	58.6%	Arkansas	55.8%	California	48.5%
Idaho	64.5%	Alaska	57.9%	Wisconsin	55.4%	North Carolina	48.1%
South Carolina	63.8%	Tennessee	57.8%	Washington	55.3%	Puerto Rico	47.6%
Alabama	62.1%	Indiana	57.6%	Montana	55.2%	New Mexico	47.5%
Ohio	61.8%	Louisiana	57.3%	Oklahoma	54.6%	Maryland	47.1%
New Hampshire	61.8%	Pennsylvania	57.2%	Florida	54.5%	Wyoming	47.0%
Mississippi	61.2%	Vermont	56.9%	Kansas	54.5%	Maine	44.8%
Texas	60.8%	Nevada	56.6%	Utah	54.1%	Georgia	43.5%
Kentucky	60.3%	Connecticut	56.6%	New Jersey	53.4%	Hawaii	33.9%
Oregon	60.2%	Minnesota	56.4%	Arizona	53.0%	Dist. Of Columbia	31.6%



Arkansas National Standing in PY2023

2nd Quarter Median Earnings by State – PY 2023

PY 2023 National Median Earnings in 2nd Quarter after Exit: \$5,513

Michigan	\$9,773	North Dakota	\$6,253	Alabama	\$5,167	Virginia	\$4,323
Oklahoma	\$9,110	South Carolina	\$6,178	Puerto Rico	\$5,130	Oregon	\$4,199
Kentucky	\$8,620	Wyoming	\$6,137	Colorado	\$5,037	Georgia	\$4,039
Mississippi	\$7,651	Pennsylvania	\$6,060	Delaware	\$5,029	Kansas	\$3,899
West Virginia	\$7,485	Massachusetts	\$5,877	Utah	\$5,019	South Dakota	\$3,877
Arkansas	\$7,170	Louisiana	\$5,763	Florida	\$4,920	Minnesota	\$3,852
Texas	\$7,118	Hawaii	\$5,669	Maine	\$4,819	North Carolina	\$3,772
California	\$7,058	New York	\$5,611	Iowa	\$4,778	Washington	\$3,741
Alaska	\$7,030	New Hampshire	\$5,448	Nebraska	\$4,728	Ohio	\$3,664
Vermont	\$6,950	Dist. Of Columbia	\$5,444	Arizona	\$4,706	Wisconsin	\$3,610
Connecticut	\$6,891	New Mexico	\$5,418	Maryland	\$4,588	Indiana	\$3,479
New Jersey	\$6,836	Idaho	\$5,380	Illinois	\$4,448	Montana	\$3,457
Nevada	\$6,369	Missouri	\$5,301	Tennessee	\$4,333	Rhode Island	\$3,372

RSA | REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES



4th Quarter Employment Rate by State – PY 2023

PY 2023 National 4th Quarter After Exit Employment Rate: 53%

North Dakota	69.1%	Kentucky	57.4%	Virginia	54.0%	Delaware	46.2%
Michigan	68.3%	Vermont	57.4%	Oklahoma	53.4%	Pennsylvania	45.0%
West Virginia	66.1%	Nevada	57.3%	Florida	53.3%	Maryland	44.9%
Missouri	62.5%	Connecticut	57.3%	New Jersey	52.8%	Rhode Island	44.4%
New Hampshire	61.2%	Nebraska	56.9%	Louisiana	52.6%	Maine	44.2%
Idaho	61.1%	Alaska	56.6%	Wyoming	52.4%	Puerto Rico	43.7%
Alabama	60.7%	Arkansas	56.3%	Montana	52.1%	New Mexico	43.3%
South Carolina	59.9%	Colorado	56.0%	Utah	51.4%	Georgia	42.0%
Ohio	59.4%	Indiana	55.9%	Arizona	49.6%	North Carolina	36.4%
Texas	59.1%	Minnesota	55.7%	Illinois	49.4%	Hawaii	34.1%
Mississippi	57.7%	Iowa	55.7%	California	48.4%	Washington	32.7%
Massachusetts	57.5%	South Dakota	55.1%	Kansas	47.9%	Tennessee	31.9%
Oregon	57.4%	Wisconsin	54.5%	New York	47.8%	Dist. Of Columbia	30.7%

RSA | REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES



Arkansas National Standing in PY2023

Credential Attainment Rate by State – PY 2023

PY 2023 National Credential Attainment Rate: 41%

North Dakota	71.5%	Texas	47.9%	New Mexico	40.0%	South Dakota	30.6%
Virginia	61.9%	South Carolina	47.2%	Georgia	39.8%	Washington	30.0%
Missouri	61.1%	Mississippi	45.3%	Louisiana	38.7%	Connecticut	29.9%
Idaho	59.7%	Maine	45.0%	Utah	38.0%	Puerto Rico	28.1%
New Hampshire	54.8%	Alabama	44.5%	Florida	37.9%	Wyoming	27.9%
Vermont	53.4%	Nebraska	44.2%	Nevada	37.7%	Kentucky	26.9%
Michigan	52.5%	Hawaii	43.3%	Pennsylvania	36.5%	Montana	26.3%
Delaware	52.0%	New York	43.0%	Massachusetts	36.1%	Arizona	24.7%
Iowa	51.7%	West Virginia	42.2%	Arkansas	34.3%	Colorado	23.3%
Indiana	51.7%	Oregon	41.9%	Tennessee	32.5%	North Carolina	23.1%
Alaska	51.6%	California	41.1%	Illinois	32.4%	Maryland	22.5%
Ohio	49.2%	Minnesota	40.6%	Rhode Island	32.1%	Dist. Of Columbia	19.9%
Oklahoma	48.1%	Wisconsin	40.6%	Kansas	30.6%	New Jersey	16.3%



Arkansas Career Development Center

The **Arkansas Career Development Center (ACDC)** serves as a support system of ARS. ACDC offers multiple services to both youth and adults with disabilities.

Training in a variety of in-demand industries is available through ACDC. Participants can also achieve industry recognized credentials from entities such as the National Retail Federation (NRF), the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute, (AHLEI), the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) and others.

ACDC offers pre-employment transition services to youth who are in school, involved with the Department of Youth and Family Services, and those involved with the juvenile justice system.

Additionally, ACDC assists 14C facilities in meeting mandates set forth by the Department of Labor. ACDC assists by providing career counseling to all employees working in one of the 43 14C facilities in Arkansas who receive sub-minimum wages.

ACDC partners with many community entities to bring other needed resources and services to those in need.

Business Engagement

Our **Business Engagement** Team comprises professionals with experience in workforce development, sales, education, human services, business, and industry. The team works to provide proactive interventions, successful engagement strategies, problem-solving solutions, and initiatives to grow and sustain business and sector partnerships. We provide our agency's services with trust, integrity, and commitment to the Arkansans we serve. In support of people with disabilities, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services-Business Engagement Unit bridges the gap between employers, agencies, and people with disabilities seeking substantially gainful employment. This is achieved through consideration of the needs of businesses and participants. Through the knowledge and work of our Business Engagement Representatives, 2,314 businesses, industries, educational intuitions, and agencies learned of ARS services, disability etiquette best practices, or learned of hiring incentives of people with disabilities.

NDEAM: 2024 Access to Good Jobs for All

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services partnered to hold a reading of the Proclamation and a Business Inclusion Summit in Northwest Arkansas during National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Finding employment can be challenging, but for individuals who are deaf and blind, the hurdles can feel insurmountable. Yet, with determination and the proper support, success is possible, as our featured ARS client Beth Pope told the crowd at the NDEAM 2024 reading of the Proclamation held at the Arkansas State Capitol. Beth is successfully employed with Pride Industries, a 430-million-dollar company "that is looking to expand their footprints in Arkansas," stated CEO Jeff Dern.

The 2024 Business Inclusion Summit was a success, with a 9 % increase in the participation of businesses and supportive employment vendors over the previous year. The Arkansas Business Inclusion Summit made a significant impression on many who were in attendance. From start to finish, this event will be a hot topic as many businesses and organizations would like to learn more and be a part of going forward. The following businesses and vendors were recognized for their roles in hiring people with disabilities in Arkansas.



CEO, CFO, and Board Officers of Pride Industries, Beth Pope, ARS Commissioner, ARS Deputy Commissioner, and Business Engagement Director ARS.



The 2024 Business Inclusion Summit was bigger and better this year, with more participants.

Business Engagement

Distinguished Vendor Award: Ed Davis Jobs

Thank you for your continued support and recognition of people with disabilities.

Distinguished Business Award: Cintas

Thank you for your strong commitment to disability employment and company-wide support of people with disabilities.

Distinguished Business Award: Bank OZK

Thank you for your strong commitment to disability employment and company-wide support of people with disabilities.

Distinguished Business Award: Sam's Club

For embracing disability inclusion in employment and customer service to people with disabilities.

NDEAM is a month that the Business Engagement Unit commits to spreading awareness about the capacity, value, and wealth employees with disabilities add to Arkansas's businesses and industries. Our calendars were packed with Proclamations, job shadowing at companies, job fairs, CSAVR Training, Disability Etiquette Training, and training at conferences on effective business engagement.

Initiatives

ARS Business Engagement Unit is committed to helping with onboarding Arkansas Rehabilitation Services participants in the schools, vendors, and businesses that contribute to the success of On-the-Job Training, Work Based Learning, and Apprenticeships, meeting the Goals and Priorities for Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Workforce Strategy Solutions.

Successful Job Placements

ARS Business Engagement Unit is committed to helping with onboarding Arkansas Rehabilitation Services participants in the schools, vendors, and businesses that contribute to the success of On-the-Job Training, Work Based Learning, and Apprenticeships, meeting the Goals and Priorities for Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Workforce Strategy Solutions listed below. ARS business engagement will increase services provided to public and private sector employers by increasing referrals to the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) programs.

- Seneca Mathews on successful employment at Western Express as a CDL Driver making \$26.95 per hour.
- Kennesha Sims was employed by Telatec, making \$800.00 weekly.
- Randy Scott obtained employment at Midwest Express and is successfully making \$35.00 per hour, which is \$11.00 above the median wage.
- Jonathan Jenkins obtained and maintained employment and earned a wage of \$27.78 per hour as an attorney at Eason Law Firm.
- Alexis Taylor found sustainable employment opportunities at Arkansas Children's Hospital

Project SEARCH®

Project SEARCH® Arkansas sites are developed in partnership with ACCESS Group, Inc., and Friendship Community Cares, Inc., schools, and other stakeholders. Ten local businesses volunteer to provide nine months of training to ARS clients. The training is provided in the business, by the business. There are over 50 local businesses on the Business Advisory Councils (BACs). The highest wage earner to date earns \$18.08/hr. (\$37,064/year) with full benefits. Several graduates earn \$17.00/hr. (\$35,360/year) with full benefits. 100% of Project SEARCH participants have the opportunity to receive benefits counseling and receive ACDC trainings OSHA, Professional Guest Services, Drivers Permit training, and ServSafe.

Employment Outcomes

Project SEARCH® Arkansas: ACCESS Initiative



79% of graduates found employment

Employers include: Hot Springs VIP Cinema, Chicken SaladChick, City of Jonesboro Shooting Complex, St.Bernards, UAMS, ABM- Clinton National Airport, Catholic High School for Boys, Morrison Health/Mercy, AmyCo, CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs, AmbridgeHospitality at The Hotel Hot Springs

Project SEARCH® Arkansas: Friendship



83% of graduates found employment

Employers include: Bright Harbor Day Care, Hyatt House, Aramark, McAlister's Deli, Early Advantage Academic Preschool, Ace Hardware, McDonalds, Goodwill, Smoothie King, Burger King, Hampton Inn, Johnson Regional Medical Center- Clarksville, Solarity- LR, Ten Box- Russellville

Access and Accommodations

Access and Accommodations (A&A) comprises assessment, assistive technology (AT), and work-related programs that provide direct support to vocational rehabilitation clients, counselors, and employers to improve and facilitate competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities or act as a resource with regards to assessment and diagnosis, assistive technology, or accommodations. Access and Accommodations also houses the Community Service Programs (CSP's) that provide varying services regarding assistive technology to Arkansans across the state.

Psychological Services

The **Psychological Services** team has two programs, RIDAC (Rehabilitation Initial Diagnosis and Assessment for Clients) and LEC (Learning Evaluation Center), that are staffed by Arkansas licensed psychologists or psychological examiners who provide diagnostic services to counselors working with clients during the initial stages of case development and planning or if more detailed psychological information is necessary during case development. Services provided include mental health assessments, psychoeducational and vocational evaluations, diagnostic evaluations, and case consultation. This reporting period staff performed 1115 mental health assessments, psychoeducational / vocational evaluations, and diagnostic assessments. Service numbers decreased this reporting period (down from 1403 last year) as counselors complied with RSA directives to use existing documentation for eligibility rather than relying too heavily upon Psych Services.

Medical Services

The **Medical Services** team consists of 1 general physician and 1 nurse practitioner to cover the state of Arkansas. These individuals provide general medical examinations and medical consultations to aid rehabilitation counselors in determining eligibility or during case development. This reporting period medical services staff completed 1729 general medical examinations or case consultations for ARS clients.

Stay at Work/Return to Work

The **Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW)** program is designed to assist the employee and employer to either keep an existing employee on the job or successfully return an employee back to work as quickly and effectively as possible. Staff assists in the interactive process of accommodation serving both the employee and the employer in this process. SAW/RTW staff participated in this process with 23 different employers. Last fiscal year the SAW/RTW program closed 10 cases in status 26/closed-rehabilitated and all are still employed at the time of this report. SAW/RTW outcome effectiveness was hindered significantly due to staffing shortages this fiscal year.

Alternative Financing Program

The **Alternative Financing Program (AFP)** can be another funding source for assistive technology not purchased by ARS. This reporting period the AFP provided 18 loans totaling \$658,276.90 to individuals with disabilities in Arkansas to use in the purchase of assistive technology this is an increase from \$366,992.50 last year.

Access and Accommodations

Assistive Technology at Work

The [Assistive Technology at Work \(AT@Work\)](#) team provides direct support to vocational rehabilitation clients through AT assessments and consultation services. During the last federal fiscal year, AT@Work staff provided these services to 410 individuals; this is up from 313 individuals served last year. Individuals served included students requiring accommodations for school, clients actively seeking employment, and those seeking workplace accommodations to remain at work through the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) program. The occupational therapists within AT@Work have provided 55 AROAD (Arkansas Rehabilitation Occupational Abilities Determination) assessments this year. These assessments are specifically designed to aide counselors and clients in the determination or viability of a vocational goal on a functional basis. They also provided 415 incidences of technical assistance helping clients problem solve various issues in dealing with assistive technology or accommodation implementation.

Increasing Capabilities Access Network

The [Increasing Capabilities Access Network \(ICAN\)](#) allows a client to try out a piece of assistive technology prior to purchase, and its equipment reutilization program can be a no-cost solution for needed equipment. ICAN has saved Arkansans \$5,223,808.39 this year through their services. This money otherwise would have been charged to Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, or the individual themselves. This past year ICAN has served 50 ARS clients in various aspects of providing assistive technology services such as AT loans and donations. ICAN also supports VR through their relationship with the AT@Work and SAW/RTW programs where they allow ARS evaluators to utilize ICAN equipment during their client evaluations prior to making their recommendations.

Telecommunications Access Program

The [Telecommunications Access Program \(TAP\)](#) served 354 Arkansans with disabilities this reporting period helping to increase their independence with distance communications; 68 of those individuals were ARS clients. TAP participated in 34 community engagements to increase awareness of the program and strengthen community connections. TAP launched a new database in March 2024 and continues to tweak updates to capture full information regarding populations served.

The Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities

The [Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities \(AGCPD\)](#) promotes the interests of Arkansans with disabilities in a variety of ways including providing scholarships to individuals with disabilities and through public service campaigns. This reporting period the AGCPD provided scholarships of \$1000.00 each to 19 students with disabilities. Additionally, they developed and distributed a new van-accessible brochure as well as funded a 12-billboard display project covering Central Arkansas providing awareness of disability handicap parking violations.

Transition Services

ARS **Transition Services** continues to serve the needs of students in high school throughout the state as they transition into post-secondary education and competitive integrated employment. ARS works directly with students through summer camps: Youth Leadership Forum and Transition Employment Program. ARS continues to work with our local school districts to implement Pre-ETS through our WOLF & WIN! programs as well as our contracted vendor services. Arkansas was one of 20 states out of 27 that received a Disability Innovations Funds grant to create pathways to employment for in-school and out-of-school youth. Pre-Employment Transition Services has helped provide a wide range of opportunities for students with disability to ensure they have a strong foundation to continue their education or move into the workforce.

Transition Employment Program (TEP)

The **Transition Employment Program (TEP)** is a comprehensive pre-employment training service designed to prepare 11th-grade students with disabilities for future employment. TEP meets all mandated core services of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity ACT (WIOA): Job Exploration, Work-Based Learning, Workplace Readiness, Post-Secondary Counseling, and Instruction on Self-Advocacy.

TEP 2023 was held at the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts (ASMSA) in Hot Springs. Forty-nine students applied, and 42 participated. All students gained work-readiness skills through their work-based learning experience at TEP. Some attend schools with pre-ETS agreements with ARS; both groups were allowed to receive additional hours in the fall. They had the opportunity to receive some ACDC Training in OSHA Drivers Permit training and Professional Guest Services Training. TEP students and their families on Benefits received Benefits Counseling. Some family members not on Social Security Benefits volunteered to participate in the Benefits Counseling, intending to share information with other family members, friends, and others in their community who could benefit from this training.

The Transition Services team continued to provide post-secondary counseling to the students and connected them and their parents to other essential resources. According to the initial follow-along services, more than 30% received additional ARS services, and 100% graduated from high school. Some applied for and were accepted to participate in their local Project SEARCH sites; some opted to pursue a college education; the TEP staff guided them throughout the process.

Youth Leadership Forum (Hendrix College)

The **Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)** is a vital part of Pre-ETS services and allows students with disabilities to experience career exploration, peer mentoring, and work-based learning while on a college campus. Over time, this has continued to develop and focus on the required core services listed in WIOA for Pre-Employment Transition.

Some of the experiences students had at YLF include:

- Activities related to Culture and the Arts
- Participation in Employability & Life Skills with ARS Business Engagement Representatives
- Learned Self-Advocacy skills through guest speakers
- Leadership/Teamwork training with Epiphany Morrow

Transition Services

Disability Innovations Funds Grant, Seamless Transition in Arkansas (STAR)

Seamless Transition in Arkansas is a comprehensive, collaborative initiative that aims to address the underemployment of youth with disabilities and enhance their opportunities for competitive integrated employment. The STAR project focuses on critical areas such as college preparation, skill development, and innovative collaboration models by leveraging existing strengths and partnerships with various state agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations. Key stakeholders include the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Centers for Independent Living, and the University of Arkansas, allowing for a multi-faceted approach to supporting youth with disabilities in achieving post-school success in rural and underserved areas of South, Southwest, and Southeast Arkansas. Currently, 14 school districts are working with ARS to implement Pre-ETS programming within the school. STAR is currently serving 154 students.

WOLF & WIN!

ARS partners with our local school districts to directly implement Pre-ETS through two school-based programs: **WOLF & WIN!** For the school year 2023-2024, 51 schools participated in the Work-based Learning Opportunities Leading to Future Employment program, and 17 schools participated in our Working for Independence Now program. WOLF & WIN! are Work-Based Learning programs that allow students across the state to participate in work experiences throughout the school year. To increase student success, Pre-ETS has partnered with **Arkansas Career Development Center** to offer students enrolled in our school-based programming the opportunity to obtain short-term certificates such as OSHA, Serve Safe, & Customer Service. The WOLF & WIN! programs have allowed ARS to work directly with our school districts and teachers to increase post-school outcomes for our high school students with disabilities through work experiences and opportunities to gain short-term certificates.

The number of students and hours worked through WOLF & WIN! school year 2023-2024 program is listed below:

Work-Based Learning <i>(on campus, off campus, student led enterprise)</i>	Number of Students Fall Semester	Number of students Spring Semester
Number of students Participating WOLF & WIN	563	576

Transition Services

Community Rehabilitation Programs

ARS also works with our community rehabilitation programs (CRP) to implement Pre-Employment Transition Services during school, after school, and through summer programming. For the 2022-2023 school year, ARS had 14 vendors providing services in 100 schools across the state. Our vendors allow students to participate in Work-Based Learning activities throughout the school year. This benefits students by increasing their knowledge and skills in the workplace before graduating from high school. Students spent their Fall Semester (Q1 & Q2) focusing on Job Exploration, Work Readiness, Counseling on Post-Secondary Training Opportunities, and Self-Advocacy. Students spent the Spring Semester (Q3 & Q4) participating in Work-Based Learning.

Shown below is a comprehensive list of students served and hours spent on each core service:

Vendor Data School Year 2023-2024						
Quarter	# of Students Served	Job Exploration Hours	Work Readiness Hours	Counseling on Post Secondary Hours	Self-Advocacy Hours	Work-Based Learning Hours
Q1 (July – Sep)	757	943	1,353	533	2,136	2,114
Q2 (Oct – Dec)	793	3,631	5,598	5,501	2,265	7,069
Q3 (Jan – Mar)	783	1,257	992	402	1,082	12,704
Q4 (Apr – June)	768	255	145	86	101	10,214

All Pre-ETS students receiving services are eligible to receive Benefits Counseling through Project AWIN. Project AWIN assists people currently enrolled in SSI/SSDI with information on how employment affects their benefits, such as cash payments and medical coverage. In assisting the Pre-ETS program, Project AWIN helps those students and parents on SSI understand and sign up for Student Earned Income Exclusion. This work incentive allows students aged 14-22 to work and earn money and not lower their SSI cash payment.

Benefits Counseling	
# of Students Served	289
# of Hours Spent 1 on 1 with Students	793 Average = 2.77 Hours per Student

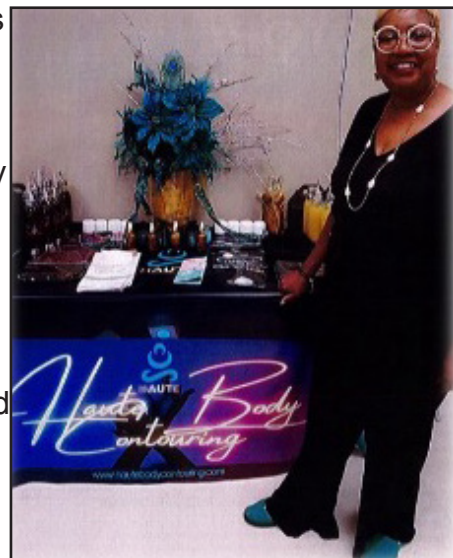
Success Stories

Phillis Nichols

Despite facing physical challenges due to her disability, Phillis Nichols was determined to succeed in her daily life and start a business. Upon learning about Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, she promptly connected with a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor to determine eligibility and begin the necessary steps for assistance. Together, they discussed challenges and devised strategies on how ARS could help her thrive.

Phillis submitted a small business plan, which was deemed feasible with the assistance of the Small Business Program Manager. From there, Phillis, her counselor, and small business manager collaborated as a team to find a vendor capable of providing the necessary items for her business growth.

Once the plan was developed, the counselor connected with the partnered vendor to authorize and purchase supplies and equipment for Phillis. With these items, she could effectively perform her job duties and ensure the success of her business. She is now the proud owner of Haute Body Contouring and Wellness Zone, LLC.



Bailey Mitchell

Since 2022, Bailey Mitchell has been an enthusiastic participant in Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. She recently graduated from Joe T. Robinson High School and is now pursuing her passion for cosmetology at Pulaski Technical College in Little Rock.

Thriving in her new environment, Bailey expresses gratitude for the ongoing support from ARS, PTC staff, and newfound friends. Eager to make a difference, Bailey dreams of owning her own hair salon and using her creativity to empower others.

With a vibrant social media presence and a heart for helping others, Bailey embodies positivity and ambition. She credits her VR Counselor, Katrina Bennett, for her guidance and kindness, urging others to explore the opportunities ARS provides. With boundless aspirations, Bailey confidently declares, "My future looks bright, thanks to AR Rehab!"



Success Stories

Cade Johnson

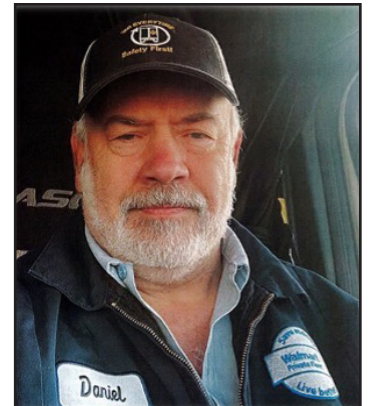
Cade Johnson was a client of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) who had a diagnosis of scoliosis. After learning about ARS, he was quickly connected with a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor who worked with him to determine eligibility and complete the necessary steps to help him obtain and maintain full-time employment. The counselor and client collaborated to identify challenges and develop solution strategies to ensure Cade could find success. ARS also partnered with a vendor to provide the training he needed, and upon completion, Cade was able to start his career as a Welder with Thompson Construction Group.



Daniel Jones

After years of hard work, Daniel's disability didn't keep him from his lifelong ambition. Despite the pain and discomfort from an ill-fitting prosthetic leg, Daniel continued to push on as a tractor trailer truck driver for Walmart. The professionals at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services saw Daniel's determination and helped in the form of a brand-new prosthetic leg and foot, a perfect fit to get him back on his feet and back to the job he loves.

Now, Daniel is grateful and optimistic as he gets ready to start the day with renewed strength and enthusiasm. Through sheer hard work, dedication, and assistance from those willing to lend a helping hand, Daniel was able to accomplish what he set out to do – prove that no obstacle is too big to overcome.



Indra Rodriguez

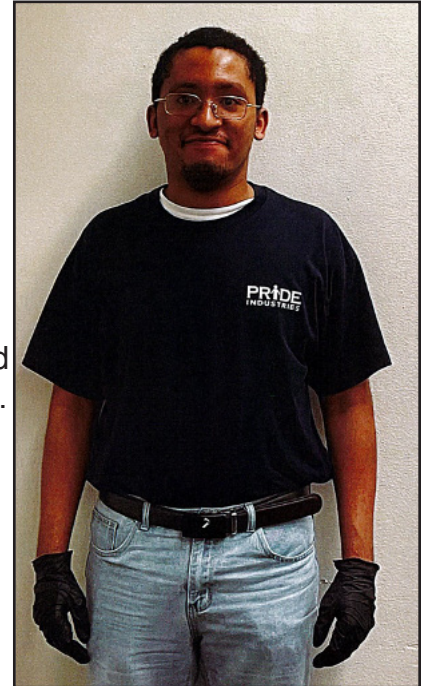
Indra Rodriguez is a first client of ARS. Through the assistance of ARS, Indra was able to complete her schooling and pass her written/practical exams through DeSigner Barber & Stylist School. She is now a licensed Barber & Stylist and is very proud of this accomplishment. Indra thanks ARS for their assistance in this achievement and is excited to begin her new career in this field.



Success Stories

Davion Green

Davion is one of the newest hires at Pride Industries. Davion Green heard about Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) through his mother about job opportunities for people with disabilities. Davion's diagnosis of Autism and ADHD impacts his working memory and cognitive flexibility. Davion was looking for employment that is understanding of his needs, strengths, interests, and abilities. Pride Industries was the employment place for Davion that allowed him to feel respected and "important" in the aspect of contributing to society and accomplishing a career as a custodial team member for Pride Industries in Little Rock. Davion and his counselor worked together to build his ARS plan to include supported employment services to assist Davion with achieving his vocational goal. Davion selected to work with Mr. Becker (employment hire coordinator at Easter Seals of Arkansas), who assisted Davion with applying and interviewing for Pride Industries in Little Rock and provide job coaching to Davion. Davion Green received assistance with assistive technology to help him achieve and exceed performance targets at Pride Industries. Davion reports, "he likes working at Pride Industries and is thankful for help of his mother, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Mr. Becker, and his supervisor and the Pride staff". Davion said, "he would recommend others to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services".



Nathaniel "Luke" Munn

Nathaniel "Luke" Munn was a student at Valley View High School in Jonesboro, Arkansas, who was struggling with ADHD and a learning disability for most of his life. After speaking to one of his teachers, he was introduced to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. He met with his VR Counselor, who guided him in setting achievable goals and finding a program that suited his skills. He wanted to apply for Project Search, a nine-month program that would provide him with work experience. After his first rotation, he was offered a job as an Operating Room Aide at St. Bernard's Medical Center. He was eligible for benefits, including 401k, immediately. When asked about his time at ARS, Luke said, "I love my job because of the interaction I have with the patients and co-workers. I am so glad I connected with ARS. I was unsure of myself and didn't know what I was good at, but now I have found something I love and am good at. I want to thank ARS, my teachers, and Project Search for giving me an opportunity to become a successful working citizen."



Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
is under the
Division of Workforce
Connections
within the
Department of Commerce

