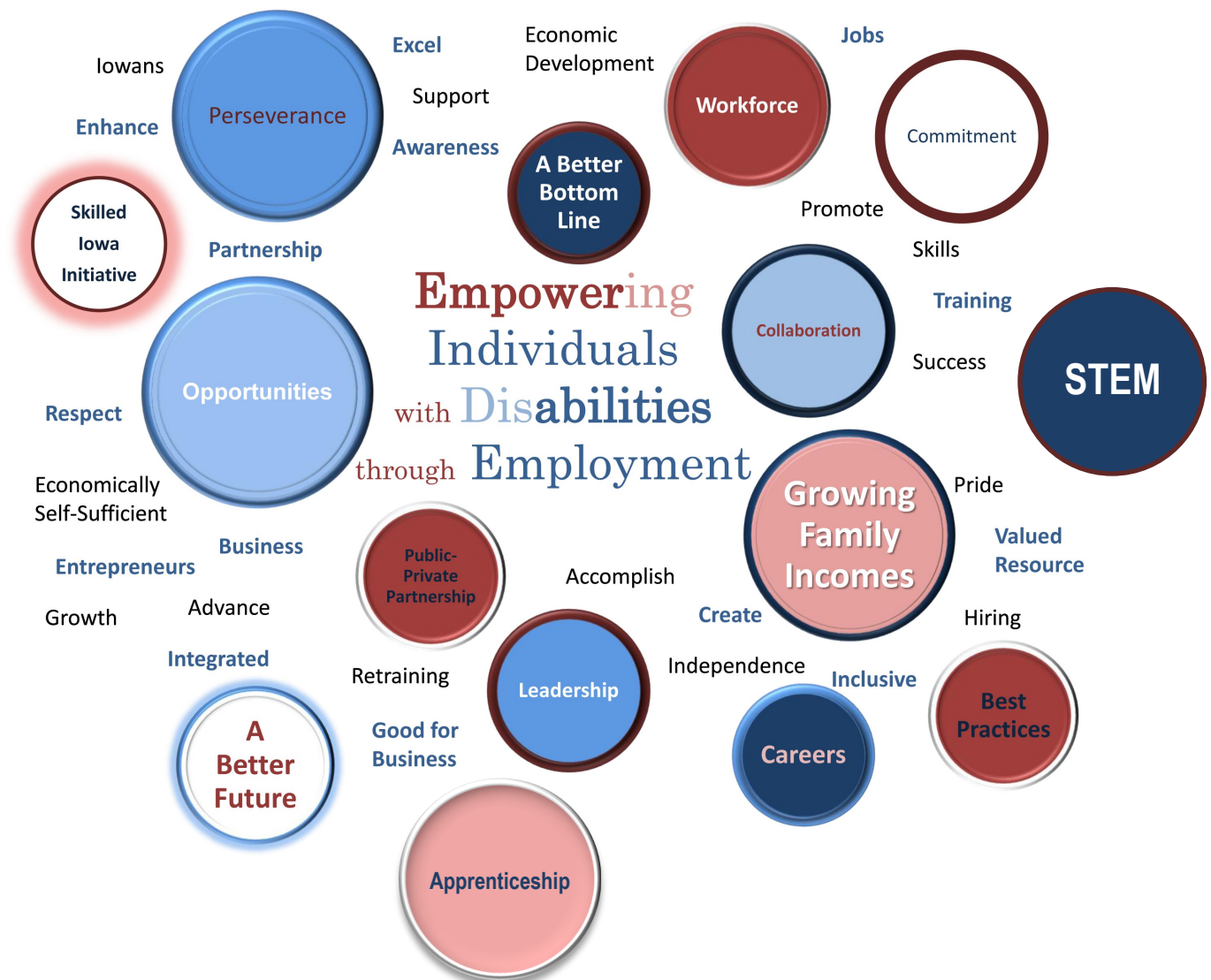




# State Rehabilitation Council

## Annual Report

# 2015



# From the IVRS Administrator



Terry E. Branstad, Governor  
Kim Reynolds, Lt. Governor  
Ryan M. Wise, Director  
Department of Education  
David L. Mitchell, Administrator

Dear Friends,

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) is pleased to partner with the Iowa State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) in presenting the 2015 SRC Annual Report. We are proud of the accomplishments and activities reflected in this report and of the IVRS vision of making a positive difference for every person, one person at a time.

We extend a special thank you to outgoing SRC member John Mikelson, who served on the council for six years. We give a warm welcome to our new members: Nicole Cleveland, Pamala Fitzsimmons and Brian Dennis.

This report highlights the partnerships that assist IVRS in serving Iowans with disabilities. Particular focus is on strong relationships with secondary and post-secondary schools, Iowa Workforce Development and a collaborative approach across state systems to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

The State Rehabilitation Council plays a key role in providing for these collaborative partnerships. Diverse representation on the Council facilitates lively discussion impacting areas of veteran services, independent living, and students/adults with disabilities. This report also emphasizes the essential partnerships developed with business and industry.

Through these efforts, IVRS provided vocational rehabilitation services to over 12,000 Iowans with disabilities in fiscal year 2015. All federal outcome measures, as outlined by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, were achieved.

One of those standards and indicators included 2,321 Iowans with disabilities that achieved successful community integrated employment. These new on-the-job citizens represent the powerful impact of vocational rehabilitation with a total increase in annual earnings of \$9.9 million and a positive return on investment for money appropriated to VR services.

The SRC plays a critical role in supporting the VR service delivery program through its work in conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment, informing the State Plan and in reviewing and monitoring satisfaction and progress towards attaining employment goals. This past year also involved learning of federal changes to the VR system caused by the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act and providing input into the Iowa Unified State Plan, impacting service delivery. IVRS pledges continued commitment towards an employment service delivery system that is accountable and effective in serving Iowans with disabilities and our business and industry customers. Thank you for taking the time to review this report and the work of our dedicated SRC volunteers.

Respectfully,

IOWA VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION SERVICES

David L. Mitchell  
Administrator

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# State Rehabilitation Council

**FY 2014-2015**



**Jeanne Sorenson:  
Chair**



**Renee Neppi:  
Chair, Co-Chair**



**Rosemary Thierer:  
Co-Chair**

Joan Bindel

Sherri Clark

Jill Crosser

Randell Davis

Page Eastin

Kathy Joblinske

Gary McDermott

John Mikelson

Lori Moore

Renee Neppi

Deb Samson

James Smith

Jeanne Sorenson

Rosemary Thierer

Ed Wallace

David Mitchell

## **IVRS Staff to SRC:**

Matthew Coulter

Kenda Jochimsen

Kathleen Slater

Kelley Rice

Lee Ann Russo



**T**he SRC, with members appointed to three-year terms by the Governor, has been in operation since January 1993.

Our focus is to provide advice and direction to the Department of Education's Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services on the quality and effectiveness of their programs and services.

The SRC is a vital link to community organizations and providers which IVRS serves and through which it procures its goods and services.

The goals of the SRC are to seek and improve the quality of employment outcomes and community participation for individuals with disabilities.

## **CAP**

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) is a federally-mandated program designated to assist individuals who encounter conflicts with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Iowa Department for the Blind, and Centers for Independent Living. CAP helps people with disabilities receive quality services by advocating for their interests and helping them identify resources, understand procedures, resolve problems, and protect their rights in the rehabilitation process, employment, and home services. The CAP advocate uses mediation, negotiation, conflict resolution, and legal means needed to help resolve issues.

## *SRC Committees*

**Jeanne Sorenson: Chair**

**Renee Neppl: Chair, Co-Chair**

**Rosemary Thierer: Co-Chair**

### **PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

#### *DUTIES/OBJECTIVES/ACTIVITIES:*

1. Review and provide input and recommendations on the RSA-required State Plan and yearly State Plan amendments.
2. Develop and coordinate distribution of monthly client satisfaction survey.
3. Analyze responses from monthly client satisfaction survey.
4. Complete SRC Annual Report to the Governor.
5. Review proposals and make recommendations regarding Agency policy issues.

### **OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

#### *DUTIES/OBJECTIVES/ACTIVITIES:*

1. Create an informative legislative reception that produces support from legislators regarding IVRS services and initiatives.
2. Develop a position paper to be used in educating legislators and the public on the impact of IVRS on the Iowa Workforce needs.
3. Recruit new SRC members who can leverage public support in advocating for persons with disabilities.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

#### *DUTIES/OBJECTIVES/ACTIVITIES:*

1. Review and communicate the implications of allocation decisions.
2. Understand and be able to communicate the state-federal match process.
3. Understand and be able to communicate the financial processes of IVRS.
4. Educate legislators, policy makers, partners and others on fiscal issues.

## SRC Consumer Satisfaction Survey

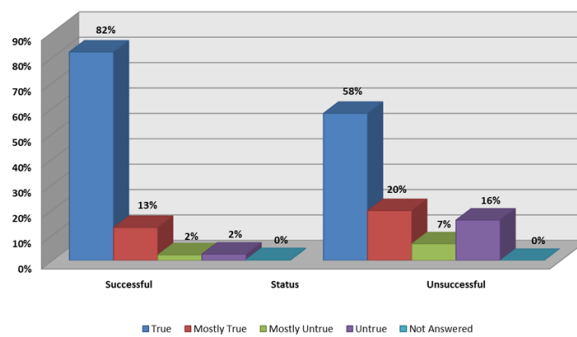
95% of our job candidates with successful employment outcomes report satisfaction with the way their counselor related to them.

94% of our job candidates with successful employment outcomes report the counselor involved them in decision-making.

89% of our job candidates with successful employment outcomes report they are employed or more prepared for employment because of the services received from IVRS.

89% of our job candidates with successful employment outcomes had a satisfactory experience throughout the vocational rehabilitation process.

1. I am satisfied with the way my counselor related to me?



Satisfaction surveys have been designed to solicit information from individuals served by IVRS. Survey data is shared at quarterly SRC meetings and posted to the IVRS website. IVRS staff are also informed about the satisfaction level from job candidates who complete a survey once their case is closed by IVRS.

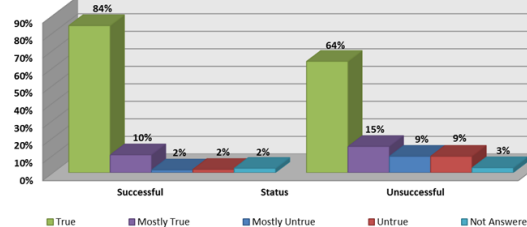
The current *Consumer Satisfaction Survey* is in response to a mandate under federal regulations §361.29.

Additionally, a five-question post-card survey is provided to active job candidates at three specific points during their rehabilitation process. It is currently available in all IVRS offices, and can be completed on site or online.

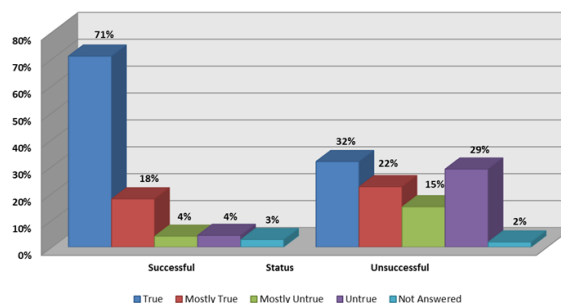
Feedback from this survey indicates that the majority of job candidates rate the quality of services received from IVRS as excellent. The survey also provides an opportunity for individuals to make contact with IVRS administration.

Survey satisfaction results are reviewed and shared at every SRC meeting. The goal of each member of Iowa's SRC continues to be to seek and improve the quality of employment outcomes and community participation for individuals with disabilities.

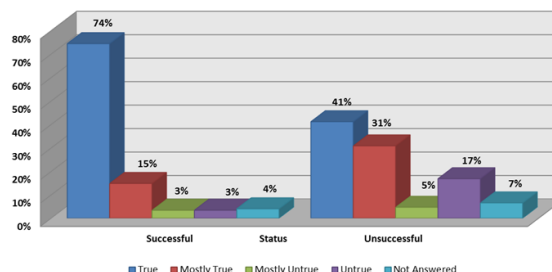
5. My counselor involved me in decision-making?



7. I am employed or more prepared for employment because of the services I received?



10. I had a satisfactory experience throughout the vocational rehabilitation process?



To see the results of the entire Consumer Satisfaction Survey, visit our website at:

<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/partners/FFY2015ConsumerSatisfactionSurvey20151029.pdf>



## STATE PLAN GOALS

1. Improve retention and rehabilitation rate of job candidates from diverse backgrounds in the caseload annually through FFY15.
2. Collaborate with workforce partners to coordinate effective service delivery for IVRS job candidates through FFY15.
3. Retain eligible IVRS job candidates until they become rehabilitated, achieving their optimal level of employment and self-sufficiency, achieving or exceeding number of persons with employment outcomes in prior year.
4. Improve meaningful, sustained employment for supported employment consumers through FFY15.
5. Improve outreach and rehabilitation rates for individuals who are underserved such as individuals who are age 55 and older, and students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing through FFY15.
6. Track data and assess the effectiveness of benefits planning services provided by IVRS in FFY15.

### Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

#### RESULTS OF RSA PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	RSA Standard	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Number of persons with employment outcome (status 26) for current year		2,217	2,136	2,162	2,185	2,205	2,321
	Number of persons with employment outcome (status 26) for prior year		2,264	2,217	2,136	2,162	2,185	2,205
1.1	Change in number from prior year	Equal or exceed last year	-47	-81	26	23	20	116
1.2	Percentage of persons after receiving services with employment outcomes	55.8%	51.96%	57.95%	63.68%	62.27%	59.66%	57.35%
1.3	Percentage of persons with employment outcomes with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage	72.6%	98.11%	98.27%	98.29%	98.12%	98.78%	98.92%
1.4	Percent of competitive employment outcomes that were individuals with significant disabilities	62.4%	95.08%	94.52%	95.95%	96.74%	97.57%	98.74%
	Average Hourly Rate		\$11.18	\$11.57	\$11.57	\$11.61	\$11.88	\$11.72
1.5	VR average wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed.	0.52	0.63	0.62	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.57
1.6	The difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services.	53.0%	63.36%	66.94%	63.34%	64.18%	61.43%	61.24%
2.1	The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from non-minority backgrounds	0.80	0.799	0.767	0.812	0.710	0.843	0.839

# Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services:

## Investing in Iowans

### FFY 2015

#### Vocational Rehabilitation is an investment in Iowa

\* A Total of **2,321** VR Iowans with disabilities obtained employment in the 2015 federal fiscal year.

\*Approximately **96 percent of successful VR job candidates remain in Iowa**, working, paying taxes, and contributing to their communities.

\*A total of **627 VR job candidates were receiving public support for living** expenses (SSI, SSDI, TANF, General Assistance). Of those, 122 now support themselves, a **savings of \$955,716.96** annually for the state.



#### The investment pays off

\*Iowans with disabilities served by IVRS in FFY 2015 **have an** estimated income of \$47.1 million annually.

- This reflects growth of more than **\$27.5 million** from increased employment and more than **\$10.4 million** from increased earnings.
- This results in Iowans with disabilities earning **\$11.3 million** more than was spent on the entire VR program.

\*Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services has a positive impact on linking our youth with disabilities to career pathways! **Thirty-five percent** of our referrals come from Iowa School Districts and **973 students** were successfully employed, working **34 hours/week** with average earnings of **\$11.21 / hour**.

- **\$7.37 million** was spent on post-secondary tuition assistance, facilitating educational and occupational skills attainment.

## What services are available?

- Technological assessment
- Vocational assessment
- Counseling and guidance
- Transition services for students
- Physical and/or mental restoration services that may include therapy, wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc.
- Special adaptive equipment or devices
- Medical and psychological assessment
- Training for employment
- Occupational tools, equipment or licenses
- Planning for Self-Employment
- Personal assistance
- Supported Employment
- Job coaching
- Job placement
- Follow-up after placement to assist with work and employer satisfaction

Services may be provided after employment if needed.

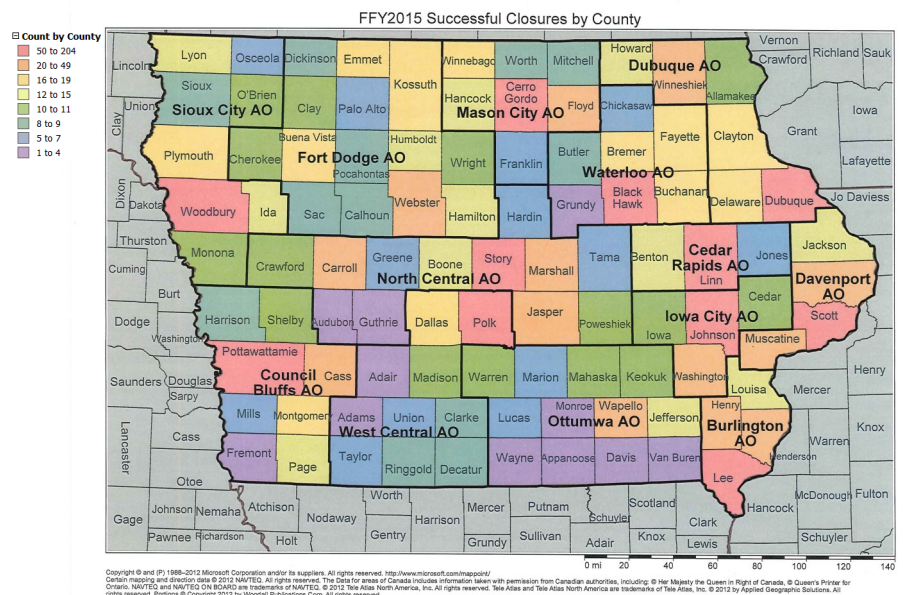
**IVRS** is the largest division of the Department of Education. The division employs nearly 400 people in Des Moines and 43 locations throughout the state. Employees work within three bureaus and a Planning and Development Team.

The majority of staff are professionally trained rehabilitation counselors and disability examiners. Ninety-seven percent of the counselors have Master's degrees in Counseling or a closely related field.

With the exception of a few administrative personnel and the West Central Area Office, most of the Rehabilitation Services Bureau (RSB) employees are geographically disbursed outside of Des Moines to cover all 99 counties and every high school in the state.

As stewards of the public trust, IVRS maintains an efficient workforce by assigning staff to multiple locations so that every community college, regent's institution, county, high school and most mental health institutes have access to an IVRS staff person.

IVRS customers are individuals with disabilities who need vocational or other assistance to help meet their goals for employment or personal independence.





## IVRS Job Candidates

**The increase in annual income between application and closure was 415.5% statewide for successful IVRS job candidates.**

**There were more than 6,000 referrals for IVRS services in 2015.**

**In 2015, 59% of successful IVRS job candidates increased their education.**

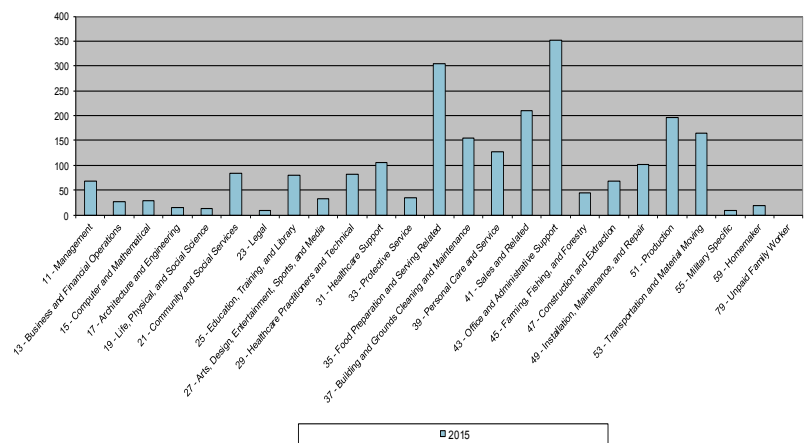
"I found out about Vocational Rehabilitation through special education at high school and a local community rehabilitation partner. My Special Education Teacher, Elaine Baughman, referred me.

What kept me from working was that I couldn't drive yet because I didn't have my license. I have ADHD and seizures. I stare a lot sometimes when I have my seizures. A service that my IVRS Counselor Ellen Sokolowski provided to help me was to set up a job coach. She was in the background making sure I did everything o.k. Ellen thought Fareway would be a nice job for me to do. I bag groceries and stock shelves at Fareway. I do pretty good. I'm probably the third top courtesy out of all of them and I get a lot of hours. They like me at Fareway and they say I do a good job. They don't want me to leave."

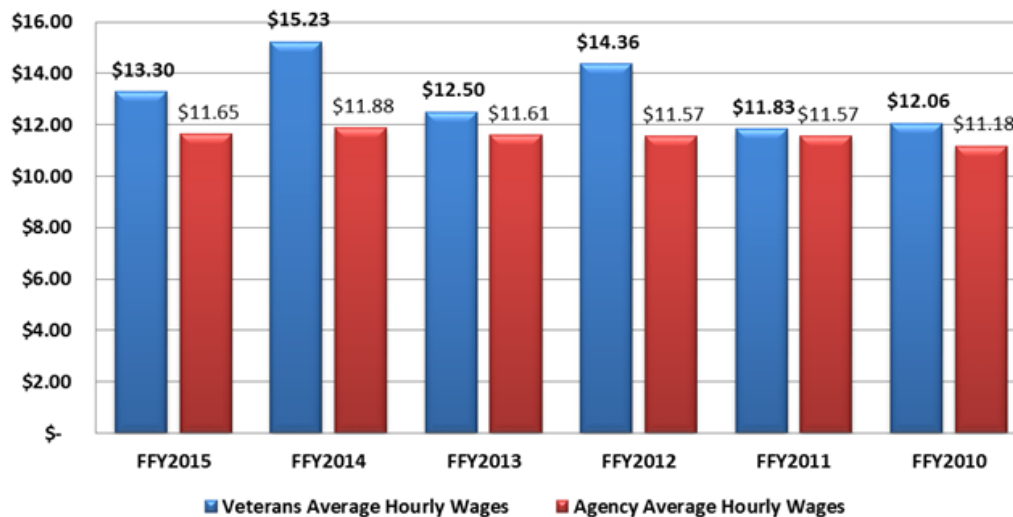


Josh Buman

Number of Placements by Occupational Category



Average Hourly Wages for Veterans



**IVRS assisted 70 Veterans in successfully obtaining employment in 2015.**

## Business Initiatives

**IVRS** works with business and industry to provide career opportunities for our job candidates and a qualified and trained workforce for our business partners.

We have initiatives with several partner businesses including Walgreen's REDI program and Manpower's Access2Ability to provide On-the-Job-Training or Temp-To-Hire opportunities for our job candidates.

In addition, IVRS works with employers who seek Federal 503 compliance or consultation for reasonable accommodations and assistive technology. IVRS provides additional resources through the Talent Acquisition Portal and Employer's Disability Resource Network (EDRN).

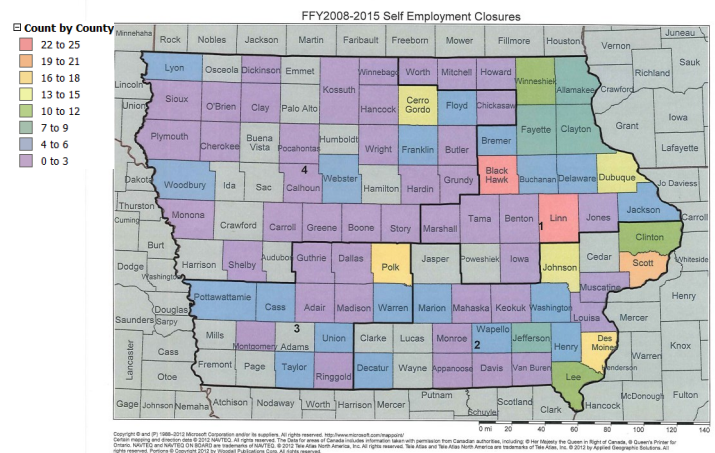


Pepsi Beverages Company in Urbandale provided our VR with a tour of their company. They shared information on the types of positions they have available, the duties and requirements of those positions and their hiring practices. This tour and information helps IVRS to provide the best job candidates to fulfill business hiring needs.

## Iowa Self-Employment Program

**50 new Iowa businesses were started or expanded in 2015, earning an average of \$14.23 per hour and working an average of 28 hours per week.**

Employer	Closed, Rehabilitated
Hy-Vee, Inc.	124
Walmart	99
Self-Employed	50
McDonald's	32
Casey's General Store	25
Fareway Food Stores	24
Pizza Ranch	21
Goodwill Industries	19
Menards Inc.	17
UnityPoint Health	15
Mercy Medical Systems	11
Walgreens	10
T.J. Maxx	9
University of Iowa	9
Burger King	8
Kmart	8
Kwik Star	8
Pizza Hut	8
Tyson Foods	8
Hardee's	7
Kelly Services	7
Sam's Club	7
U.S. Military	7
Winnebago Industries	7
Applebee's	6
Dollar General	6
Great River Health Systems	6
Home Depot	6
Wells Fargo	6
FedEx	5
Securitas Security Services	5
Target	5
U.S. Post Office	5
Veterans Health Administration	5
Wendy's	5



Learn more about the Iowa Self-Employment Program at:  
<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/iowaSelfEmploymentProgram/SelfEmploymentMainIndex.htm>

# IVRS Transition Initiatives

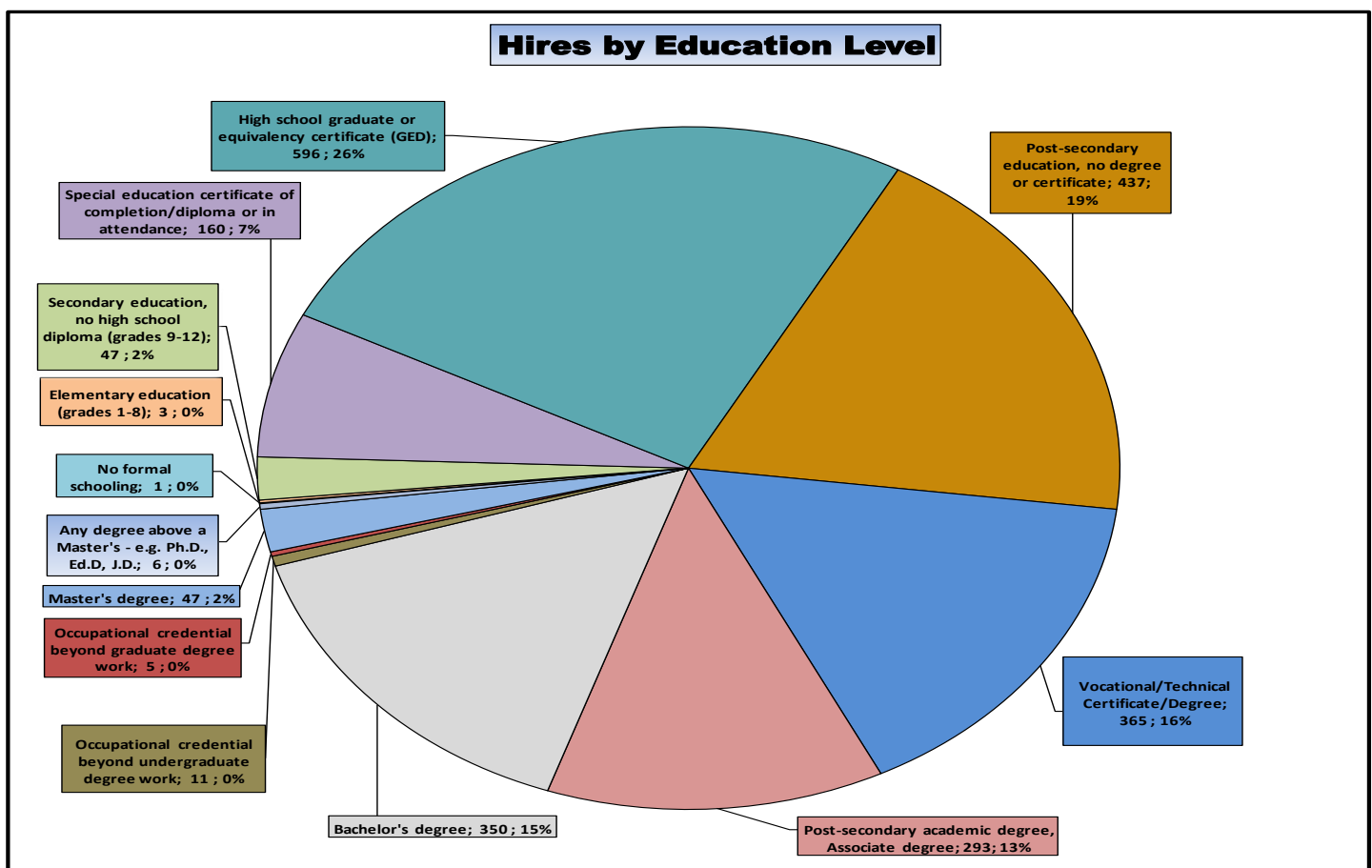


Kyle Young (center) and Melody Davis (right) came to the IVRS Des Moines office to talk about their experience in the Mt. Ayr Transition Alliance Program (TAP). They are pictured with IVRS Administrator David Mitchell. Kyle is completing training in auto mechanics and Melody works for a hospital in the housekeeping department.

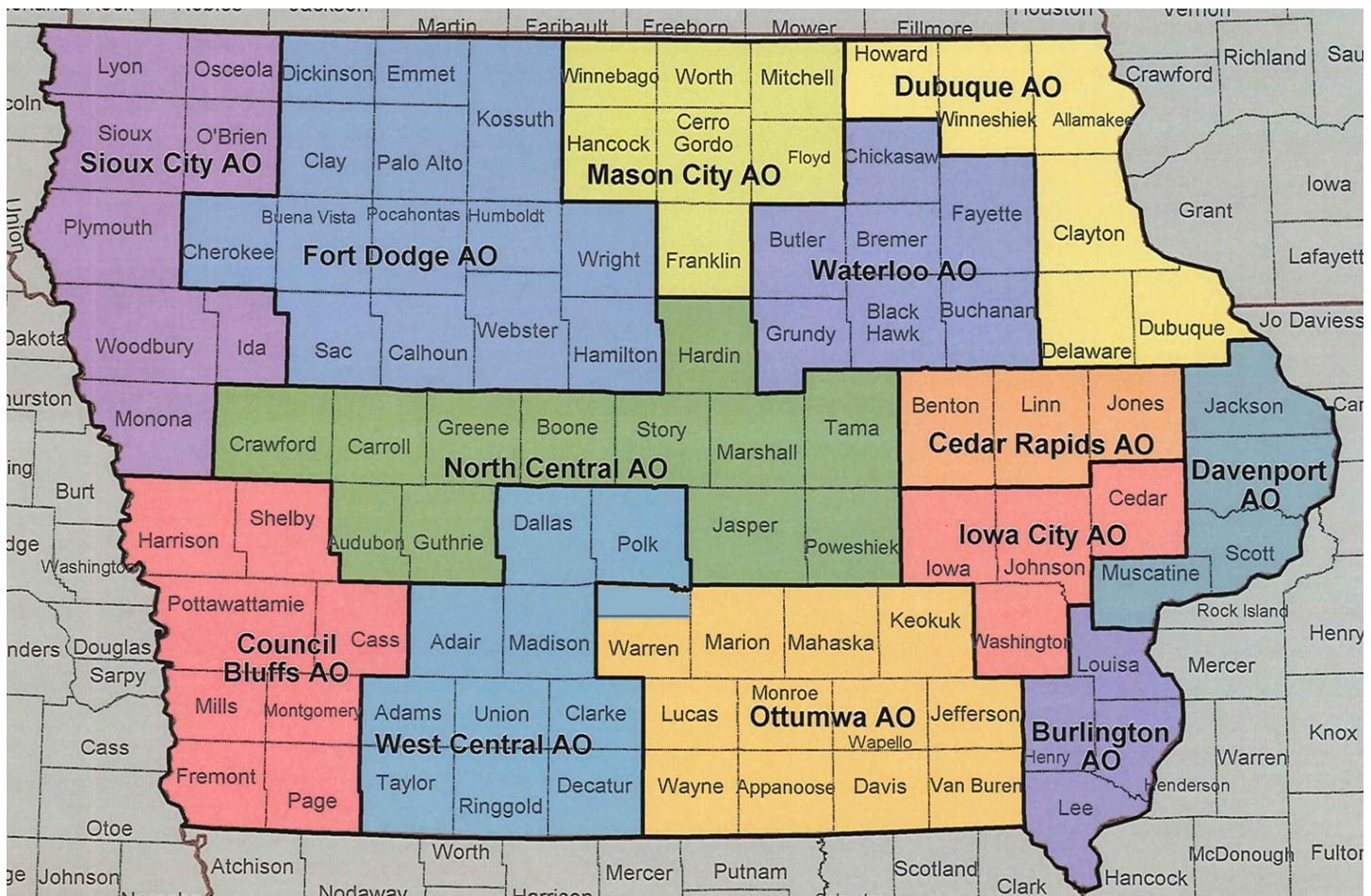
The Transition Alliance Program (TAP) is a collaboration between IVRS and a local school district, focused on improving post-school employment outcomes for students with disabilities. The program is jointly funded by IVRS and the school district, with each entity providing 50% of the costs of the program. Currently there are eight TAP contracts serving 20 high schools and 929 students.

IVRS, in partnership with the local school districts, assists students with disabilities to prepare for success in vocational, academic, and independent living settings. IVRS has a presence in every public high school in the state to assist with a student's transition to employment.

More than \$7.37 million was spent on tuition assistance for students in post-secondary training programs to obtain educational or occupational skills training to help compete in today's labor market.







## IVRS Area Offices

### Burlington Area Office

1000 North Roosevelt  
Burlington, Iowa 52601  
319-753-2231

### Cedar Rapids Area Office

4444 1st Avenue NE, Suite 436  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402  
319-294-9308

### Council Bluffs Area Office

300 W. Broadway, Suite 33  
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503-9030  
712-328-3821 (Voice/TTY)

### Davenport Area Office

3827 W. Locust Street  
Davenport, Iowa 52804  
563-386-1200 (Voice/TTY)

### Dubuque Area Office

2600 Dodge Street, Suite NW2  
Dubuque, Iowa 52003  
563-588-4697

### Fort Dodge Area Office

Two Triton Circle  
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501  
515-573-8175

### Iowa City Area Office

1700 South 1st Avenue, Suite 11-A  
Iowa City, Iowa 52240  
319-354-4766

### Mason City Area Office

600 South Pierce Avenue  
Mason City, Iowa 50401-4836  
641-422-1551

### North Central Area Office

819 Wheeler Street, Suite 6  
Ames, Iowa 50010  
515-233-5753

### Ottumwa Area Office

15260 Truman Street, Suite 4  
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501-1473  
641-682-7569 (V/TTY)

### Sioux City Area Office

2508 East 4th Street  
Sioux City, Iowa 51101-2298  
712-255-8871

### Waterloo Area Office

3420 University Ave., Suite D  
Waterloo, Iowa 50701-2008  
319-234-0319 (Voice/TTY)

### West Central/Polk Area Office

510 East 12th Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
515-281-4211  
WATS 1-800-532-1486 (Voice/TTY)



Iowa  
**Vocational  
Rehabilitation**  
Services

*Finding solutions. Generating success.*

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