



# The OVR Review



"To assist Kentuckians with disabilities to achieve suitable employment and independence"

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

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Article submitted by Veronica Dale and Jason Jones

## Employee Spotlight Presents Veronica Dale

*"Ten Questions with a Lexington Counselor"*



Veronica Dale

### **1. Tell me about how you grew up.**

I grew up in Paris, KY, the home of Claiborne horse farm. My grandfather retired from Claiborne in 1980. During my childhood I visited the farm several times. I had the honor of seeing the 1973 Triple Crown Winner Secretariat and the 1972 Kentucky

Derby Winner Riva Ridge. There were many horses at the farm but, those two I vividly remember.

### **2. Tell me about your family.**

I am the oldest of six children, along with plenty of cousins, nieces, nephews and even great nephews. I was very blessed to have lived within a mile radius of five generations of family members. I had the privilege of knowing my great-great grandfather who loved to sit on the front porch in the summer, smoke his pipe and watch people walk by. He lived to be 99.

My great-grandfather was the golf pro at the all-white country club in Paris. He loved golf and told me about the Lexington all-black tournaments that he had played and all the times he won \$50 to \$100 in prize money. He thought that he would never live to see a black man break the color barrier in professional golf and make millions, but was glad to see Tiger Woods succeed before he died at the age of 97 in 2005.

All the grandchildren called my grandmother "Mommy". She was a woman ahead of her time with regards to women's rights and choices. She was the matriarch of the family and did not filter anything. She could make a sailor blush. You could not print this article if I quoted her. I decided to take my little red suitcase to spend the summer of 1969 with her and my grandfather and did not leave until August of 1981.

This was a great arrangement for me. I was so close to my parents that I could play with my sisters and brothers' everyday and it made for great dinner options. I had the best of both worlds being an only child at my grandparents or having siblings when I wanted.

I enjoyed my childhood and also have a sense of history about who I am and where I come from having grandparents always around me.

I am now a grandmother myself with a four-year-old granddaughter name Abria, who loves to call and talk to me on the cell phone. It is hard to remember life without her. She is so full of life and other people's business that she is not afraid to share. I was a young mother having my first child at 16, but my family gave me a lot of support during those times.

I have two children. My daughter, Nicole, 30, who I had at age 16 with such love and support from my family, works as a nurse for a local home health agency and is married to a very wonderful man. My son, Corbin is 23 and is an Army Reservist doing a tour in Iraq. In our last conversation he shared with me how beautiful the stars are in the desert at night. He marvels just how many there are and how bright each one appears. Corbin always sees beauty in everything... that tells you about his personality...calm.

We always seem to find a reason to have a get-together at my mom's house. I'm not sure if it is because she is a great cook or because she has a big screen TV. My mother loves to play games and is a fierce competitor. My favorite event at the family get together is when my brother Spencer sings country and western songs.

### **3. What is your education history?**

I graduated from Paris High School in 1981. From there I graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in Healthcare Administration with aspirations of going into nursing home administration. My goals quickly changed after I realized that I would need to work a 40-hour a week semester long internship without pay...that was not feasible being a single parent and with student loan obligations. My first job was at the MARC Center as a supported-employment job coach, then Metro Industries and Goodwill before coming to OVR. While at Metro, I earned my Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Kentucky.

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## Employee Spotlight Presents Veronica Dale

*"Ten Questions with a Lexington Counselor"* **Continued**

### **4. Do you have time for any hobbies?**

It will be hard for some of my co-workers to believe that I do have hobbies and interests other than work. I love to read a variety of things by African American authors. I love to walk for miles and spend time with my Cocker Spaniel and Jack Russell mix, Colee. The one thing I love to do is SLEEP!

### **5. How long have you been with OVR? Any memories of your early days?**

I started with OVR on January 1, 1998 when Sam Serraglio was commissioner. We still had the state wide training meetings. I really enjoyed getting to meet all the other OVR people from across the state. I miss those meetings.

### **6. What changes have you seen over the years?**

I have personally felt the increasing size of my caseloads and the intense needs of the consumers. OVR has really gone computerized and now counselors can do most of their own work, from generating an authorization to paying the authorization.

### **7. What are favorite and least favorite things about your job?**

My favorite thing about this job is that I know that I make a difference in someone's life. If I died tomorrow I can take comfort that I had an impact on someone's life for the better. As far as the least favorite, I have a strong disdain for the paperwork. I know it is necessary to document, but sometimes I feel like that is all I do.

### **8. Anything you want to say about co-workers?**

I have a great group of co-workers. Everyone works well together and is willing to share their knowledge. It is so nice to have co-workers to talk to when you feel overwhelmed. The reassurance that you are not alone is great.

### **9. Before Christmas you were presented with an award from the Rehabilitation Counselor program at UK.**

**Tell me about the award. How does this feel? Who was your unofficial mentor?**

On December 11, 2009, Dr. Crystal presented me with a Certificate of Appreciation for contributing guidance, inspiration, and professional development to students in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program. I have mentored a total of seven students during my career at OVR. I was very surprised and gratified by the show of appreciation. Jan Parson, Sandy Hart and Regina Stigall had such a positive impact on my work.

### **10. Would you do anything different if given the opportunity? (personally or professionally)**

Personally, I am very pleased with where I am in my life and very proud of my children. Professionally, I do at times wish that I had more of an outgoing personality but, then I wouldn't be Veronica Dale.

## May is Job Placement Month

*"Each District Participates"*

Each year in May, offices across the state combine staff and effort to celebrate the Governor's proclamation of May as KY-OVR Job Placement Month.

As an example, the Ashland and West Liberty districts will be meeting on Thursday, May 6, at 10:00 am in Ashland's Central Park for a special celebration. Distinguished guest speakers will include the new Commissioner of the Department for Workforce Investment, Beth Brinly and Melissa McKenzie, representing King's Daughters Medical Center. King's Daughters is the area's largest employer. Melissa will be speaking about the work opportunities for consumers available at the Medical Center. Invitations have also been extended to Representative Rocky Adkins and to speak.

## Summer AT Workshop

*"June 10 - 11, 2010"*



The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in partnership with the University of Kentucky Human Development Institute, AgraAbility and the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation will hold the 7th Annual Summer Institute in Assistive Technology & Transition June 10 & 11, 2010.

The conference will be held at the E.S. Good Barn on the University of Kentucky campus Lexington.

This year there will be an Assistive Technology Track and a Transition Track.

Visit the following website for the topics and schedule. Detailed descriptions of the workshops and online registration will be available soon.

<http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/atworkshop/>

## Message from Executive Director, Beth Smith



As I sit down to write this latest installment of the Executive Director's message, the weather seems to be taking a much needed direction towards nicer temperatures. Whatever you're doing this spring I hope that you enjoy yourselves and that you and your families are safe in your travels.

As far as an update I am sure all of you have either had the opportunity to meet or have heard about the new Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Investment, Beth Brinly. Commissioner Brinly worked for state government in previous administrations and most recently worked at the Federal level in Washington DC. One of her main objectives as her term begins is to see the workforce agencies collaborate as much as possible. Look for several new initiatives in the next year that will involve the sharing of ideas and resources with the other agencies in our department.

I will not spend a lot of time on the budget because I know it seems to be the only thing we talk about. As I write this, the legislature has not passed a biennial budget so we are unsure what the bottom line will be for the agency. I wish we had better news but it does look like we are weathering the storm for now. I want to say again how much I appreciate the sacrifices our staff continue to make under these circumstances. We are trying every way possible to find ways of saving money without affecting consumers and the services we provide for Kentuckians with disabilities.

We are starting to see the effect of changes in the Order of Selection on our expenditures. Our staff will continue to complete applications on potential consumers and put those not in the current Order of Selection on the waiting list so that we can demonstrate how important additional funding is to our program and to Kentucky.

Submitted by Donna Osburn

## 2010 Cost Reimbursement

### *"Second Quarter"*

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation had 35 Social Security claims reimbursed from January through March 2010. These claims totaled \$482,708.07, bringing the total for fiscal year 2010 to \$982,380.65.

The Middletown district (Pat Selch, Branch Manager) had the most cases reimbursed this quarter, with six. The Danville district (Ruth Dyer, Branch Manager) was the top district based on dollars received, with \$99,218.88 for the quarter.

The top counselors in terms of number of cases reimbursed, with two claims each, are:

Jordan Aspinwall, Jack Kiefner, Kelly Osborne, Roxana Robinson, Mary Beth Schoen, Brent Sturgill

The top five counselors for the quarter in terms of dollars received for case reimbursements are, in order of amount:

Jennifer Morse, Elizabeth Westerman, Peggy Anderson, Brent Sturgill, Jack Kiefner

Thanks to all staff who provide services to consumers receiving Social Security disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for disability. In addition to helping the individual consumer, you also help secure cost reimbursements for the agency. These funds can then be used to provide services to other consumers.

## NEWS BITS

### ***Kentucky AgrAbility Enhances Partnerships with New Grant***

Kentucky AgrAbility recently received notice that its funding has been renewed from the United States Department of Agriculture. This funding from the National AgrAbility program will enable it to enhance existing partnerships and start new ones. It will be partnering with Kentucky State University, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital to significantly expand the types of services that farmers with disabilities can access in Kentucky and expand services to underserved populations such as women, minority and Appalachian small farmers. Farmers with disabilities will be available to access monthly small farm operation educational programs, which includes information on agricultural assistive technology, through the Kentucky State University's Third Thursday Program and a Retirement Planning program. Other innovative programs that are being developed include: a heavy equipment "Ride and Drive" evaluation program; a seating clinic to look specifically at the needs of heavy equipment operators; health and nutrition programs and screenings; and safety and secondary injury prevention training

### ***Migrant Grant Partners with NAMI to Deliver Innovative Training***

The Migrant farmworker with Disabilities Employment Partnership (MDEP), the five-year grant funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, has continually sought innovative collaborations to educate the Hispanic community about mental and physical disabilities, the American disability service system, employment opportunities, and rights for people with disabilities. As part of this on-going effort, MDEP staff has recently embarked on an ambitious project with the Lexington Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to bring the Family to Family mental illness education program to the Hispanic community. Family to Family is a 12 week peer-taught program for family and caregivers of people with mental illness. It provides current information about a variety of mental illnesses, up to date information on medications and therapies available, as well as strategies for handling crisis and

relapses. In addition, the Family to Family model emphasizes the needs of the caregiver and addresses issues like emotional overload, and the stress and worry that can happen from taking care of a person with a mental illness.

This partnership between NAMI and MDEP grew as a result of the Lexington NAMI chapter wanting to reach out to the Hispanic community in the Bluegrass area. MDEP has long known that a major component of its success is to ensure that the Hispanic community is educated about both physical and mental disabilities and how to navigate the disability service system. With NAMI providing the structure and content, and MDEP providing the culturally and linguistically appropriate context, the partnership expects to engage and educate the Hispanic community in a way that will have lasting impact. The 12 week course began on Friday March 5th at 6:30 pm and will run through the end of May. The course is free and childcare will be provided. If anyone has questions about MDEP or the Family to Family initiative, call Karen Cinnamond at (859) 509-7295.

MDEP is a partnership of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kentucky Business Leadership Network (KYBLN), the Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky, Goodwill Industries™ of Kentucky, and Kentucky AgrAbility.

## HRD Report

Article Compiled by Jason Jones

### **Retirements**

Phyllis Gale Balentine	2/28/10-retire
Karen Alba Ford	2/28/10-retire

### **Appointments**

Toni Jackson	Admn Spec III
Amber Hager	VR Counselor
Donna Crews	VR Counselor
Dorrena Hess	VR Prog Spec I
Kathleen Hougham	FFTL VR Prog Spec
Connie Gorman	FFTL VR Counselor
Jeffrey Humble	FFTL VR Prog Spec
Kimberly Watson	Patient Aide I
Jonathan Scalf	FFTL VR Prog Spec I
John Glover	VR Counselor



## Celebrating Administrative Professionals Day

*"April 21, 2010"*

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation would like to recognize this as Professional Assistants Month. Please take the time to recognize your assistant and other assistants across the state for the expertise and professionalism. Following is a list of the assistants that help us to do our jobs each day.

Archer, Tonya H (OVR-PD)	Halbert, Kristen A (OVR-TH)	Sabie, Amber D (OVR-LV)
Arrowood, Debbie L (OVR-TH)	Hargrove, Jenny V (OVR-LV)	Santiago, Katerina (OVR-LX)
Back, Beverly G (OVR-WL)	Heaton, Marti L (OVR-LX)	Sepko, Jessica A (OVR-LX)
Ball, Angela (OVR-WL)	Hilton, Jason C (OVR-DV)	Sharp, Connie D (OVR-FK)
Barnes, Teresa K (OVR-LX)	Jackson, Toni B (OVR-DV)	Sheneman, Tonya (OVR-FL)
Baseheart, Penney S (OVR-BG)	Johnson, Kimberly (OVR-AS)	Simpson, Andrea (OVR-HL)
Bayes, Joy L (OVR-AS)	Johnson, Sarakia (OVR-LV)	Slone, Karen (OVR-PB)
Beeler, Linda S (OVR-PK)	Justus, Peggy J (OVR-LX)	Soard, Nanci
Beville, Diana F (OVR-LV)	King, Kay X (OVR-TH)	Spigle, Carole J (OVR-LX)
Bogens, Sue A (OVR-SB)	Kirk, Sharon A (OVR-TH)	Steffey, Jane M (OVR-GW)
Bradford, Darene K (OVR-BU)	Lancaster, Althea B (OVR-EZ)	Terry, Sherry (OVR-PB)
Brown, Autumn A (OVR-MD)	Lancaster, Lou E (OVR-CG)	Thacker, Dolores A (OVR-PK)
Carey, Lois J (OVR-FK)	Lanham, Frances M (OVR-DV)	Thomason, Patricia C (OVR-OB)
Carpenter, Lois S (OVR-FK)	Lawson, Amy R (OVR-CV)	Thompson, Cheryl L (OVR-LV)
Carr, Linda G (OVR-HL)	Ledington, Angela (OVR-CR)	Trosper, Annie (OVR-BG)
Caudill, Judy C (OVR-LX)	LeMaster, Renee (OVR-TH)	Ward, Kathy D (OVR-PV)
Childs, Susan (OVR-LV)	Lestingi, Kimberly (OVR-CG)	Watts, Missy A (OVR-LX)
Cobb, Tammy J (OVR-FK)	Ling, Barbara J (OVR-OB)	White, Sharon D (OVR-FK)
Combs, Glenna L (OVR-LX)	Long, Kathy D (OVR-RM)	Williams-Sisson, Janice (OVR-LX)
Conley, Joann R (OVR-TH)	Lyons, Nancy J (OVR-GW)	Woodall, Doi S (OVR-MV)
Cooper, Staphine R (OVR-PD)	Malone, Linda (OVR-AS)	Yeary, Vicki L (OVR-FK)
Daniel, Paula M (OVR-PB)	Manns, Beth W (OVR-FK)	Zurliene, Gerry A (OVR-HS)
Davis, Susan B (OVR-OB)	Mathews, Dana J (OVR-FK)	
Denney, Susan M (OVR-HP)	Matlock, Phyllis D (OVR-LV)	
Denton, Robin P (OVR-LV)	Mazurek, Deborah S (OVR-RM)	
Dillon, Julia (OVR-MH)	McIntosh, Pamela K (OVR-WB)	
Dillon, Kellie (OVR-MH)	McKeon, Sue (OVR-LX)	
Dooley, Derrick J (OVR-LX)	Meek, Malissa J (OVR-TH)	
Eirich, Carolyn A (OVR-FK)	Miller, Melissa R (OVR-LV)	
Evitts, Margie E (OVR-MD)	Minix, Mary (OVR-TH)	
Farmer, Crystal D (OVR-BG)	Morrison, Carleen (OVR-MB)	
Ferrara, Wendy L (OVR-LV)	Mullins, Janet D (OVR-TH)	
Florence, Kandi (VR-TH)	Palmer, Carolyn S (OVR-SS)	
Freeman, Carmen (OVR-FK)	Parker, Melinda A (OVR-TH)	
Gatton, Jackye A (OVR-DV)	Patenaude, Lesa A (OVR-SB)	
Gibbs, Melissa (OVR-HP)	Paul, Janice (OVR-EZ)	
Glauber, Mary L (OVR-LV)	Prater, Fay (OVR-TH)	
Grant, Pat A (OVR-LV)	Price, Conor D (OVR-BT)	
Green, Donna R (OVR-CR)	Provance, Karri L (OVR-BG)	
Groenewold, Glenda (OVR-OB)	Rice, Laurel G (OVR-FK)	
Grubbs, Linda (OVR-FK)	Richardson, Shirley A (OVR-CG)	
Gullett, Melissa J (OVR-WL)	Roberts, Debbie J (OVR-EZ)	
Gwin, Erin R (OVR-SS)	Rogers, Heather (OVR-CG)	



## Richmond One Stop Job Fair with Meijer

*“March 9 through 13, 2010”*



Robin Stinson, Debbie Mazurek and Roxana Robinson

The partners in the Richmond One Stop pulled together and demonstrated true teamwork spirit in making a marathon five-day Meijer job fair a resounding success. Although the unemployment rate in Madison County is not as high as some other Kentucky counties, an influx of over 200 jobs was definitely welcome. There was a tremendous response to the job fair advertising and on the first day well over 400 applicants came seeking jobs. The remaining days of the job fair were equally busy and overall more than 1,000 individuals applied for the available positions. Throughout

the job fair, the partners of the Richmond One Stop worked as a team to meet the needs of the employer and job applicants and make the job fair a success for all involved.

OVR was well represented by employees Debbie Mazurek, Kathy Long, Donna Marshall, Roxana Robinson, Tracy Bishop, Patti Edwards, and Kristi Short and by agency interpreters Ruth Bradley, Tom King, Judy Gooch, and Toni Jackson.



OVR staff received praise and appreciation from the employer and other One Stop partners including Office of Employment and Training (OET) management, A.J. Jones and DeeDee Connor, WIA leadership, Theresa Little and Jennifer Compton, for their efforts in assisting with the One Stop's job fair success. Seeing local individuals become employed made all the hard work put in by the Richmond One Stop partners worthwhile and contributed to the economic success of Madison and surrounding counties.

## Meet Irene Dervin Council Member



Irene Dervin

Irene Dervin is the president of Phoenix Business Consulting, a business consulting firm that assists clients with starting or expanding businesses. She also works seasonally as a tax professional. A graduate of Oakland City University in

Indianapolis with a degree in marketing and finance, Irene was formerly the director of the Small Business Development Center in Evansville, Indiana. She currently resides in Winchester with her husband and best friend, Jim, where she enjoys reading, theater, flower gardening, and gourmet cooking. The couple has one son, Matt. Irene is very active in the Lexington Multiple Sclerosis Society and the Boonesboro Lion/Lioness Club where she was Lion of the Year in 2009.

In 2001, Irene became severely ill with gallstone pancreatitis. She was put in a six-week induced coma during which she had a spinal stroke. She spent two years in the hospital, followed by months in rehabilitation at Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital in Lexington. Of her involvement in the Council, Irene says "I have been very fortunate in being able to help others with disabilities and being selected to serve on the Governor's Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation, which helps me to continue with my goal. There is so much that SCVR can accomplish and I am honored to be chosen a part of this wonderful organization."

## Meet Connie Dotson Council Member



Connie Dotson

Connie Dotson was born and raised in Falmouth, Kentucky. A graduate of the Kentucky School for the Deaf, Connie attended Gallaudet University where she received a Bachelor of Arts in History in 1989. She worked for a time with Senator Alan Dixon of Illinois in Washington, DC, and with the Internal Revenue Service in Kentucky. She now works as timekeeper at

the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Lexington. She resides in Lexington with her husband, Robert, and their five cats. She strongly advocates for the Deaf and encourages deaf people to become employed and to push to get their needs met.

## Save the Date Upcoming Council Meeting



### Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVR) Meeting

Monday, June 14, 2010  
9:00-3:30  
Marriott Griffin Gate Resort and Spa  
1800 Newtown Pike  
Lexington, KY 40511

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(Jason Jones - Content Editor, Nanci Soard - Layout Editor)

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