

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services (GVRS) Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 14th, 2022

Tom Wilson, Chairman





Chairman's Welcome

- Welcome and Remarks
- Roll Call and Agenda
- Previous Board Meeting Minutes Approval

Executive Report

Chris Wells, Executive Director

Chris.wells@gvs.ga.gov





Georgia Vocational
Rehabilitation Agency

Executive Report

Employee of the Month/Employee Recognition

Employee of the Month, August 2022: Sakinah Jackson, VR, Savannah, GA

Employee of the Month, September 2022: Linda Belt, VR, Canton, GA

Georgia Industries for the Blind Employee of the Year: Peter Salmon



Sakinah Jackson



Peter Salmon



Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency FY 2023 Program Based Budget

Program Name	FY 2022 Expenditures	FY 2023 Current Budget			
		State General	Federal	Other Funds	Total
Business Enterprises Program	\$2,478,921	\$314,025	\$2,443,269		\$2,757,294
Departmental Administration	8,384,068	2,140,310	7,846,048	\$304,597	10,290,955
Disability Adjudication Services	68,316,719		70,300,638		70,300,638
Georgia Industries for the Blind	4,453,983			4,669,691	4,669,691
Vocational Rehabilitation	75,531,450	22,631,463	73,950,659	5,063,038	101,645,160
Total	\$159,165,140	\$25,085,798	\$154,540,614	\$10,037,326	\$189,663,738



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Executive Report

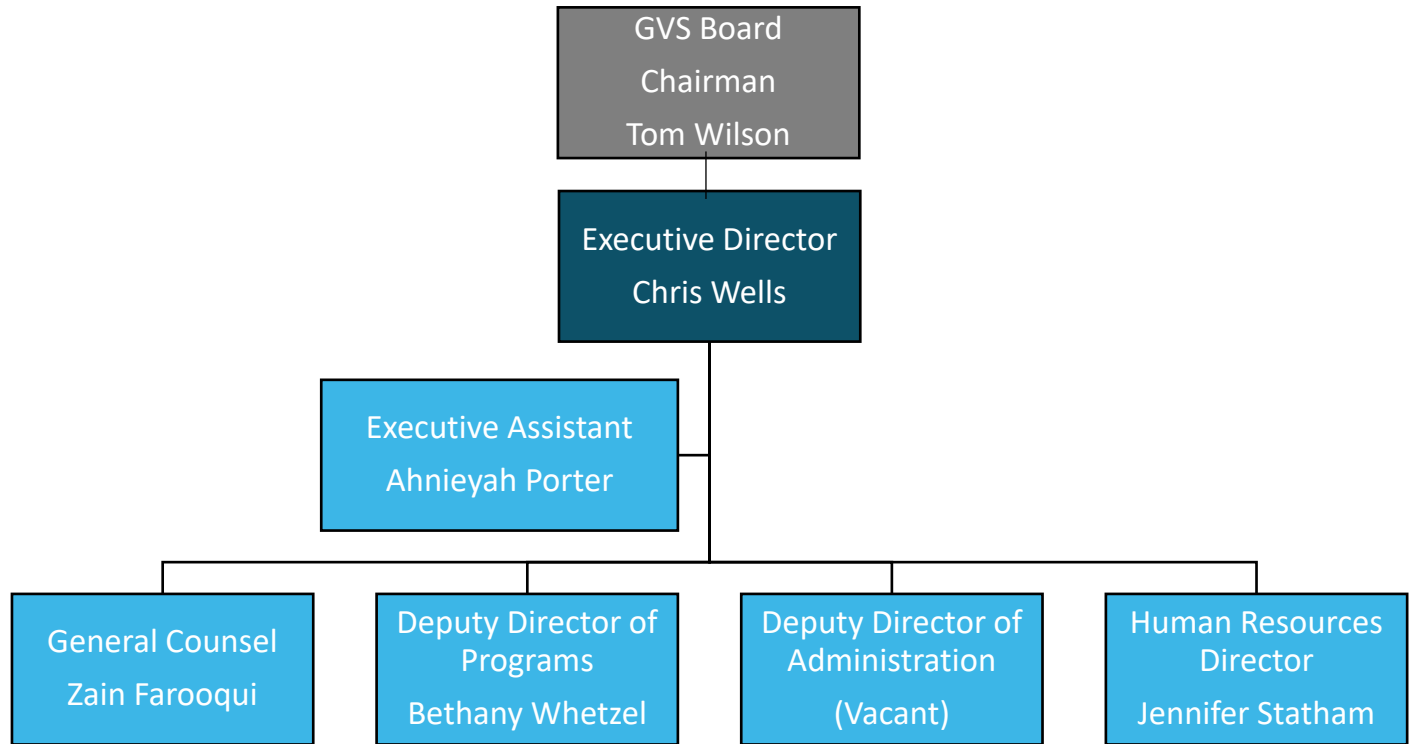
Agency Expenditure

GVRA	Total Expenditures	Current Budget	Percent of Budget
300-Personal Services	\$11,653,124	\$90,800,663	13%
301-Operating Expenses	1,529,831	7,130,112	21%
303-Vehicle Purchases	0	0	0%
304-Equipment	12,991	176,754	7%
305-Computer Charges	422,944	5,928,312	7%
306-Real Estate Rentals	1,468,281	9,630,661	15%
307-Telecommunications	385,681	2,930,896	13%
309-Capital Outlay	16,453	0	
312-Contractual Services	1,684,420	13,411,744	13%
314-Transfers	0	175,000	0%
315-Grants and Benefits	524,807	4,591,091	11%
319-Other	427,594	1,476,985	29%
320-DAS CE/ME	2,947,015	21,060,000	14%
321-VR Case Services	2,126,673	32,351,520	7%
Total Expenditures	\$23,199,813	\$189,663,738	12%



Executive Report

Organizational Chart- Executive Leadership

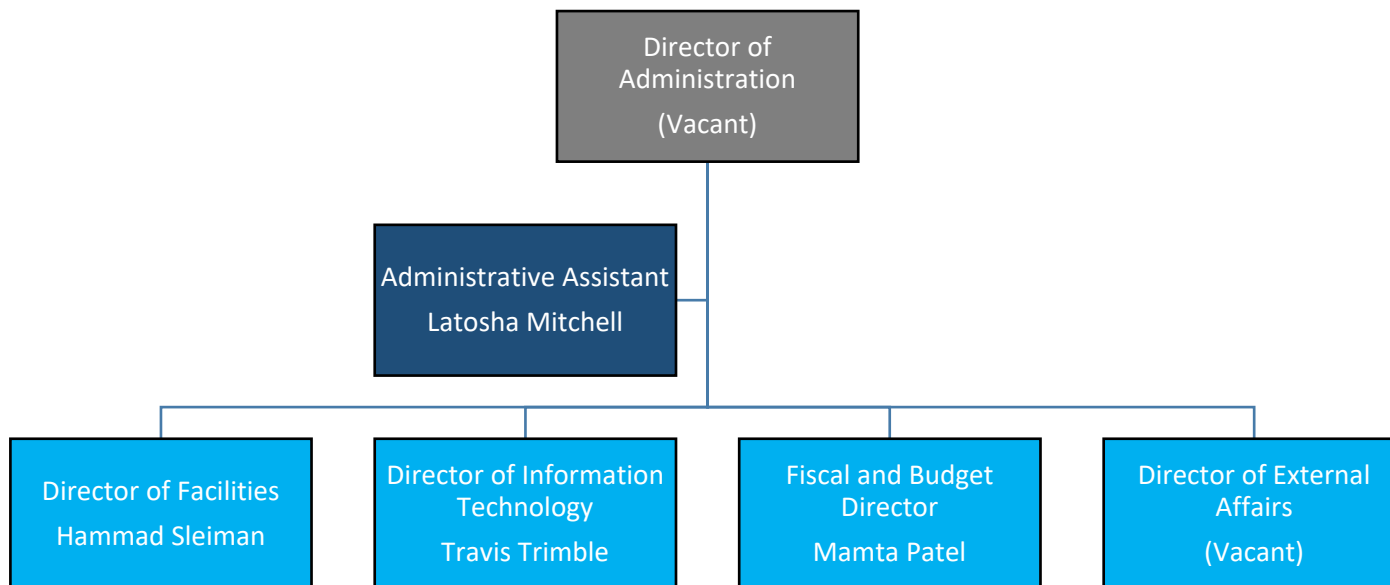




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Executive Report

Organizational Chart - Administration

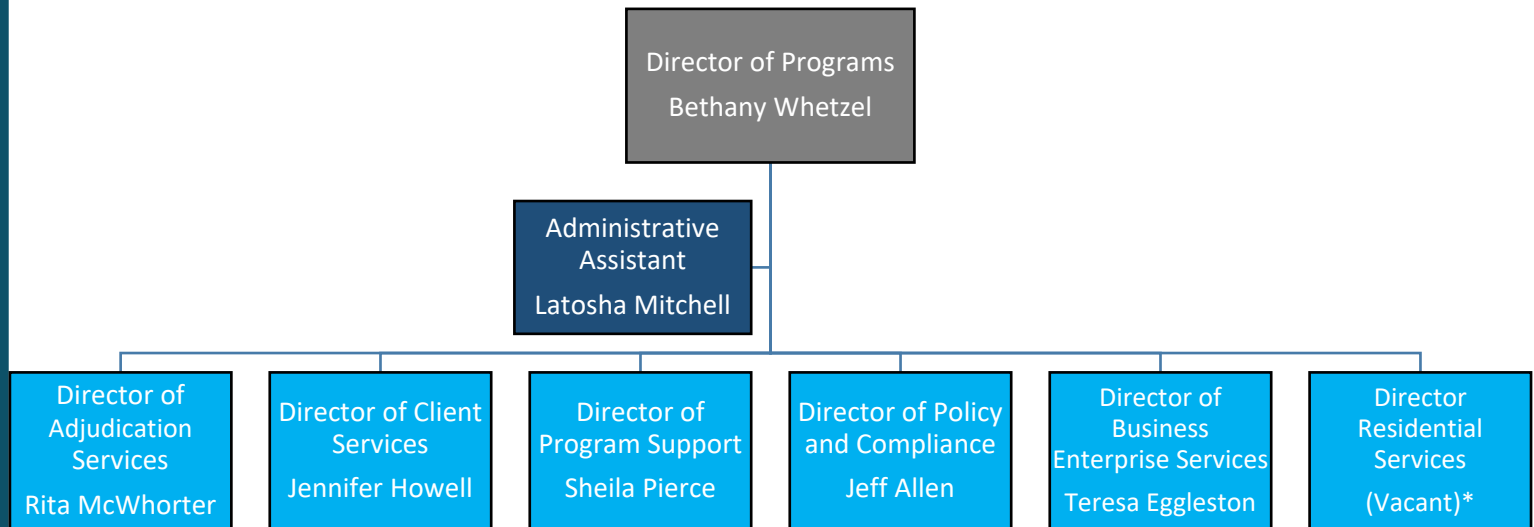




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Organizational Chart - Programs



*Interim Director of Residential Services
Tamika Wright

Program Highlights

Bethany Whetzel, Deputy Executive Director of Programs

bethany.whetzel@gvs.ga.gov



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Program Highlights

Client Services

- As of this week, 35 Counselors, 18 Pre-Employment Specialists and 15 Office Assistance have been selected and are being processed for hire.
- David McConnell is the new District Manager for District 5, effective September 1, 2022.
- Since July 1, 2022, 257 clients have been closed successfully

Disability Adjudication Services (DAS)

- DAS has met its total workload goal for FFY22 by processing 92,539 cases as of September 2, 2022
- DAS has hired 37 staff members FFY-to-Date (since October 1, 2021)
- New Adjudicator Basic Training Class of approximately 20 is expected to start on September 16, 2022

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Shirley Robinson, Blind and Low Vision Coordinator

shirley.robinson@gvs.ga.gov





Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- **Technical Assistance**

- Consult on cases with counselors, managers, policy, and Assistive Work Technology
- Regularly staff cases with counselors
- Collaborating with Employment Coordinator on Job Fair
- Collaborating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coordinator, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator, and community partners on Deaf/Blind Taskforce
- Collaborate with GAB to deliver transition/VR services

- **Provider Relations**

- Work closely with provider management and providers
- Recruiting new providers
- Consult on current providers
- Identify the need for providers within the districts
- Conduct onboarding presentation for providers



Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- **Collaboration with Stakeholders** (Representative with state and national groups)
 - GCB
 - NFB of GA
 - Conducted Presentation with counselors at GCB and NFB of GA State Conferences
 - Collaborating with GCB and NFB of GA Presidents to develop Virtual Job Club
 - Board member of the Blind Rehabilitation Professionals Division of the NFB
 - Employment Committee Chair for NCSAB
 - COP, NCSAB national conferences, NFB national conference
 - Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Committee
 - Tools For Life
- **Grants and Contracts**
 - GARRS
 - Project Independence



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Vocational Rehabilitation Services: Data

On average, 61% of the BVI Cases Served since July 1, 2021, are in VR Districts 1, 2 and 3

	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
PTS	30	19	12	9	31	10	20	10
VR	194	482	483	158	130	173	196	42
Total	224	501	495	167	161	183	216	52
% of Overall Total	11%	25%	25%	8%	8%	9%	11%	3%

Total Served SFY23 to Date

Impairment Type	Open Cases	Closed Cases	Total	% of All Impairments
Blindness	471	13	484	2.92%
Deaf – Blindness	17	1	18	<.05%
Other Visual Disabilities	116	4	120	<1%
Other Visual Impairments	204	7	211	1.27%
Grand Total	808	25	833	5.02%



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Vocational Rehabilitation Services: Data

In years 2020-2023, to date, BVI clients earn an average of \$4.00 more per hour in wages at case closure compared to the average hourly rate for all VR clients closed successfully

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Total Average for all VR	\$11	\$12	\$13	\$12
Total Average for BVI Impairments	\$16	\$18	\$16	\$16

In SFY's 21 and 22, the most frequently provided services were those related to Rehabilitation Technology, Diagnosis and Treatment and Assessment

Grand Total (Distinct Count of BVI Clients)	344	362
Rehabilitation Technology	49%	49%
Diagnosis & Treatment of Impairments	40%	30%
Assessment	20%	32%

Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Teresa Eggleston, Director of BEP

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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Overview

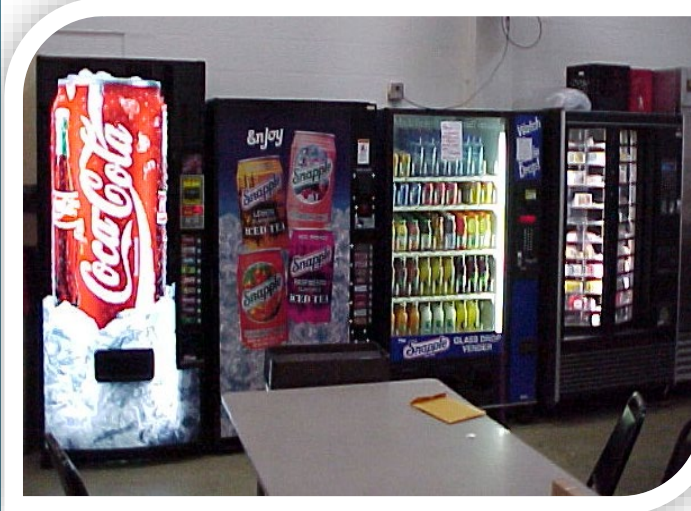
- BEP is the State Licensing Agency (SLA) designated by the Randolph Sheppard Act (RSA) to provide economic entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Has created financial independence for the blind citizens of Georgia since 1944.
- Blind Vendors manage vending routes, coffee shops, snack bars, smoothie bars, micro-markets, cafés, and military dining service facilities, as well as the interstate roadsides and Welcome Centers.



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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

BEP Vending and Snack Facilities:





Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Growth

- Clients referred and accepted into the Business Enterprise Program from Vocational Rehabilitation Services and are trained to become a Licensed Blind Vendors.
- Currently we have over 190 vending facilities
 - 104 vending facilities (stand alone)
 - 63 attachments
 - 23 full service
- Currently have 52 License Blind Vendors

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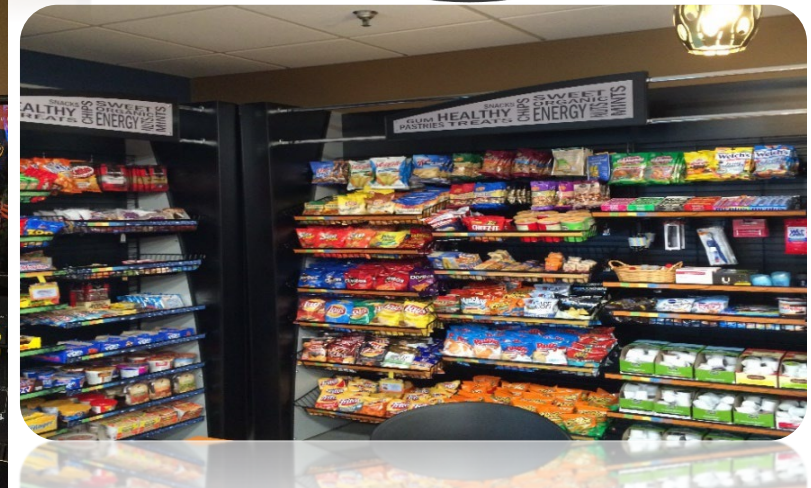
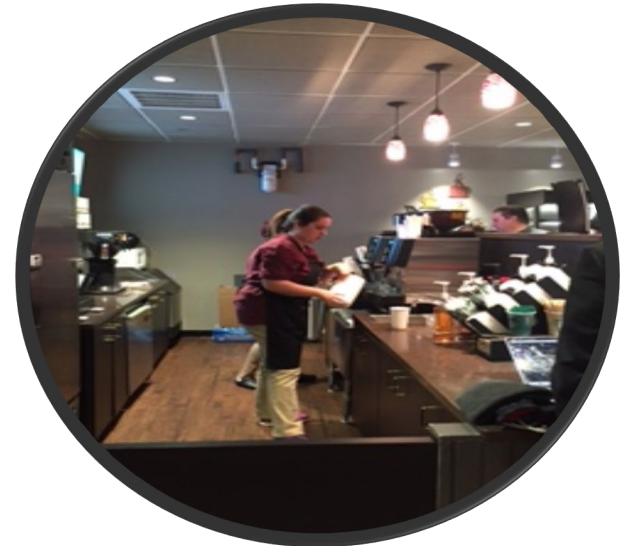


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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

BEP Facilities:

Summit Coffee Shop; Fort Benning Army Post; GBI Micro Market





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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

BEP Facilities : FAA Café





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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

BEP Facilities: Fort Benning Army Post



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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Business: Applicants

- **Who can apply and other data points?**
- Nationally – the call is urgent for innovation, expansion and modernization of the Randolph-Sheppard
- Funding – the allocation of unused VR funds that were returned by state VR agencies in 2021
- Conduct a study of what needs to be done to reinvent the Randolph-Sheppard Program



Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

The Path Forward/Post Pandemic

- Funding Guidelines
- Modernize current service delivery models
- Implement TAC 21-02
- Convert third party vending on non-federal property to blind operated
- Place electronic payment services on existing equip
- Establish non-traditional vending facilities such as food truck, ghost kitchens, etc.
- Establish non-food related businesses (i.e., laundromat, dry cleaners, retail shop, etc.)
- Establish vending facilities in private sector (convenience store or sub shop in strip mall or stand-alone building

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Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Want to Know More?

- Just ask any of the BEP staff or you can call the BEP office at 770-724-6590.

Georgia Industry for The Blind (GIB)

Teresa Eggleston, Interim Director

teresa.eggleston@gvs.ga.gov



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Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)

Business Enterprise Services

- Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB) was authorized in 1937 with the passage of House Bill 114 to provide jobs in manufacturing, packaging and services for individuals who are blind.
 - Manufactured products include pillows, safety vests, classification folders, cloth reusable facemasks, and first aid bags.
 - GIB operates in three manufacturing facilities located in Bainbridge, Griffin, and Robins Air Force Base.
- GIB is affiliated with National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and acquires federal contracts under the Ability One Program.
- The Ability One Program requires that GIB maintain a 75% blind ration in the direct labor category.
- Number of Employees: 53 full time and 5 temp employees

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- The AbilityOne Program is a **preferred source of supplies for federal employees**
- Government agencies prioritize the purchasing of products to suppliers that employ individuals who are blind
- **75%** of the organization's workforce must be either **blind or legally blind.**
- NIB provides technical assistance and negotiates contracts on behalf of its agencies
- Georgia Industries for the Blind is one of 100+ agencies that NIB supports



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Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)

- GIB is the manufacturing partner for Rustic Outdoors
- Rustic Outdoors is in negotiations with a major retail outlet to sell their products nationwide
- Partnership with GIB was a major selling point





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Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)



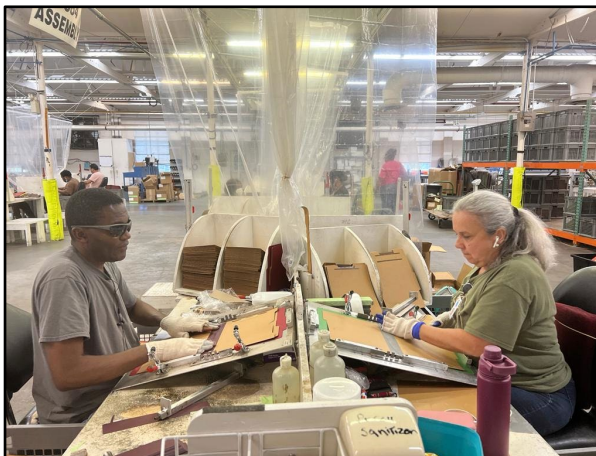
GIB Mask Machine Operation

Bainbridge Plant



Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)

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File Folders





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Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)



Pillows



Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)

Dr. Cindy Gibson, School-level Superintendent

Alicia M. Jackson, Principal of Transition



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Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)

Essential Questions

1. What does “success” look like?
2. What is transition?
 - Transition begins the moment a child is born.
 - While there are many transitions in life, one of the most pivotal is the launch from high school to post-secondary endeavors.
3. What can GAB offer GVRA?
 - A 100%/100% partnership for workforce development and quality of life for students with VI.
4. What does GAB need from GVRA?
 - Personnel
 - Guidance
 - Community



Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)

Transitional Opportunities at GAB

- “Work experience as a teenager will be one of the common denominators for all successful people in the future.”
- Daily integration of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)
- Ready for the World
- Work-Based Learning
- Project SEARCH: The pinnacle launching pad!



Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

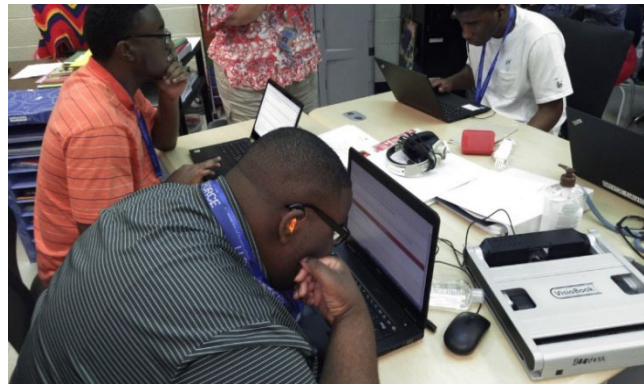
- A transitional job-skills training program which lends instruction to developing employability skills.
- Successful participation in WBL can lead to students acquiring skills for employment beyond high school.
- GAB proudly salutes 10 graduates who are on a job path beyond high school after completing job skills training.
- GAB's WBL community partners include Goodwill, Macon Outreach, Kroger, Marriott Courtyard, Magnolia Manor, Papa Johns and GIMC.



Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)

Project SEARCH at Atrium
Health Navicent

- GAB's Pinnacle Transition Program: Cohort VI!
- 1-Year Internship for graduating seniors
- Interns work towards post-graduation competitive employment opportunities.
- A focus on transferable work and life skills
- All areas of the ECC are covered.
- Interns must meet eligibility requirements for GVRA.



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State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Report

Juliet Hardeman, State Rehabilitation Council Chair

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Georgia Vocational
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- Old Business
- New Business

Public Comment and Adjourment



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