



THE FLORIDA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION (FRA)

2013 NEWSLETTER



Florida Rehabilitation Association • 606 Marla Creek Court —Jacksonville FL 32220– 904/632-5007

The 2013 FRA training conference was held at the beautiful Hyatt Regency—Grand Cypress Hotel at Disney which is located in Orlando, Florida. This Hyatt hotel is self contained and includes several amenities on its grounds (see photos below).



“A misty beginning”



Donna Ferrell, FRA President (above)

Dear Rehabilitation Friends,

On behalf of your Florida Rehabilitation Association (FRA) board members, I'd like to welcome you to our 2013 newsletter. I hope you will find it informative and interesting.

We held our 2013 annual FRA conference at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida. The conference was a tremendous success and was enjoyed by rehabilitation professionals from the Veteran's Administration, Centers for Independent Living, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Blind Services, Colleges/Universities, Students and Public/Private service providers. The participants were able to receive a total of 13.5 continuing education units (CEUs), 3.5 of those units were for ethics.

This Just In: Two final rules to improve hiring and employment of veterans and people with disabilities were published in the Federal Register on 9/24/13. These were announced by Vice President Biden in August. Congratulations to all – our voices were finally heard.

Be well,

Donna

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Cover

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- Welcome—FRA President

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FRA Board Members

- Donna Farrell, President
- Denise Giarrusso, Past President & Treasurer
- Don Barnes
- Madeline Davidson, Chair—Membership
- Vacant
- Tina Dillahunt-Aspillaga
- William Hudson, Newsletter Editor
- Andrea Melvin, Secretary
- Harry McEwen
- Linda Rimmer
- Karla Wooten

Don't sweat the small stuff and it's all small stuff.

Richard Carlson, Ph.D.



Pictured below: Dr. Ron Spitznagel, who serves as a private expert witness for Social Security Disability Determination provided an indepth update on the Rehabilitation Formula: Body, Mind, and Spirit. A historical perspective was provided. Spirituality and religion were discussed as well as models used and the research involved. In addition, the applications of spirituality, and religion were provided. Lastly, the counseling approaches utilized were provided.



Above: FRA Board meeting

The FRA Board met during the training conference on Wednesday, 8/28/13 from 5:30 to 6:30PM. There are currently 158 members statewide. There are 58 lifetime members. There were 118 conference attendees. The Tampa Bay chapter is in the process of reorganization. The legislative report was provided. The issue of relocating Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) out of the Department of Education and placing it in the Department of Labor was discussed. Additional items discussed were nominations for the board, cost of the training conference, dates for the 2014 training conference, speaker fees, agenda items for the training conference and the distribution of the FRA newsletter. Lastly, Robert Doyle II, new State Division of Blind Services Director from Delaware was introduced.

Shown below: Dr. Bryan Batien



Working with Veterans

Dr. Batien, who is Program Coordinator/Consultant/University Liaison for the Veteran Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) Initiative provided information and discussions about the purpose of the initiative and possible outcomes. A timely and interesting discussion followed this presentation. A question and answer period was also provided. E-mail and telephone information were shared.

Pictured directly below is John

Ficca who heads up the “Hands on Program”. It was announced that this program continues to grow and provides employment to individuals with disabilities as assistants in the dietary areas of Hyatt hotels in numerous cities in several states.



Pictured Below is Terri Daly, Ph.D., who is from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities. She presented on Autism and how it affects socialization and communication abilities.



Below: Dr. Tina Dillahunt-Aspillaga (standing) served as moderator for Valerie Breen (President/CEO, BIAF), Ted Bruce (RESULTS Projects Director, Consultant, BIAF), and Rhonda Lattimore (center), Director of Programs and Services, BIAF. These individuals presented on project RE-SULTS - “Realistic Employment Strategies, Ultimate Long -Term Success” for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).



Pictured above is Donna Rhoades, Ph.D. (to right) and Kristen Panella (on left). who presented on job development and placement services. Discussion and a Q&A followed. Attendees were highly involved in this presentation.

Quote of the day: Keep asking yourself, “What’s really important?”



Pictured above are the Director of the Florida Division of Blind Services, Mr. Robert Doyle (left) and the Director of the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Ms. Aleisa McKinlay (right). Each director provided a statewide update on their specific divisions and addressed future issues. A brief question and answer period followed their presentations.



Picture #1 FRA President -Donna Farrell and Dr. Beth Boland

Picture #2. FRA Board Member—Linda Rimmer addressing FRA conference concerning continuing education units (CEUs) for CRC and CVE certifications.

Picture #3 is of Donna Farrell as she presents a slice of birthday cake.

Save the Date! The Florida Rehabilitation Association is pleased to announce that its 2014 Annual Training Meeting will be held on October 22—24, 2014 at the Goodwill Industries of Central Florida, Inc. Please plan to attend.



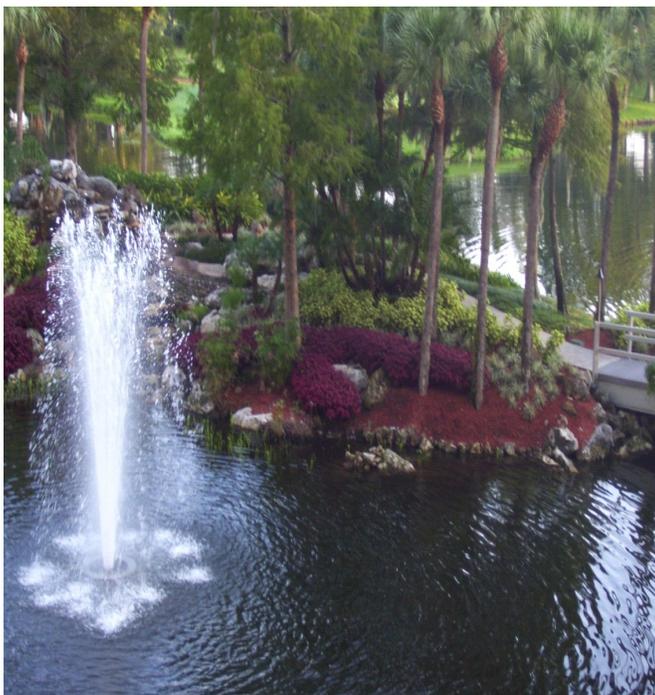
A brief personal demographic overview was provided. Robert Doyle, III worked in the Illinois state legislature and with Senator Obama. Most recently he served as the Director of the Department of Visually Impaired in Delaware. He is married with a family. He has only been on the job a few months. He announced that he hopes to continue the level of involvement, collaboration and the sharing of knowledge that currently exists between DBS, DVR and FRA.

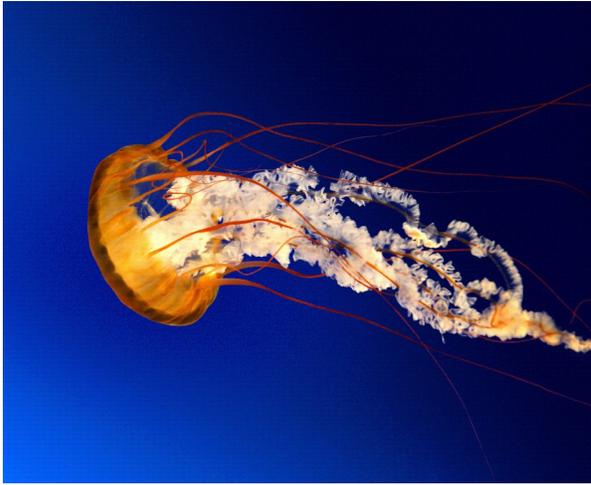


Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Updates by Aleisa McKinlay, DVR Director

It was announced that 6,523 job placements were completed in 2012. There were 6,071 job placements in 2011. It was announced that categories 1 and 2 are open and flowing. Category 3 is remains closed since 2008 (non significant disabilities). There were 51,000 clients in this category in 2007. It was noted that 51% of customers have a mental illness as a primary disability. The statewide case load for counselors is 132—134. However, the case-loads in area 5 & 6 is 250. DVR has 57,000 clients statewide. There is a staffing disparity and the use of contract-employment vendors remain high. Insight on Section 503 revisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act mandates hire the handicapped. It was reported that a potential new position title will be mental health peer specialist.

Pictured below: Breath taking views of the hotel/resort grounds. One can get lost in such a relaxing environment.





Message from the Board

We would like to acknowledge all of our sponsors, exhibitors and presenters who shared their time and expertise with us. It is through their efforts and support that we are able to provide such a meaningful and fulfilling conference and training. You are much appreciated.

ANNOUNCEMENT

If any member wishes to nominate someone or run for the FRA Board, please contact Donna Farrell, FRA President (donna.farrell@vr.fldoe.org) or Denise Giarrusso, FRA Treasurer (denise.giarrusso@fscj.edu) or visit us online at www.floridarehabilitationassociation.org for other nomination and FRA information.

On behalf of the FRA Officers and Board Members, we would like to thank each of you for your continued support. We are appreciative of your attendance and participation in the 2013 FRA annual training conference.

Bill Hudson, Editor