

THE SOUTH CAROLINA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT



VR³ Ready...Reliable...Results August 2012

Perseverance, and giving a little "extra," pay off with success

Full of pure will and determination is how Rachel Nash, Rock Hill Counselor, describes Joel Stimax, former SCVRD client. "After he successfully completed training in the Rock Hill Training Center Joel was ready for a real job — he got it," says Rachel.

While Joel may have been ready, often success doesn't come without trial, tribulation and the help of others, as the story goes for Joel.



Joel Stimax (right) with his Cracker Barrel manager, Frank Sanders.

Rachel, while in her former position as a job coach, worked faithfully accompanying Joel to several interviews until they found an opportunity for him. Excited about his first job, but a little uneasy Rachel remained by Joel's side.

She went to work with him; she coached and encouraged him until Joel felt comfortable working independently.

As the weeks passed excitement about the new job changed to frustration and disappointment. Without an explanation from his employer, by February Joel was receiving fewer and fewer hours on the schedule. Joel's mother began to realize this job may not be the best fit for him.

Joel's mother turned to a familiar contact, Rachel. Joel was no longer on Rachel's caseload, but she was glad to help. After Rachel spoke with Joel's mother, she too understood the current position was not right for Joel. Rachel offered advice on a job lead at Cracker Barrel in Rock Hill. Rachel had gotten to know Frank Sanders, General Manager, and felt confident he would offer Joel the support and tools that he needed to be successful. By March Joel was hired.

Joel's mother recounts what happened next...

"Joel had completed orientation and training and was scheduled for his first night, Saturday night from 5:30 pm to 11:30 pm. Joel went to work with a bit of apprehension, but was excited about his new opportunity. At 8:30 that evening Joel called to ask if I could pick him up, he was done with his job. The first person I called at 9:15 pm that Saturday night was Rachel; she returned my call within 20 minutes. After a lengthy conversation, I was reassured and confident that I would be able to assist Joel in his return to work the next day. That same night I also spoke with Mr. Sanders and he agreed to give Joel a second chance. Mr. Sanders expressed that putting Joel, a new employee, on one of the restaurant's busiest nights may not have been the best transition.

"Filled with anxiety, Joel and his father arrived in the parking lot of Cracker Barrel at 11:00 am Sunday morning. To their surprise, sitting on the front porch was Rachel Nash and her husband. Joel's father told me he could see Joel relax almost immediately as they all walked in together."

Rachel and her husband stayed to enjoy brunch, but received greater enjoyment watching Joel successfully do his job.

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Joel's mother exclaims, "Joel's second day was a stark contrast to the first, thanks to Vocational Rehabilitation and Rachel Nash!"

While taking little credit, Rachel praises not only Joel, but Frank Sanders. Mr. Sanders has been an excellent advocate of SCVRD and has provided opportunities to three VR clients with pervasive developmental disorders.

It is truly a "win-win" partnership. Clients are provided rewarding opportunities, while Cracker Barrel receives reliable employees.

Joel is excited to be part of the Cracker Barrel family. Joel's determination, his parent's devotion, and Frank Sanders' understanding have all been part of Joel's success.

By taking a little extra time, showing care and concern Rachel Nash truly made a difference.

CDI unit saves millions

Social Security benefits are a critical source of income to eligible people with disabilities. Unfortunately there are others who seek to defraud the system. Thanks to the Cooperative Disability Investigations unit (CDI), in which SCVRD's Disability Determination Services is a partner, that has become much more difficult to do!

Despite being in operation only a few years South Carolina's unit, based in Columbia, has quickly become the Southeast leader in the number of referrals and the amount of money saved by uncovering fraudulent claims. So far this federal fiscal year, there has been a savings of more than \$28 million in South Carolina. The Columbia unit has opened more than 200 cases this year and is ranked third nationally. There are 25 CDI units in the U.S. The units look at individual claims and also identify lawyers, doctors and other third parties who facilitate fraud.

The South Carolina CDI program is a joint venture among the U.S. Office of Inspector General (OIG), the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), Social Security field offices and DDS. Most of the referrals come from DDS offices, and initial tips about fraud frequently come from friends and family members.

Did you know...

that before SCVRD began building its own work training centers in 1975, the centers were owned and operated by other organizations such as Civitans and Elks and governed by private boards? SCVRD provided staff, vocational evaluation and training. Pictured below is the Charleston VR "workshop" that was owned by the Elks.





Events

Greenville – Call 864-297-3066 for more information

- **Quarterly Award of Excellence Recipient: Joni Hammond, ATS** for consistently going above and beyond to exemplify standards of quality, good customer service, productivity, compliance and overall professionalism
- Every Friday 9am- 10:30am **Job Club**
- 8-1 to 8-2-2012 **High School/High Tech (HS/HT) Summer Institute**
- 8-24-2012, 7:05pm **Annual Greenville Drive Night Out** (Baseball) at Fluor Field
- 10-26-2012 **Disability Mentoring Day / Open House**

Greenwood – Call 864-229-5827 for more information

- 9-26-2012 10am to 3pm **Upper Savannah Job Fair**, Greenwood Mall, 420 Bypass 72 NW (thanks to Oconee-Pickens office for submitting)

Richland – Call 803-782-4239 for more information

- August 8 **Summer Institute** for Transition students.
- Monthly **Work Ready Workshop Seminars**

Alken – Call 803-641-7630 for more information

- August 8 **Job Corp Visit** in Bamberg for Transition Students as part of the Career Success Institute
- October 25, 9-11 – **Open House**

Beaufort – Call 843-522-1010 for more information

- August 3 **Dog Days of Summer** Field Day and Cookout for staff and clients
- August 4 **Back to School Expo 2012** hosted by Beaufort County School Board – Transition counselors will be attending high schools around the county.

Enabling eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to prepare for, achieve and maintain competitive employment

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