

## Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services







Tucker

Danahy

The Commission for Rehabilitation Services meets monthly to discuss agency activities and plans for the future.

Commission Chair Lynda Collins led the meetings and the commission through another successful year. Commission Chair Lynda Collins is a former DRS client and employee. She worked her way up through the ranks to Vocational Rehabilitation administrator. She retired after 33 years of service. Gov. Mary Fallin appointed her to the commission.

Commission Vice Chair Jack Tucker is a former client and is a retired principal from the Oklahoma School for the Deaf. With his 40 years of experience in working with children with disabilities, he is an advocate for services provided by DRS. The President Pro Tempore of Oklahoma State Senate appointed him.

Commissioner April Danahy has 17 years of radio experience and is currently vice president of human resources and corporate communications at the Security National Bank of Enid. Danahy is active in the Enid community and holds positions on numerous nonprofit boards. The Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives appointed her to the commission.

Interim Director Noel Tyler works directly with the Commissioners. She leads

approximately 960 employees. In state fiscal year 2016, Tyler's staff assisted 83,406 Oklahomans with disabilities. The agency is comprised of six program divisions — Disability Determination Services, Oklahoma School for the Blind, Oklahoma School for the Deaf, Visual Services, Vocational Rehabilitation and support services. Each division has its own goals along with the collective mission: Empower Oklahomans with Disabilities



Tyler



#### Letter from the Director

Dear Oklahoma Stakeholders,

The Department of Rehabilitation Services' overall focus is to direct client services and our mission is to Empower Oklahomans with Disabilities. DRS empowers Oklahomans with disabilities through vocational rehabilitation, employment, residential, and outreach education programs, and eligibility determinations for disability benefits. We believe all DRS employees are integral to the success of our programs. The work we do every day benefits the clients, claimants, and students we serve and helps them to have informed choices regarding their independence. This is seen in the 2016 program outcomes.

- DRS Visual Services and Vocational Rehabilitation divisions successfully helped 2,125 Oklahomans find employment and become taxpayers.
- DRS schools, Oklahoma School for the Blind and the Oklahoma School for the Deaf, both achieved a 100 percent graduation rates for their Classes of 2016.
- DRS Disability Determination Services again performed at an outstanding level clearing 62,594 Oklahoma cases and made accurate decisions on 99 percent of the initial disability claims applications.
- DRS support services divisions kept the agency going, allowing the divisions with direct client contact able to work seamlessly.

DRS is very fortunate to have dedicated employees who work hard all year to help our clients, students and claimants achieve their goals and dreams. All divisions kept this agency moving forward, and we have produced great results. 2016 was an amazing year!

In 2017, this agency will continue to make excellence our standard. DRS is committed to quality program results that is accountable to the public, private sector employers and our customers. We will deliver improved access and quality services to Oklahomans with disabilities. We will strengthen our workforce and our infrastructure. These commitments give purpose to our daily decisions and drive the agency to align and leverage our resources to achieve our mission.

Sincerely,

Noel Tyler DRS Interim Director

## 2016 Actual Expenditures

	VR/VS	OSB	OSD	DDS	Support	Total
State	\$ 13,911,000	\$ 6,375,000	\$ 8,171,000		\$ 2,232,000	\$30,689,000
Federal	47,000,000			\$ 40,188,000	6,638,000	\$93,826,000
Inter-Agency	96,000	221,000	193,000			\$510,000
Other	564,000	49,000	593,000		7,000	\$1,213,000
Total	\$ 61,571,000	\$ 6,645,000	\$ 8,957,000	\$ 40,188,000	\$ 8,877,000	\$126,238,000

The majority of funding for Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services is eligible for a federal/state match of 78.7 percent / 21.3 percent. VS' Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is state-funded.

The majority of funding for Oklahoma School for the Blind and Oklahoma School for the Deaf is state appropriations. Other OSD funding is primarily the Equipment Distribution Program, which provides telecommunications and other equipment to deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and severely speech-impaired individuals.

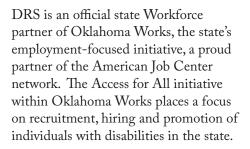
Disability Determination Services is

100-percent federally funded.

In the Support Services divisions, DRS utilizes an indirect cost rate as the standardized method for individual programs to pay a fair share of general administration costs.

Statistical information is based on State Fiscal Year 2016

#### Partnerships Make for Better Service



DRS is committed to leading Oklahoma's Workforce system toward enhanced accessibility. The objective is to provide equitable services to individuals with disabilities and to ensure that all Workforce system partners comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Oklahoma Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility law.

Specific results from these efforts include:

 In preparation for the full implementation of Oklahoma's business-driven workforce development system, DRS has been continually participating in a plan for the state to use a one-stop infrastructure and cost-sharing model. DRS' chief financial officer has been leading the development of the pilot cost model and guiding the partners in this process.

- DRS is committed to Oklahoma
  Works in bringing state workforce
  resources together and connecting
  employers, employees and job
  seekers to information and
  programs that help build the
  state's workforce.
- DRS is obligated to ensuring an accessible workforce system.
   Through a partnership with Oklahoma ABLE Tech, we developed the Oklahoma Works Roadmap for Physical and Technology Accessibility Standards Certification. This road map serves



#### OKLAHOMA WORKS

to detail coordination among the workforce system partners to ensure accessibility to all job seekers with disabilities.

- Local DRS representatives
   participate in individual
   Workforce Development Board
   and Youth Committee activities
   in their areas. Staff understand
   their role is a critical part of the
   Workforce system.
- DRS supports career pathways for young people, working-age youth and adults in partnership with employers.
- DRS locates staff in Workforce centers around the state.

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

Second and third chances — Bryan White had a few that didn't work out. Struggles with bi-polar disorder and depression led to alcohol problems, drug abuse and ultimately incarceration for non-violent offenses — mostly forgery — in Texas and Oklahoma.

White seems amazed at the transformation that has taken place in his life and willing to give all the credit to DRS, drug court, his pastor – just about anybody that played a part when he decided to start over.

DRS helped White with career counseling and guidance, vocational and self-employment evaluations and financial assistance to purchase a professional power-washing system and trailer.

These days, he is busy doing a great job for his customers around Clinton, Weatherford and Elk City and helping his parents. He's thinking about buying more equipment and someday hiring other Vocational Rehabilitation clients to take on the extra work that is starting to come his way.

"We all have problems in our daily life and need structure and a chance to start over," White said.



#### **Our Services**

Vocational Rehabilitation staff provide Oklahomans with disabilities the opportunity to become employed members of society. Our job is to remove barriers that prevent a person from working, to guide and counsel clients on career paths of their choice and network with employers on behalf of people with disabilities.

In fiscal year 2016, VR served 11,124 clients. That means VR staff were work-

ing with these clients in some fashion. Some may be at the beginning of their journeys to employment, and others may be completing their plans. We celebrated with 1,879 Oklahomans with physical or mental disabilities who reached the next level and found employment this year.

Our clients receive career counseling, vocational education and training, or medical services if it is determined it will help them find employment. They may also receive assistive technology, job placement and coaching. Our coun-

selors help clients find their own path to employment success and independence.

When DRS clients who are former recipients of Social Security benefits reach their nine month work anniversary, Social Security Administration reimburses DRS a portion of the cost of the services we provided to get that person into the workforce. The SSA reimbursement final totals for the 2016 federal fiscal year were an impressive \$2.5 million from 208 Oklahomans going to work.

# Job-Seeking Clients Served

**Vocational Rehabilitation** 

11, 124

Clients served

**7,311**Program applications

4,798
Employment plans

**Visual Services** 

1,830

Clients served

Total VR and VS

12,954

Clients served

462

Program applications

7,773

Program applications

rogram applications

390

**Employment plans** 

5,188

**Employment plans** 

# Job-Seeking Clients Employed

**Vocational Rehabilitation** 

1,879

**Employment outcomes** 

\$20,774

Average yearly earnings

\$10,135

Average cost of services per client employed

\$3,116

Average taxes paid (based on 15 percent tax rate)

**Visual Services** 

246

**Employment outcomes** 

\$22,602

Average yearly earnings

\$17,106

Average cost of services per client employed

\$3,390

Average taxes paid (based on 15 percent tax rate)

**Total VR and VS** 

2,125

**Employment outcomes** 

\$20,952

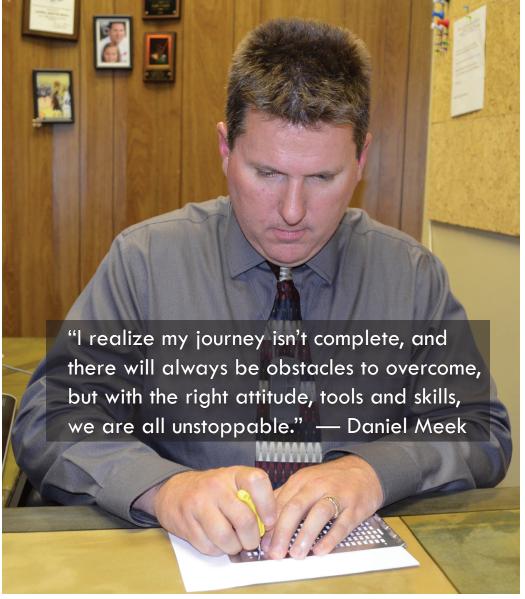
Average yearly earnings

\$10,942

Average cost of services per client employed

\$3,144

Average taxes paid (based on 15 percent tax rate)



#### Visual Services

Daniel Meek, from Mustang, is an investment advisor and CPA employed by CC Investment Advisors. He is deaf-blind due to Usher's Syndrome Type III. The condition combines hearing loss with retinitis pigmentosa. The result: progressive loss of side vision due to retina deterioration. Type III is the syndrome that causes loss of vision before hearing.

DRS provided guidance and counseling, communication assistance, adaptive technology, new hearing aids and funding for Meek to complete his accounting degree at Colorado State University through their online program.

DRS recommended and prepared

Meek to attend a week-long, accelerated mobility program at Leader Dogs for the Blind in Rochester Hills, Michigan. Leader Dogs funded transportation and training.

He has also successfully completed three Braille distance learning courses through Hadley School for the Blind.

Today, Meek uses a white cane for travel, magnification software in conjunction with a screen reader on his computer and a Bluetooth neck loop to stream phone conservations to his hearing aids and other technology as needed. He relies on the zoom window, which enlarges text, to verify words.

#### **Our Services**

Visual Services helps people who are blind or visually impaired reach their employment or life goals.

Clients are provided the opportunity to become employed through the vocational rehabilitation process of:

- Career counseling;
- Vocational education and training;
- Medical services required to become employable;
- Assistive technology geared to their specific needs and job placement.

Clients are eligible for the vocational rehabilitation program if their disability makes it difficult to work. They must be able to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services, which are required to prepare for and find jobs.

Many clients receive living skills training that allows them to navigate their environments, operate computers, manage money and much more. When these skills are learned early in the rehabilitation process, persons who are blind or visually impaired often become open to the idea that they can compete in the work place.

There is no age limitation to becoming involved in our vocational rehabilitation program, which assists interested persons in returning to work.

The Business Enterprise Program trains and assists people who are blind in establishing and operating food service businesses in public and private facilities across the state. BEP equips locations, provides initial inventory and offers ongoing technical support to licensed BEP entrepreneurs.

Older Blind Independent Living Services gives Oklahomans, aged 55 and older, the ability to remain independent after becoming visually impaired. The program teaches living skills with special magnifying equipment, small appliances with audio and tips on staying safe when performing household duties.

# Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is the source for talking books for those who cannot read the written word due to visual impairments or physical disabilities. The library mails thousands of free, recorded books to patrons all across the state. The Accessible Instructional Material Center provides free Braille and large print textbooks and classroom materials to public school students.

#### **Services Circulation**

4,884 library patrons 959 books circulated daily to patrons 3,825 books received weekly by patrons 160 daily inquiries

# Federal Quota Funds (Previous School Year)

760 children eligible for textbooks \$212,115 funding

# Accessible Instructional Materials Center

- 767 children served
- 2 average days for a child to receive an in-house book
- 10 average days for a child to receive an ordered Braille book
- 8 average days for a child to receive an ordered large print book
- 13,600 total books/items in collection
- 161 new Braille books purchased
- 419 new large print books purchased
- 4,280 new instructional aids and equipment\*

\*Books and instructional aids/equipment, such as talking globes and tactile maps, are ordered during one fiscal/school year and received the next fiscal/school year.

All library data reported on the state FY-2016

# Disability Determination Services

#### **Performance**

In 2016, DDS' performance is based on the five dimensions of quality: accuracy, customer service, processing time, cost and production.

1019% budgeted workload completed

99.1%

Oklahoma decision accuracy rate

81

days processing time

Based on Federal FY-2016



## **Disability Determination Services**

DRS' Disability Determination Services processes applications made to the Social Security Administration for Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income.

DDS personnel understand each disability claim is a person needing financial assistance — timeliness and accuracy are crucial. Staff receives quality training and mentoring that focuses on accuracy, confidentiality, consistency and efficiency.

For each disability claim, a team of para-professionals, disability specialists and medical/psychological consultants review each applicant's medical and work history. The team determines whether applicants meet federal medical eligibility criteria for disability or blindness. Children may qualify for SSI benefits and are evaluated based on their ability to perform age-appropriate activities as documented in their medical and educational records.

According to SSA's Office of Quality Performance, DDS staff made accurate decisions in 99 percent of the initial disability claims application. As result of these determinations, more than \$2.8 billion in disability benefits are paid to the beneficiaries and dependents in Oklahoma. This figure excludes benefits to dependents and the financial impact of Medicare/Medicaid.

DDS continues to be a national resource as one of four

Extended Service Team sites that assists other states with their backlog of disability claims. Since its inception, Oklahoma EST has provided assistance to multiple states including Arizona, California, Kansas, Louisiana and New Mexico.

DDS is 100-percent federally funded. The division employed 368 Oklahomans with a federal budget of \$46.5 million. In 2017, DDS' budget is expected to increase to \$47.1 million.

The Cooperative Disability Investigations unit investigates individual disability claims and identifies third parties to prevent fraud in SSA's SSDI and SSI disability programs and related federal and state programs. Claims and post-entitlement actions are referred to the CDI Unit by DDS staff, SSA field office personnel and private citizens who suspect fraudulent activity. The investigation results are presented to DDS staff for their use in making disability determinations and to federal and state prosecutors for possible of prosecution.

In 2016, the CDI unit saved \$16 million in SSA and Medicare/Medicaid savings and opened 175 case investigations.

The Oklahoma City CDI unit is a joint effort consisting of staff from DDS, SSA, Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General and SSA Office of Inspector General.

#### **OSB** Census

100% graduation rate

**60** residential students

**31** day students

91 students attending all or part of the year

**52** counties served

12 students with multiple disabilities

1 to 5 teacher-to-student ratio

1 to 6 direct-care specialist-to-

**67** summer school students

**24** days for summer school

#### **OSD** Census

100% graduation rate

99 residential students

**7** day students

students attending all or part of the year

**37** counties served

2 students with multiple disabilities

1 to 6 teacher-to-student ratio

1 to 9 direct-care specialist tostudent ratio

**70** summer school students

5 days for summer school

# **OSB**Outreach Programs

2,856 direct services

**288** consultations and evaluations

**296** services to families

1,094 services to schools

**1,475** services to organizations

#### **OSD**

#### **Outreach Programs**

**34,447** direct services

3,385 consultations and evaluations

16,894 services to families

11,392 services to schools

**2,776** services to organizations

Oklahoma School for the Blind



The Oklahoma School for the Blind is home to the 2016 Oklahoma State Champions Class 2A Jazz Band.

OSB serves students age 3 to 12-grade, offering superior educational opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired. Tuition is free, and students throughout Oklahoma are accepted.

OSB students receive specialized education in coordination with their state-mandated educational requirements. They learn valuable independent living skills and use specialized accessible technology equipment.

Students excel in their education because school staff set high bars for achievement. All state-mandated education requirements are taught. The school offers a comprehensive curriculum of reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, physical education, music and computer science for residential and day students. In May 2016, the OSB senior class proudly graduated with a 100-percent graduation rate.

OSB also offered a new robotics program that is fully accessible to blind/visually impaired students and introduced the students to the exciting world of math and engineering.

Specialized instruction includes Braille, orientation and mobility, optimum use of low vision, adaptive equipment, technology and tactile graphic skills. These specializations are not readily available at other public schools in the state.

The school's boundaries are statewide. Regardless of the hometown, the school will transport students at no cost to the parents or guardians to designated stops throughout the state. OSB is a four-day a week program. Students who live close commute daily. Those who live farther away stay on campus Monday through Thursday. Residential students are transported to and from OSB for three-day weekends, summers and holidays at home.

OSB staff is committed to motivating students to break through whatever challenges they may face as they work toward leading lives of independence.

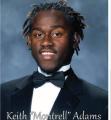
OSB provides thousands of free outreach services each year for students attending local public schools, their families and local school systems. Qualified staff offer free student evaluations, in-service training for teachers and recommendations for classroom modifications and special equipment that help students reach their full potential.

# Class of 2016



(Front row, from left): Jennifer Ratliff, Makayla Fetner, Regan Spaulding, Destiny Tanyan;

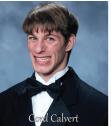
(Back row) Aaron Hopson, Triston Gibson, Tesla Nakedhead and Logan McCoy.









































## Oklahoma School for the Deaf



As the statewide resource center on deafness, Oklahoma School for the Deaf offers the ultimate learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing students because there are no communication barriers.

All staff and students communicate directly with each other using American Sign Language, voice or any other communication mode preferred by students. Many students utilize cochlear implants or hearing aids.

OSD is a deaf education immersion school, while other schools, public or private, are usually only able to make basic accommodations. Sign language classes are provided for all students and staff. Classes for parents and the community are also offered. Staff are required to obtain sign language proficiency that is measured by the Sign Language Proficiency Interview.

Students who attend OSD must still meet all graduation requirements set forth by the Oklahoma Department of Education. All classes are taught in consideration of each student's unique communication and education needs. This includes not only the use of American Sign Language, but also the use of other adaptive technology beneficial to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Courses such as chemistry, algebra I and U.S. history are offered as in any other school. In May 2016, OSD proudly achieved 100-percent graduation rate for the sixth year.

OSD has a strong vocational program that offers business technology, family and consumer sciences and welding classes on site. OSD also offers a school-to-work program, Occupational Training Opportunities for the Deaf. Students gain valuable work experience and a paycheck at various businesses in the community, which gives them a competitive resume after graduation.

OSD is a four-day a week program. Students attend classes Monday through Thursday. Those who live close to campus commute back and forth to school. Students from greater distances live at the school Sunday through Thursday, free of charge, and go home for three-day weekends, summers

and holidays. OSD serves any Oklahoma student from age 3 to 12th grade.

Students receive full educational and social experiences. They perform in school programs and dramas. They have prom and homecoming events for all sports. They com-

pete with other schools on sports teams, leadership programs and academic teams.

#### **DRS Clients Are Statewide**

83,406 Oklahomans were served by DRS from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016

County	Vocational Rehabilitation	Visual Services	School for the Blind	School for the Deaf	Disability Determination	OK Library for the Blind	Total by County
Adair	23	9	9	10	526	21	598
Alfalfa	19	0	0	0	67	18	104
Atoka	88	8	0	1	245	13	355
Beaver	4	5	0	2	33	4	48
Beckham	42	5	2	2	438	30	519
Blaine	17	1	0	3	150	18	189
Bryan	149	47	17	16	919	48	1,196
Caddo	98	18	0	12	587	26	741
Canadian	256	18	2	18	1,127	133	1,554
Carter	111	23	22	40	1,018	65	1,279
Cherokee	86	29	143	26	756	51	1,091
Choctaw	57	15	0	8	366	23	469
Cimarron	1	0	0	0	24	3	28
Cleveland	519	57	23	39	2,466	254	3,358
Coal	56	7	0	0	105	4	172
Comanche	350	57	30	46	2,301	107	2,891
Cotton	7	2	0	3	120	14	146
Craig	32	4	2	10	319	21	388
Creek	238	22	3	30	1,072	92	1,457
Custer	66	15	1	5	433	52	572
Delaware	65	9	5	8	727	56	870
Dewey	12	1	0	0	57	9	79
Ellis	14	5	0	0	60	4	83
Garfield	213	24	28	30	924	95	1,314
Garvin	108	17	8	28	585	32	778
Grady	118	30	4	19	725	61	957
Grant	4	2	0	2	54	7	69
Greer	29	1	0	2	125	12	169
Harmon	8	2	0	0	57	3	70
Harper	6	1	0	2	42	8	59
Haskell	115	4	3	10	303	11	446
Hughes	62	9	5	8	300	15	399
Jackson	58	5	0	3	404	25	495
Jefferson	10	2	0	4	154	6	176
Johnston	29	7	1	6	225	6	274
Kay	144	11	41	17	818	68	1,099
Kingfisher	19	4	6	3	162	31	225
Kiowa	50	8	0	9	209	19	295

County	Vocational Rehabilitation	Visual Services	School for the Blind	School for the Deaf	Disability Determination	OK Library for the Blind	Total by County
Latimer	47	6	0	2	177	18	250
LeFlore	151	26	8	18	1,217	42	1,462
Lincoln	88	5	6	18	576	51	744
Logan	73	4	1	8	507	45	638
Love	14	3	0	10	196	10	233
McClain	40	12	0	5	555	47	659
McCurtain	73	32	11	9	715	42	882
McIntosh	61	11	5	8	488	35	608
Major	24	1	2	9	89	11	136
Marshall	79	12	4	18	332	16	461
Mayes	104	21	4	18	810	36	993
Murray	62	2	5	75	205	22	371
Muskogee	253	86	621	36	1,814	121	2,931
Noble	21	0	23	2	139	15	200
Nowata	35	3	5	12	210	18	283
Okfuskee	46	8	1	7	246	17	325
Oklahoma	2,491	198	728	215	13,410	916	17,958
Okmulgee	184	24	12	15	821	58	1,114
Osage	97	8	4	11	492	45	657
Ottawa	44	15	15	5	774	41	894
Pawnee	63	7	4	6	324	28	432
Payne	141	9	19	26	936	92	1,223
Pittsburg	269	16	5	30	1,098	50	1,468
Pontotoc	155	42	5	43	718	46	1,009
Pottawatomie	262	26	5	38	1,461	89	1,881
Pushmataha	75	8	4	7	304	20	418
Roger Mills	6	1	2	0	43	8	60
Rogers	212	20	18	18	891	111	1,270
Seminole	68	16	2	17	582	26	711
Sequoyah	160	32	16	6	1,101	47	1,362
Stephens	53	16	0	70	849	51	1,039
Texas	24	7	1	0	166	8	206
Tillman	19	2	0	0	131	8	160
Tulsa	2,129	334	121	152	9,345	713	12,794
Wagoner	101	35	12	8	609	47	812
Washington	154	11	0	13	744	73	995
Washita	14	8	0	2	194	16	234
Woods	65	5	3	0	79	17	169
Woodward	66	4	10	1	243	28	352
Total by Program:	11,306	1,560	2,037	1,360	62,594	4,549	83,406

<sup>\*</sup>The data includes school students as well as outreach clients.

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### Governor's Employment **Disability Awards**

The Governor's Disability Employment Awards of Excellence annually recognize outstanding employees with disabilities and employers who are committed to hiring job seekers with disabilities.

Vivien E. Adeleye, vocational rehabilitation specialist nominated Lowe's Home Improvement Store in Mustang for the 2016 Governor's Disability Employment Awards of Excellence.

"My client Ricky Goodson is a wheelchair user. I nominated Lowes Stores for hiring Ricky, an individual with severe disability. For giving him the same opportunity awarded others — the chance to prove to their employers that they can fulfill the essential duties of their job," Adeleye said.

Goodson works as a pro-sales specialist at Lowes and has been promoted twice within a six months period, earning more than \$16.00/hr.

"He has gained more self-esteem, and more independence. Though still very humble, Ricky is overjoyed at the fact that he is also contributing to society; he can be of assistance to others and not always be on the receiving end," Adeleye said.

"All because Lowes gave him that opportunity to prove he could do it."

end."

"Ricky is overjoyed at the

fact that he is also contribut-

ing to society; he can be of

assistance to others and not

always be on the receiving

— Vivien Adeleye

In addition to DRS, the awards celebration was sponsored by the Office of the Governor, Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Developmental Disabilities Services and Oklahoma Association of People Supporting Employment First

"We are proud of the accomplishment of each and

every employee who won an award today," DRS Interim Director Noel Tyler said. "We also appreciate the accomplishments of employers who hire qualified and talented job seekers with disabilities, and we look forward to working together as partners to completely fill up this room where the governor's awards are given with successful clients and satisfied employers next year."

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