



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: The Honorable Members of the Board of Regents
FROM: Ceylane Meyers-Ruff 
SUBJECT: Appointments to the New York State Rehabilitation Council
DATE: November 3, 2022

AUTHORIZATION(S):



SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent)

The New York State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) has seven vacancies. ACCES-VR is seeking the review and approval by the Board of Regents of the proposed seven appointees for membership on the SRC.

Reason(s) for Consideration

The Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the Board of Regents to appoint members to the New York State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the Full Board for action at its November 2022 meeting.

Procedural History

As vacancies occur on the SRC, the Board of Regents approves recommendations to fill such vacancies.

Background Information

Information on the proposed appointees (Attachment A) and a list of current members (Attachment B) are attached.

Related Regent's Items

State Rehabilitation Council Appointments April 2021
<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/321brca1.pdf>

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: Maryann Donnelly Sigona, Devin Fernandez, Talanda Jackson-Franklin, Dawn Kalleberg, Mary Kitzel, Tonya Robinson, and Jeffery Tamburo be appointed to a three-year term beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2025.

Timetable for Implementation

Upon approval by the Board of Regents of the recommended candidates, appointments will be effective January 1, 2023.

Attachment A

New York State Rehabilitation Council

(New appointment for term January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025)

Representative of Current or Former Applicant for, or Recipient of, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Representative of Business, Industry, and/or Labor Organization

Maryann Donnelly Sigona

New York State Office of Mental Health Peer Bridger - New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services

- Provides empathic, person-centered, and recovery-oriented support to 60 adult patients annually, focusing on moving toward community reintegration.
- Builds community connections with an understanding recovery primarily takes place in one's own environment.
- Facilitates weekly, hospital-based peer support groups to reinforce self-care, recovery lifestyle changes, and work/life balance and harm-reduction strategies.
- Promotes the rehabilitation, recovery, rights, and community inclusion of people with psychiatric disabilities.
- Participates in training for new Home Community-Based Services (HCBS) and Community and Recovery-Oriented Empowerment (CORE) Services.

Representative of Current or Former Applicant for, or Recipient of, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Representative of Business, Industry, and/or Labor Organization

Devin Fernandez

Founder/Program Director/Chief Instructor, Third Eye Insight – Fitness for the Blind Inc.

- Created the first of its kind non-profit 501(c) 3 martial arts/physical fitness organization for individuals with visual impairments located in Long Island, New York.
- Develops martial arts/physical fitness and meditation program syllabi for children and adults who are blind or visually impaired.
- Chief instructor of martial arts/physical fitness, meditation, and archery classes.
- Instructor in personal safety, health, and awareness to improve individuals' visually impairments level of lifestyle independence.
- Provides instruction and assistance in martial arts/physical fitness classes for senior citizens at the Jewish Guild - Manhattan, as well as the senior citizen center for the blind in Huntington NY.

Representative of Business, Industry, and/or Labor Organization

Talanda Jackson-Franklin

Vice President of Social Services, ACACIA / Promesa Inc.

- Maintains and grows supportive housing programs.
- Supervises staff to ensure the delivery of high quality and efficient care management services.
- Ensures administrative and financial processes and policies are implemented and adhered to by program staff.
- Maintains working relationships with multiple state agencies and constituencies.
- Identifies gaps and implements new systems and change projects to respond to departmental needs.

Representative of the State Education Agency responsible for the Public Education of Students with Disabilities who are eligible to receive services

Dawn Kalleberg

Associate, Office of Special Education- Policy Unit, New York State Education Department

- Provides oral and written technical assistance on special education requirements.
- Assists in preparation of the annual State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.
- Works collaboratively on the redesign of the Office of Special Education website.
- Researches and synthesizes information on legislation and policies related to students with disabilities.

Representative of Current or Former Applicant for, or Recipient of, Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Mary Kitzel, PhD

Former Director, Visiting Assistant Professor and Adjunct Professor, Rochester Institute of Technology

- Recruited to establish Field School in Deaf Geographies at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT).
- Conducted and disseminated research in Human Geography.
- Completed program and curriculum development, budget development and maintenance, hiring and managing staff, and student recruitment and marketing.
- Researched and wrote grants to obtain program funding.

Representative of Transition Educational Services

Tonya Robinson

Coordinator of Transition Programs, Champlain Valley Educational Services

- Oversees community-based work experience program for high school students.
- Supervises and trains job coaching staff.
- Facilitates staff development related to transition and agency services.
- Cultivates strong partnerships with community organizations and regional and national partners including assisting with referrals to OPWDD, ACCES-VR and OMH.
- Maintains current knowledge of NYSED graduation requirements and the college planning process.

Representative of Transition and Educational Services

Jeffery Tamburo

Training and Content Development Specialist, K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University

- Serves as lead trainer for the NYS Consortium for the Advancement of Supported Employment (NYS CASE), a Cornell initiative and an ACCES-VR funded project that offers training for supported employment providers across New York State.
- Acts as a training specialist for the Northeast ADA Center and provides training on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to individuals and organizations in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Works on the Diversity Partners project, a national initiative with a mission of bridging the gap between disability service providers and employers.

Attachment B

New York State Rehabilitation Council

Current Members (Effective March 1, 2022)

Ellice Switzer, Chair, representing Business, Industry, and Labor
Ithaca, NY

Joseph M. Delgado, Vice Chair, representing Disability Advocacy Group
Holtsville, NY

Naomi Brickel, representing Community Rehabilitation Service Providers
Valhalla, NY

Megan Brown, representing the State Education Agency responsible for the Public Education of Students with Disabilities who are eligible to receive services
Albany, NY

Sebastian Chittilappilly, representing Disability Advocacy Group
Bronx, NY

Alan Gallagher, representing the New York State Department of Labor (DOL) State Workforce Investment Board
Albany, NY

Valarie Gambino-Carelli, representing Business, Industry, and Labor
Kingston, NY

Kathleen Grosvenor, representing Community Rehabilitation Service Providers
Brooklyn, NY

Nancy Grant, representing Community Rehabilitation Service Provider
Canandaigua, NY

Jenny Hutkowski, representing a Parent Training and Information Center
Rochester, NY

Anthony Morano, representing Community Rehabilitation Service Providers
Syracuse, NY

Hillary Nichols, representing Community Rehabilitation Service Providers
Kingston, NY

Evelyn Pugh, representing a Parent Training and Information Center, and Current or Former Applicant for, or Recipient of, Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Brooklyn, NY

Brenda Shannon, representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP)
Albany, NY

Robert Statham, representing Disability Advocacy Groups- A Cross Section of
Individuals
Rochester, NY

Toni Sullivan, representing Community Rehabilitation Service Providers
Getzville, NY

Non-Voting Members, Ex-Officio Members, and State Partners

Ceylane Meyers-Ruff, representing the New York State Education Department - Office
of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES)

Linda Schramm, representing the New York State Education Department - Office of
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES)

Pam Brehm-Bisaillon, representing the New York State Education Department - Office of
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)

Lori Boyd, representing the New York State Education Department - Office of Adult
Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)

Melinda Dolezal, representing the New York State Justice Center for the Protection of
People with Special Needs

Connie Glover, representing the New York State Education Department - Office of Adult
Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)

Peter Herrig, representing the New York State Commission for the Blind (NYCB)

Julia Kelly, representing the New York State Office for People With Developmental
Disabilities (OPWDD)

Andrew Sink, representing the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH)

Jennifer Semonite, representing the New York State Education Department - Office of
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)