Slide 1.

**JOB-DRIVEN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (JD-VRTAC)**

Oregon Commission for the Blind

**Building Business Engagement Efforts**

A journey to increasing partnerships between agency staff, Community Rehabilitation Providers and Employers

Presenters:

**Oregon Commission for the Blind**

**Business Relations Coordinators**

Morgan Rincon, MS CRC

Molly James, MS

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Webinar Objectives

* Explain JD-VRTAC goals, partners, TA, and Learning Collaborative (*TA Lead will present slides 3-6*)
* Describe SVRA background/services
* Explain JD-VRTAC project background
* Discuss JD-VRTAC project purpose & goals
* Describe JD-VRTAC project implementation
* Share JD-VRTAC project accomplishments
* Share challenges & lessons learned from JD-VRTAC project
* Describe current status of JD-VRTAC project
* Discuss what was most helpful from the TA and Learning Collaborative throughout this process
* Share next steps, future direction, & goals

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JD-VRAC Goals

Improve skills of state VR agency staff, other rehab professionals & providers of VR services, who are trained to provide “job-driven” VR services & supports to PWD, employers & customized training providers through:

Business Engagement

Labor Market Information

Customized Training Providers

Employer Supports

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JD-VRTAC Partners

Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), Univ. of Massachusetts/Boston

***In Partnership with:***

* Jobs for the Future (JFF)
* Univ. of Arkansas/CURRENTS
* Univ. of Washington
* Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)
* United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN)
* Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

***In Collaboration with:***

* National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB)
* Technical Assistance Center Collaborative

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JD-VRTAC Learning Collaborative

* As part of receiving intensive TA, states attended 2-3 in-person Learning Collaborative meetings to provide project updates, collaborate across agencies, and participate in topical discussions
* Learning Collaborative states participate in conference calls with their cohort to discuss job-driven topics
* 18 state VR agencies are part of the JD-VRTAC Learning Collaborative

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OCB- Who We Are and What We Do

The mission of the Oregon Commission for the Blind is to Empower Oregonians who are Blind to Fully Engage in Life

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OCB Core Programs

Youth Transition Services - We work with students 14+ who are legally blind to help ensure a successful transition from high school to college or the workforce

Vocational Rehabilitation - Experienced VR counselors and skilled instructors help clients who are legally blind hone the skills necessary to live independently and obtain or retain employment

Business Enterprise - The BE Program provides quality vending and café business opportunities to Oregonians who are legally blind

Independent Living Programs - provides training and resources to assist Oregonians who experience vision loss to live as independently as possible in their homes and communities

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Portland Orientation & Career Center

* In-depth, residential training program for eligible clients from all over the state. Participants who do not live in the Portland area live in nearby housing (provided by OCB).
* Majority of participants have experienced vision loss in adulthood and must learn new methods of performing everyday activities (cooking, cleaning, laundry, computer skills, orientation and mobility, etc.)

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VR Overview

VRCs – 10.5

Business Relation Coordinators – 2

Business AT Specialists – 5

Workforce Innovation Manager - 1

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OCB Regional Field Office Locations

Portland – Main Office

Redmond

Salem

Eugene

Medford

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JD-VRTAC Project Background

2015- OCB Implements a Progressive Employment Model focused on engaging employers throughout exploration and job development

OCB must increase staff and partners to provide education and training to businesses and create consistent messaging throughout the state

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JD-VRTAC Project Background (continued)

Perfect Timing!

OCB is presented with an opportunity to apply for the JDVRTAC Business Engagement!

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JD-VRTAC Project Purpose & Goals

* Implementation of business engagement database
* Building state-wide consistency in business engagement efforts
* Building business engagement capacity

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JD-VRTAC Project Implementation

1. Work with TA team to create Business Engagement Tracking Sheet (borrowed from Kevin Red, University of Arkansas)
2. Conduct monthly calls with NJ CBVI to share and compare developments
3. Develop and provide training to VRC staff & CRP job developers
4. Update Business Relations marketing materials (new brochures, videos with ICI, monthly email newsletters)

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JD-VRTAC Project Implementation (continued)

1. Increase CRP capacity, recruit and train job developers who also work with OVR (general agency)
2. Increase OCB staff
3. Build a business engagement workforce team
4. Work with OVR & WA state VR Business Coordinators (Interstate Disability Employment Alliance/Region 10 NET monthly calls)

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JD-VRTAC Project Accomplishments

1. Business Engagement Brochure on [OCB website](https://www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Documents/Business%20Engagement%20Brochure.pdf)
2. [YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-AQIc96mUpFtpoiL_9rFww?view_as=subscriber) with OCB marketing videos
3. Explore monthly Business Engagement Newsletter

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JD-VRTAC Project Accomplishments (continued)

1. Built OCB Workforce Team
2. Database Draft
3. Worksource Partnerships and colocation

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Success Stories [OCB/ICI Marketing Video](https://www.explorevr.org/toolkits/business-engagement/models-functions#ocbmkt)

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Challenges and Lessons Learned

* Tracking all new & existing CRPs
* Getting training to CRPs & Staff consistency
* Establishing/ implementing data-base

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JD-VRTAC Project Today

1. Capacity = CRP numbers increased x3
2. Business Tracking System = still in development
3. State-Wide Consistency= still in development (CRP Training onboarding & welcome process, tracking system and monthly training topics & VRC regional business trainings)

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What was most helpful about receiving TA?

Getting support to:

* Identify our needs
* Create a plan
* Develop strategies
* Identify resources
* Create appropriate timelines and deadlines
* Review objectives
* Collaborate and learn

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Next Steps, Future Direction & Goals

* Continue to merge Business Engagement with WIOA
* Define Business Engagement & measures
* Focus on regional business efforts
* Keep driving the message & goals
* We’ve come a long way and we know there is still much more work to be done.  
  We know it is a marathon, not a sprint and we are committed to the journey!

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Questions?

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JD-VRTAC (State VR) Contact Info

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