

Synopsis of Outcome Measurement Report 2011

Over the past year, NTI has served 118 individuals in Organizational and Community Employment, up from 107 last year. Ages served span from 18 to 91, and the most frequently noted barriers to employment were intellectual impairment 34% (44% in 2010) and mental illness 32% (25% in 2010). See **figure 1** Employment Barrier Distribution and **figure 2** Age Distribution. A description of services is also attached.

Persons served met 84% of training objectives set. Those served in Organizational Employment Production and Recycling combined, earned an average of \$5.66 per hour. The average wage of those employed in our janitorial service was \$13.57. Individuals receiving Community Employment Services worked an average of 15 hours per week at an average wage of \$7.75 per hour. Altogether, persons served earned over \$553,000 this year. If we compare training and coaching costs with earnings of persons served, we find that the training cost is \$1.21 per dollar earned by persons served. "Training and coaching costs" do not include expenses attributable to other business operations.

There has been a significant decrease in the amount of work available for persons served in our Production area. Having caught up with a particularly large volume of confidential shredding brought to us by one customer over an extended period, we now keep up with current demand using significantly fewer hours. Increasing reliance on e-mail virtually eliminates need for bulk mailing and local employers have required only minimal assistance with production and packaging. Sorting batteries dropped off at Recycling has provided some work requiring attention to detail, matching, sorting skills and following instructions. Suggestions for revitalizing services provided at our main location include product development, revisiting prevocational services and expanding to new clientele to meet community employers training needs such as hospitality industry support.

Fifteen competitive job placements matured to four months over the course of the year. Fourteen of them were still working at that time. Forty-five employers are participating or open to accepting new persons served by NTI including 5 new employers added this year.

Our newest Community Employment Specialist brought with her past grant experience and personal relationships with our local school system. A job skills series, focusing on responsibility and social appropriateness in interviews and employment settings previously under development has found new life. It is being provided by Community Employment in the alternative high school building.

A conscious effort is being made to increase our involvement with the Intermediate School District, through provision of current services and cooperative development of new ones. Not only would this assist students in their transition to community employment, it may also help in identifying individuals who may wish to work for NTI or require long-term services.

Three Rehabilitation Assessments were provided to ISD students. Following completion of these evaluations, school representatives and parents indicated satisfaction, and all three individuals have returned for additional services.

The Job Education and Training (JET) program offered under contract with the Workforce Development Board, surpassed state averages in percent of participants achieving full-time employment, and placement still employed after 90 days, and did so at an average cost per employment of \$1,313 – less than one half of the state average. Of those attending at least one JET activity, 221 achieved full-time employment.

Financial stability is required if an organization is to achieve its mission. With regard to the financial health of the organization, our “current ratio” – assets divided by liabilities is 10. Three is generally accepted as indicating a strong financial condition, with 10 being quite significantly better.

Accessibility assessment identified only one physical access barrier, an automatic door which had been inadvertently turned off by a janitorial trainee. Opener was turned back on and instruction was provided to prevent recurrence. Barriers to receiving services included rather severe behavioral disturbance for one individual, solved through worksite and staffing adjustments to accommodate issues and ensure safety. Lack of availability of transportation was problematic for at least one individual, eventually solved through a cooperative effort. Difficulty obtaining required entry documentation delayed Rehabilitation Assessment in some cases. The procedure through which local schools refer students for Rehabilitation Assessment has been simplified and fully explained to all involved. Community accessibility improvement included Corps of Engineers lowering one portion of the information desk at the Visitor’s Center, partly due to our involvement .

No one referred or applying for services was turned down this year. Fifteen individuals inquired regarding services through Social Security’s Ticket-to-Work program. Twelve lost interest when it was explained that the purpose of the program was to help them become financially independent, and replace – not supplement – their Social Security cash benefits with wages earned. Two of the above mentioned inquirers are now working for us, and one decided after some discussion that Michigan Rehabilitation Services could more readily provide education and certification services he required.

Funding agency representatives indicated strong satisfaction with services and NTI personnel. "NTI has been, and remains, a valuable partner to us." "I have high hopes for our joint employment outcomes for our customers during the upcoming year."

Over the year, 92 satisfaction surveys were returned. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of surveys returned indicated satisfaction with **all** objectives they indicated as important to them or to the individual they represent. Nearly all of those participating in Organizational Employment – working for NTI – identified pride in work as important. Just over half of these individuals indicated an interest in getting a community job. Persons in Community Employment Services identified feeling more confident as important, whereas learning job seeking skills and getting a job where important to fewer, probably because they had jobs they were happy with and were receiving services to keep them.

Karl Monroe, Rehabilitation Director
E-mail: karlmonroe@sault.com
Website: www.northerntransitions.org

Date