



The Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Since 1991, VR has more than tripled the number of people with disabilities who achieve stable employment, from 442 in 1991 to 1821 in 2013. Vermont VR has achieved the highest per capita employment outcomes of any vocational rehabilitation program in the country.

VR is an Investment that Works.

Ellie was a single mom who had been on Reach Up for 134 months – that’s more than 11 years. She struggled with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders. Many Reach Up case managers had tried to get her engaged and keep her engaged over the years, with little success.

When Ellie was referred to VR, she did not have stable housing, wasn’t in any type of treatment and rarely came to appointments. Ellie’s VR counselor met her where she was, and took supportive baby steps with her. Once Ellie got into stable housing (will help from her VR counselor), she agreed to treatment, again with full support from VR. From there, she began to explore careers with her VR counselor, who was with her every step of the way, encouraging her, nudging her and teaching her the mantra, “I just need to keep going from here.”

Initially VR helped Ellie get into CDL – B training and supported her to the finish line. After that, Ellie expressed a desire to obtain her CDL-A with all the endorsements so she would have more options around work. She completed this as well – two completions in less than six months after a lifetime of not following through and not completing anything.

Ellie has been working at a job driving shuttle buses. This is the first paid job in her adult life. Ellie says this job was just her starting point, and she is planning to get a job that is year-round and pays benefits. For the first time, she has her own money and a sense of real self-sufficiency.

