Vocational Rehabilitation In Montana

Robert Conn

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.carroll.edu/sociology_theses

Part of the Sociology Commons

Recommended Citation
Conn, Robert, "Vocational Rehabilitation In Montana" (1939). Sociology and Anthropology Undergraduate Theses. 54.
https://scholars.carroll.edu/sociology_theses/54

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology and Anthropology at Carroll Scholars. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology and Anthropology Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of Carroll Scholars. For more information, please contact tkratz@carroll.edu.
Vocational Rehabilitation

In Montana

Robert James Conn

A Thesis In Social Science Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment For The
Requirement For The Degree
Bachelor of Arts

Carroll College
Helena, Montana
April 1, 1939
Vocational Rehabilitation
In Montana

I
Federal Program

Vocational Rehabilitation is a program of restoration of physically disabled persons to remunerative employment. This service comprises all those activities which are necessary to the preparation of handicapped persons for suitable occupations and of their placement therein.

It is the purpose of this presentation to show first, the responsibilities of the Federal Government, secondly, the State Act and its relation to the Federal Act and thirdly, how the Federal and State Acts are functioning under the direction and supervision of the Bureau of Civilian Rehabilitation within the State of Montana.

Previous to the present Rehabilitation Act it should be noted that the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 provided for "Federal grants with the cooperation of the States, in education in agriculture, trades, industries, commerce and Home Economics. The administrative agency being the Federal Board for Vocational Education." 1 Also it should be noted that vocational rehabilitation should not be confused with the training of ex-service men by the United

States Veterans' Bureau. This is the closest exemplification of the present vocational act. With the Assembly of Congress in 1920 such factors as the agitation on the part of charity organizations, the rise of modern orthopedic surgery, care of crippled children, and finally the increase in the number of persons disabled in one way or another served as important factors in the passage of this piece of legislation by both departments of Congress and in securing the approval of the President of the United States on June 2, 1920. The Federal Rehabilitation Program of 1920 has been amended four times since its enactment for the purpose of extending its provisions, the last and most important amendment being Title V, Part IV of the Social Security Act, which made permanent the organic act, was approved August 14, 1935, states, "In order to enable the United States to cooperate with the States and Hawaii in extending and strengthening their program of vocational rehabilitation of physically handicapped and to continue to carry out the provisions and purposes of the Act entitled, An Act to provide for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and their return to civil employment, approved June 2, 1920, there is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1936 and June 30, 1937

2. Bureau of Civilian Rehabilitation.
the sum of $841,000 for each such fiscal year in addition to the amount of the existing authorization, and for each fiscal year thereafter the sum of $1,938,000. 3. By this provision in the Social Security Act, the basis act of 1920 was made permanent and expanded without any change. Appropriations are increased $1,938,000 annually.

The need for such a program is increasing daily. Each year 400,000 persons in the United States become permanently disabled through accident or disease. Public accidents lead all others with automobile injuries increasing at the rate of forty per-cent every four years. In the home 130,000 are injured annually in addition to 50,000 persons being disabled through disease and congenital causes. 4. Serious results follow in the event of accident or disease. Workers lose time and wages and in many cases their employability. Their children are oftentimes taken from school and forced into employment for support of the family. The disabled persons often become dependent upon relatives, friends or the public. Consequently the Federal and State Governments have enacted legislation to provide for the payment of compensation benefits to those persons who suffer work accidents. They maintain hospitals and clinics which provide relief for the unemployed and finally they maintain a service of vocational rehabilitation to reduce

3. Social Security Act: Part IV, Title V.
as far as possible the economic effect of diseases and accidents.

Vocational rehabilitation is the process through which physically disabled men and women are taught a trade or profession consistent with their disabilities. The origin of the disability does not matter. It may be the result of accident or disease or it may be congenital. If it is of a permanent nature and constitutes a vocational handicap, the person if of employable age is entitled to training. It is designed to restore to remunerative employment and self support to persons who have lost their earning power through permanent disability. It is accomplished by providing for individuals one or more of the following services, namely, (a) vocational guidance in the selection of a suitable type of employment, (b) physical restoration, that is surgical or medical treatment, when the disability can be reduced or removed, or provision of an artificial appliance to restore the impaired function and (c) vocational training in the occupation for which the person has been found adapted.

Under the Federal Rehabilitation Act it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to promote the rehabilitation program, give financial aid to the states, audit the expenditure of the Federal and State matching funds and to carry on such research and investigational work as will promote the work generally. This is stated
very clearly in the following excerpt, "That in order to provide for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or in any legitimate occupation and their return to civil employment there is hereby appropriated for the use of the States subject to the provisions of this act, for the purpose of cooperating with them in the maintenance of vocationally rehabilitated persons to civil employment for the fiscal year ending June 21, 1921. . . . The Federal agency for this work is the United States Office of Education in the Department of the Interior.

All moneys expended under the provisions of the Federal Rehabilitation Act from appropriations in Section I of the Act, in addition to the $1,938,000 as authorized annually by the Social Security Act shall be upon the conditions as set forth by Section I of the basic Act which states, "(l) that for each dollar of the Federal money expended by the States under the supervision and control of the State Board at least an equal amount for the same purpose: (this section of the act provides for what is called the matching fund) Provided: that no portion of the appropriation made by this act shall be used by any institution for handicapped persons except for the special training of such individuals entitled to the benefits of

5. Social Security Act: Title V. Part IV
this Act as shall be determined by the Federal Board;
(2) that the State Board shall submit annually to the Fed-
eral Board for approval, plans showing: (a) the kinds of
vocational rehabilitation and schemes of placement for
which the proposed appropriation shall be used; (b) the
plan of administration and supervision; (c) the courses
of study; (d) methods of instruction; (e) qualification
of teachers, supervisors, directors, and other necessary
administrative officers or employees; (f) plans for the
training of teachers, supervisors and directors; (3) that
the State Board shall make an annual report to the Federal
Board on or before September the first of each year on the
work done in the State and on the receipts and expenditures
of money under the provisions of this Act; (4) that no
portion of any moneys appropriated by this act for the bene-
fit of the States shall be applied directly or indirectly to
the purchase, preservation, erection or repair of any build-
ing or buildings or equipment or the purchase or rental of
any lands; (5) that all courses for vocational rehabilita-
tion given under the supervision and control of the state
boards and all courses for vocational rehabilitation main-
tained shall be available to any civil employee of the
United States disabled while in the performance of his duty.
If any of the foregoing provisions are not carried out by

the state and which are required of the states, the Sec-
retary of the Treasury has the power to, as provided by
Section IV, Part IV of the basic act, deduct from the next
succeeding allotment to any State whenever any portion of
the fund annually allotted has not been expended for the
purposes provided for in the Act a sum equal to such un-
expended portion.

Under the policies of the United States Office of
Education as based upon the provision of the Federal Act,
Federal and State matching funds may be expended for the
following purposes: "(a) salaries of staff and clerical
assistants; (b) travel of staff members; (c) cost of
administration, communication, printing and supplies;
(d) rent, light and heat of buildings used for the purposes
of carrying on the work connected with this act; (e) tu-
ition, instructional supplies and equipment for trainees;
(f) traveling expenses of trainees; (g) artificial ap-
pliances where they are needed and physical examinations
to those individuals applying for services rendered by the
department of vocational rehabilitation. "

Besides the powers and duties of the Federal agency
(which are enumerated in graph form at the end of this
presentation) for carrying on the ever increasing work
of rehabilitation of persons injured in industry or other-

7. Social Security Act. Title V: Part IV.
wise it is important to note that with every other agency, whether welfare or assistance, that there is a very close relation between the Vocational Rehabilitation Board and these other Boards such as Child Health Service, Crippled Children, Child Welfare Service, Old Age Benefits, Unemployment Compensation and Public Health Service. Cooperation between the Vocational Rehabilitation department of the Federal And State governments is urged by both.

The relationship between the different assistance programs is to help and promote the welfare of those individuals who are unable to so do themselves. With the rapid development of the industrial world, science and medicine there is greater opportunity for the State and Federal governments to come to the aid of those individuals who because of their present condition both physically and economically cannot assist themselves, and when the state steps in and helps, it is fulfilling the function of a true government, that of the promotion of the common welfare.

Public Vocational Rehabilitation programs are in operation in all but three states, in the District of Columbia and in the territories of Hawaii and Puerto Rico. They are supported by Federal, State and sometimes local funds. These departments derive their authority from State Acts and the Federal Act which in addition to providing for

vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons. This act provides for cooperation by the Federal Government through financial assistance, promotional service and research activities, the states being charged with the responsibility of the rehabilitation of persons within their own jurisdiction.

II
State Program

Montana was one of the first State to enact a plan for a State Rehabilitation Program in compliance with the provisions of the Federal Act of 1920 by passing through its legislative chamber in the spring of 1921 the present State Act. The most important amendment since its enactment being the "Maintenance Amendment" which was enacted in 1925.

The Montana Vocational Rehabilitation Act is much broader in scope than the Federal Act. As defined by the Act persons disabled in industry or otherwise shall mean, "any person, who by reason of a physical defect or infirmity, whether congenital or acquired by accident, disease or injury, is or may be expected to be totally in-

9. Revised Codes of Montana. Section 3044.
10. Ibid: Section 3051
capacitated for remunerative occupation and who may reasonably be expected to be fit to engage in a remunerative occupation after completing a vocational rehabilitation course. To be eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation from the state board, such persons must have been domiciled within the state for one year or more, or reside in the state at the time of sustaining the disability. No portion of any appropriations made for the purposes of this act shall be used by any institution for handicapped persons except for the special training of such individuals entitled to the benefits of this act as shall be determined by the State Board.

In order that Montana restore those physically disabled individuals to remunerative employment an authorization of $37,500 is allotted to Montana from the State and Federal Governments. $12,500 is allotted to the State from the Federal government. These Federal allotments are determined on the basis of population of the entire country. Montana being a minimum state in population is authorized by the Federal Act to receive $10,000, however if any of the several states do not use all of their authorized allotments then it is apportioned to those states that can use such if they are able to match this additional amount. This is in effect how Montana receives

11. Revised Codes of Montana. Section 3048.
from the Federal Government $12,500. In compliance with
the Federal Act Montana matches the Federal appropriation
and in addition at the present time, the legislature has
appropriated an $12,500 for the purposes of carrying on
the State Act, to be taken from the General Fund of the
State. This money, appropriated for the purposes of
rehabilitation shall be on the condition: "that for each
dollar of Federal money expended there shall be expended
in the State under the supervision and control of the State
Boards at least an equal amount for the same purpose;
provided that no portion of the appropriation made by this
act shall be used by any institution for handicapped per-
sons except for the special training of such individuals
entitled to the benefits of this act as shall be determined
by the Federal Board..... Unless it were not for the
cooperation of outside forces such as social clubs, the
State Relief Administration, counties and relatives scores
of persons would have to forego the benefits of training
offered by the government, because at present there are
many that cannot be trained because of inadequate funds.

A disabled person receiving vocational training under
the direction of the State Rehabilitation Bureau may, in
addition to the benefits described in Sections 3044 to
3051 of the Revised Codes of Montana of 1935, be granted

a monthly maintenance allowance while they are in training. This allowance will be for the purpose of assisting the person receiving such training to meet his actual living expenses and shall never in the case of a single person with dependents exceed forty dollars per month, nor in the case of a married person or a single person with one or more dependents exceed sixty dollars per month; nor in any case shall the total payment for maintenance purposes exceed the sum of the maximum monthly allowance for a period of twelve months. Besides maintenance allowance, allowance is made for tuition, books and additional fees where the case warrants such, such as laboratory fees or any other fee that is necessary to the line of work that the beneficiary is following. In practice the average maintenance allowance to a single person in training is fifteen dollars and to a married person twenty-five dollars per month. If any more is needed the county is called upon to help and when it does it usually draws from the Poor fund of the county. Friends and relative are urged to assist and if the case is such that they can pay for maintenance of the trainee, then he is required to so do by the Act. Payments will be made for maintenance by warrants issued by the State Auditor upon receipt of the

13. Revised Codes of Montana. Section 3051.1
14. Ibid.
State Agent for Civilian Rehabilitation. Maintenance will not be paid where: (a) the person receiving such training is drawing sufficient compensation from the State Industrial Accident Board or from any other state, county, municipal or Federal board or commission to cover his living expenses; (b) the person receiving such training is a minor and has parents who are able to support him while in training; (c) the person receiving such training has relatives, friends or a former employer able and willing to maintain him; (d) the person receiving such training is financially able to support himself or has or can obtain part time employment, without injury to his health or training, which will enable him to get along without outside assistance; (e) the person receiving such training is taking a college course in one of the state institutions of higher learning; (f) the person receiving such training is taking a correspondence course only; (g) the person receiving such training and his parents or guardian (in the event such a person is minor) have not filed with his application an affidavit showing what property he or his parents own, and also showing that his relatives, friends or former employer are unwilling to maintain him.

In order that a state secure the Federal grant the state must through its legislative authority: (a) accept the provisions of the National Vocational Rehabilitation
Act; (b) Empower and direct its state board for vocational education to conduct the vocational rehabilitation service; (c) provide a plan of cooperation between the state board and the state compensation commission or agency, the plan to become effective when approved by the Governor of the state; (d) provide for supervision and support of the vocational rehabilitation service; (e) appoint as custodian for said appropriations the State Treasure who shall and provide for the proper custody and disbursement of all money paid to the State from said appropriations.

The State board has numerous powers and duties which are enumerated in chart form at the end of this presentation. In general it is the duty of the State board to cooperate with the federal agency, and to formulate a plan of cooperation with the State Industrial Accident Board. With all other assistance agencies of the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation is cooperating in order that each individual worth of rehabilitating be taken care of as soon conditions permit.

15. Public 236: 66th Cong. Section III.
In order to determine what treatment is required for the vocational rehabilitation of a particular individual, a through diagnosis must be made of his physical, mental, social and economic condition as well as the training and employment opportunities in his community. This is the function of the Bureau of Civilian Rehabilitation. The State Rehabilitation Department of Montana does not maintain schools, workshops, institutions and other facilities. All necessary services are secured through purchase or cooperative arrangement with existing public and private schools, commercial and industrial establishments and any other agencies which may be and are willing to assist.

In the rehabilitation program disabled persons may be prepared for a great variety of occupations ranging from unskilled to technical and professional employment. In Montana today bureau beneficiaries are studying a great many trades and professions. As one can see from the following list practically every trade and profession have representatives receiving aid from this department of the Federal and State governments. Training in the following occupations and trades is given in public and private schools, colleges and in commercial and private industrial
establishments as well as by tutor and correspondence courses. Only when suitable training facilities are not available in Montana are bureau beneficiaries sent out of the state for training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journalism</th>
<th>Sign Painting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping</td>
<td>Show Repairing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Accountancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamstress</td>
<td>Lens Grinding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>Aviation Mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Electrics</td>
<td>Auto Body Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>Welding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbering</td>
<td>Geology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry and Stone Cutting</td>
<td>Baking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busheling</td>
<td>Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>Stenography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Tailoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Mechanics</td>
<td>Lip Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch Repairing</td>
<td>Beauty Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>Cleaning and Pressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>Creamery Work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Floriculture     | Mechanical Dentistry   | 1.

Obviously there are some people who because of their disabilities cannot be successfully trained for any line of work or profession. Applicants must of necessity be of employable age and susceptible to training in order to come within the scope of vocational training. There has been no arbitrary age limit established but up to date no individual under the age of seventeen has been trained by this department. At the opposite end of the age line are the aged person at the age of fifty or over who have very little chance of acquiring a new trade at which an adequate living can be made. In most cases rehabilitants are between

1. Montana Rehabilitation Review. P.3
the ages of eighteen and thirt-five. Slight or temporary
disabilities which in time and with treatment can be cured
do not entitle a person to rehabilitation aid. A disability
which handicaps a laborer for his present work or occupa-
tion may not be a handicap to some other profession. Es-
tablishment of a permanent disability, finding of a suitable
occupation, surgical treatment, vocational training and
assistance in finding a position after the training period
has been completed is the task of the Bureau of Civilian
Rehabilitation. Aside from the existence of a permanent
disability there is practically no limit to the kind of
physical injuries for which training may be granted. At
present from the one hundred and thirty-two men and women,
boys and girls in training or who have been trained by this
department in the past have suffered or are suffering with
disabilities which may be classified as follows:

| Amputation of Both Legs | Deaf or Deaf and Mute |
| " " of One Leg | Tuberculosis |
| " " of one Arm | Curvature of the Spine |
| Foot or leg Injuries | Chest Injuries |
| Arm and Hand Injuries | Paralysis of arms and legs |
| Back Injuries | Heart Ailments |
| Hip Injury or Lameness | Unclassified |

If one thinks that he is eligible to be assisted by
this department he should call upon the County Commissioners
of his county and receive application blanks. At present
Montana has only a small staff of case workers and a very
large state to cover and in order to make it easier for

for these workers to contact and place individuals wishing and eligible for rehabilitation the cooperation of both the county agencies and the individual is needed. Because of a limited appropriation each year and in view of the fact that there are several hundred applications received by this department it is necessary that some will have to wait. It is the purpose of this bureau to carry out the provisions of the State Vocational Rehabilitation Act, to spend the moneys appropriated by the State and Federal governments in such a manner that the greatest number of people will receive the benefits which are given by this department. Vocational Rehabilitation is not a charity institution; to help a disabled person and restore him to economic usefulness is as valuable to the state as it is to the person assisted. Vocational Rehabilitation is educational and constructive and is definitely a part of a State Educational System.
Duties of Federal and State Boards

Vocational Rehabilitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L. To cooperate with State boards in carrying out purposes and provisions of Federal Act.</td>
<td>1. Is authorized and directed to cooperate with the Federal Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To establish such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry into effect provisions of Federal Act.</td>
<td>2. To administer any legislation pursuant to Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1920, enacted by the State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To provide for the Vocational Rehabilitation of disabled persons.</td>
<td>3. To direct the disbursement and administer the use of all funds provided by the Federal and State governments of persons disabled in industry or otherwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To provide for the return of disabled persons to civil employment.</td>
<td>4. To appoint such assistants as may be necessary to administer this act and said act of congress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To cooperate with other agencies for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act.</td>
<td>5. To fix compensation of assistants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To examine plans submitted by state boards and approve the same if found to be feasible and in conformity with Federal Act.</td>
<td>6. To make studies and investigations relating to vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and formulate plans for their rehabilitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To ascertain annually whether the States are using or are prepared to use moneys received in accordance with provisions of Act.</td>
<td>7. To make surveys of state with the cooperation of State Industrial Accident Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To certify on or before January first of</td>
<td>8. To ascertain the names and conditions of persons disabled in industry or otherwise within the State.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Federal

each year to Secretary of Treasury the name of each State which has accepted the provisions of the Act and complied with the provisions therein.

9. To ascertain the amount each state is to receive under the provisions of the Act.

10. To deduct from the next succeeding allotment to any state whenever any portion of the fund annually allotted has not been expended for the purpose provided for in the act a sum equal to such unexpended sum for the purposes and conditions of the Act.

11. Require the replacement by withholding allotments of any portion of the moneys received by the custodian of any state under the Act that by any action or contingency is diminished or lost: Provided that if any allotment is withheld from any State, the State Board of such State, may appeal to the Congress of the United States, and if the Congress shall not within one year from the time of said appeal direct such sum to be paid, it shall be covered into the Treasury of the United States.

State

9. To see that all such persons be properly visited by representatives with the view of determining whether or not vocational rehabilitation is feasible.

10. To acquaint all such persons susceptible of vocational rehabilitation with the rehabilitation facilities offered by the state and consult such persons regarding the selection of a suitable vocation.

11. To register all such persons electing to take advantage of the benefits of rehabilitation offered and to prescribe and provide such training as may be necessary to their rehabilitation.

12. To maintain a record of all such persons, together with the measures taken for their rehabilitation.

13. To utilize in rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise such existing educational facilities of the state as may be advisable and practicable, including public and private educational institutions and the services of persons especially qualified for the instruction of physically handicapped persons.

14. To promote and aid in the establishment of schools.
and classes for the vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise.

15. To supervise the training of such persons and confer with relatives and other persons interested in the individual.

16. To provide for the placement in suitable gainful occupations of persons completing courses of training provided by the board, including supervision, for a reasonable time after placement.

17. To utilize the facilities of such state agencies, public and private, as may be practicable in securing employment for such persons and any such public agency is authorized and directed to cooperate with the state board for the purposes above stated.

18. To make such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the administration of this act and said act of Congress within the state and report annually to the governor the conditions within the state, and such report to designate the educational institutions, establishments, plants, factories, etc., in which training is being given, to contain a detailed statement of the expenditures of the state and federal funds in the rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise.

19. To receive gifts and donations from either public or private sources as may be offered unconditionally.

20. To make a full report of all gifts and donations to the Governor.

21. To cooperate with said act of Congress.
Bibliography

I. Legislation:

   Chapter 137; 1937 Session Laws.

   Chapter 82; 1937 Session Laws.

   Public - No. 271 - 74th Congress. 
   (H.R. 7260)

4. Vocational Rehabilitation Act. 
   Public - No. 236 - 66th Congress. 
   (H.R. 4438)


II. Periodicals

   Numbers 12 and 13 respectively. Bureau of Civilian Rehabilitation. State Capitol, Helena, Montana

2. Restoring the Handicapped to Useful Employment. 
   Social Security Board.

III. Encyclopedias

   Alvin Johnson--Associate Editor. 
   Macmillian Co., New York; Copyright 1934.

2. Social Work--Year Book; Russell H. Kurtz, Editor. 
   4th issue; Copyright 1937 by Russell Sage Foundation. 
   Wm. F. Bell Co. Printers; Phil. Pa.

IV. Interviews:

3. Supervisor of Civilian Rehabilitation. 
   State Capitol: Helena, Montana.