

# Working Progress

## News from NVSU and NVS

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### Volunteer Direct-Hire Success Story—Bryant

My voice is the first voice you'll probably hear if you call the **Neurology Vocational Services Unit**. I'm the "front desk" person. My name is Bryant. **Neurological Vocational Services Board** members know my name by the e-mails I send out for Dr Bob. I thought you might be interested to know why I enjoy working at NVS and have for the last 7 years.

Recently our **CARF** consultant (CARF has to do with our national accreditation) did a mock interview with me and asked me to tell something about myself and my work at NVSU. In the course of the interview I got to thinking:

I have never been a client of NVSU, but I might as well have been. At age 64 I was sent over to NVSU as a "volunteer." It was a period of my life when I had recently experienced the after-effects of neurological damage caused by treatments years earlier for a lifelong emotional illness. I had experienced false arrest, jail time, mass confusion, homelessness, and bouncing around from any number of minimum wage jobs which I couldn't keep. Then I was a client of DVR (the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation) for years and there was the long slow climb back up.

A number of decades earlier I had attended several of the country's most prestigious colleges, emerged with a five year professional degree in what was called in the fifties one of the "noble professions," became licensed and found some career distinction.

**But**, as I said to Dr Fraser a couple of years ago, "When I arrived at NVSU in 1999 I could barely tie my shoelaces."

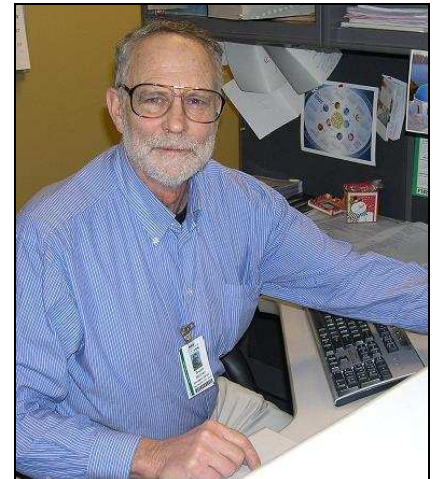
NVSU, particularly Dr Fraser, has lifted me up – it has been rehabilitation in the best sense. I am extremely grateful.

But it's been rewarding in other ways. As the so-called "front desk person" I have quite a lot of interaction with the clients starting when they first call up on the telephone or come through the door. Because of my life experiences I can relate to almost everything they are going through: whether it be neurological damage, traumatic brain injury (TBI), homelessness, confusion, jail-time, emotional illness, being broke, needing to completely retrain after perhaps a promising earlier career -- and finally, the sometimes desperate struggle to find a meaningful job, in one's 40's, 50's, 60's or even beyond (I happen to be 71).

It is gratifying and inspiring to see our clients surmounting so many obstacles and getting back to work.

I am also truly grateful for the energy and dedication of the Neurological Vocational Services Board, with whom I deal continuously via phone calls and e-mails, but also those individual members I've actually gotten to know, members such as Carol and Brenda and Cheryl and Carl and past members such as Robin and Jon Digel and Oma McLaughlin. As they say, "You know who you are."

Thank you very much for being here.



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Former NVSU volunteer's story and photograph used with written permission.  
Photographer: Rubén Rivera-Jackman. Text copyright Bryant.

## CARF ACCREDITATION – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What is CARF (the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities)? Why do programs like Neurology Vocational Services Unit (NVSU) seek accreditation from CARF? Why is CARF accreditation such an important indicator of quality?

You may have heard that CARF is the premier accrediting body for rehabilitation programs—the gold standard. Although some states mandate CARF accreditation for specific programs, it is not widespread. Accreditation requires that organizations meet a stringent set of standards developed by peers in the field of rehabilitation. Preparing for surveys requires time, money and concerted effort on the part of the leadership and staff of the program. Since accreditation is voluntary, a considerable commitment is required by the organization.

One of the first questions you may ask is why become accredited by CARF when your program is already regulated by other outside agencies. The answer is that CARF surveys are not just inspections, but reviews by consultative surveyors who share their knowledge with your program. CARF's consultative approach allows organizations to improve the quality of their services and benefit from the professional expertise of the surveyors.

CARF was founded in 1966 as a private, not for profit organization. Their mission, vision and core values specify that all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, have access to needed services that achieve optimal outcomes and should be empowered to exercise informed choice. The person served is central to CARF's mission.

CARF standards are developed and revised through a series of leadership panels, national advisory committees, focus groups and field reviews. The standards also include input from a variety of stakeholders, including the persons served.

The survey process applies standards that focus on sound business practices that advocate for and support the person served. Standards address health and safety, accessibility, program outcomes, human resources, leadership, input from stakeholders, patient rights, legal requirements and financial planning and management.

### ***“Exemplary” Job Club at NVSU***

*“The development and ongoing activities of the Job Club that meets twice each week are outstanding. The club is excellent as a resource and for providing understandable employment service information to persons served.”*

### ***Unique***

*“NVSU provides outstanding services in a unique and valuable environment within Harborview Medical Center. The services are reported as being one of only two of their type in the entire United States, and the other program was mentored by NVSU. The vital relationship between Harborview Medical Center and NVSU and their tremendous respect for each other are truly impressive. NVSU staff have built a much-needed service in a very unique environment through years of dedicated professional work. This work has resulted in many success stories by the persons served, businesses, and the medical and vocational communities. Furthermore, **the work of NVSU and in particular its skilled and dedicated leader** has resulted in several publications that are benchmarks in the field of neurological rehabilitation.*

Each program must also meet standards in their specific area of focus. Neurology Vocational Services Unit (NVSU) was surveyed under the Employment and Community Services area of focus. Standards in this section address the scope of services, the program, the interdisciplinary team and client rights. Additional standards focus on the records of clients, their rights and the team serving them. The standards assure that the client is the focus of treatment, that they have input into the services provided and can be assured of quality services and measurable outcomes.



Join Us!

May 19, 2007

## Save the Evening!

May 19, 2007

# NVS

### Gala Auction & Dinner

### Saturday, May 19, 2007

Fred Hutchinson

### Neurological Vocational Services

Helping people with neurological conditions gain independence, one person, one job, at a time.

**LWM**

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**LEONARD W. MOEN & ASSOCIATES**

**Thank You!**  
**again for your generous donations and support:**

**Kathryn Majnarich**  
**Jan Pelroy**  
**Peter & Beverly Vander Lugt**

**NVS Board / NVSU Staff**

If you find yourself dealing with an **ACCIDENT with related medical problems** or a **DIVORCE**, our staff of 3 attorneys has over 50 years of combined experience in handling these legal matters for you.

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Founder: Leonard W. Moen (1941-1988)

## **BAC (Business Advisory Council ) - LIFT OFF 2007**

During 2006 the Board of Directors of Neurological Vocational Services (NVS) authorized the creation of a Business Advisory Council (BAC) to assist NVS to fulfill its mission in working with the Neurology Vocational Services Unit (NVSU) at Harborview: **Helping people with neurological conditions gain independence, one person, one job, at a time.**

People with neurological conditions represent an untapped resource in the labor marketplace. The BAC's business expertise will enable NVS/NVSU to build more bridges to competitive employment and productive lives for people with neurological conditions.

The purpose of the BAC is to provide input and recommendations to NVS (and thus to NVSU) on analyzing employment trends.

identifying and partnering with potential employers.

assessing skills/certification needs for NVSU clients in a competitive job market

marketing of NVSU's vocational rehabilitation program to the community.

developing contacts in business community to promote competitive employment for people with neurological conditions.

The NVS Board depends on the clinical expertise of NVSU to help people with neurological conditions such as epilepsy, stroke, traumatic brain injury and multiple sclerosis obtain employment. **The mission of NVSU is to provide a full range of employment services to individuals with neurological conditions and to assist them to work and lead productive lives. In addition, the Unit acts as a national resource in the field of vocational rehabilitation through research, teaching and distribution of information.** NVSU is recognized nationwide for its expertise and decades of experience in this specialized area of vocational rehabilitation.

Recent medical breakthroughs have meant that more people with epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis are **able** to work than ever before. Many **want** to work and have the skills and experience to do so but they are underemployed or not employed at all. NVSU clients want to work; and NVSU helps them to find and keep employment.

NVSU knows that holding down a job is essential to our self-respect, to living a productive life, to feeling like a part of society. NVSU assists people with neurological conditions to achieve the same self-respect, quality of life, and connection to society that most people take for granted.

BAC is made up of business and employment professionals. It will meet four (4) times a year and report to the board with its recommendations. The first meeting was held in November, 2006 and was designed to provide an overview of the NVS Board and NVSU and what they are seeking from the BAC. Participants represented a wide—and growing—range of employers and expertise. The BAC, NVS, and NVSU thank all who participated in our first BAC meeting.

The BAC is looking for more participants at our next meeting, **Tuesday, February 6, 2007, 7:30am—9:00 am** at the Mezza Café, Starbucks Headquarters (2401 S. Utah St., Seattle, WA ). Our goal is to gather about 40 members for a breakfast function (no cost) to hear speakers on cutting-edge topics in HR and employment practices and to advise NVS and NVSU. Please join BAC for **LIFT OFF 2007**.

Call us for more information:

**Carl Peterson**  
**(425)-785-7117**

**Dave Maloney**  
**(206) 298-2953**

**Neurological Vocational Services**  
**[www.nvsrehab.org](http://www.nvsrehab.org)**

**Neurological Vocational Services: Board of Directors 2007**

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**WANTED:  
 A FEW GOOD  
 Board Members  
 to help  
 Neurological Vocational Services (NVS)  
 fulfill its mission:**

**Helping people with neurological  
 conditions gain independence,  
 one person, one job, at a time.**

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**For more information call or email:**

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***Thank you!***

**Neurology  
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