

# ICBVI Board Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2024

Meeting was called to order at: 9:08 am Mountain Time

Board Members in Attendance in Person: Al Schneider, B.J. Stinger, Mark Watkins, Britt Raubenheimer

Board Members in Attendance via Teams: None

ICBVI Staff in Attendance in Person: Beth Cunningham, Mike Walsh, Steve Achabal, Angela Starr, Corey Bresina, Kevin Jernigan, Justin Fish, Earl Hoover, Rocio Gil

ICBVI Staff in Attendance via Teams: Linda Upton, Shane Hyde, Jackie Stallings, Jeff Weeks, Dawn Ristau

Others on Teams: Alison Steven

Motion to approve prior meeting minutes –Britt moved; B.J. seconded.

Motion to approve agenda - Britt moved; B.J. seconded.

## **Administrator’s Report – Beth Cunningham**

**Good Morning**, I thought I would follow the Mission with ICBVI’s Core Values:

**-Independence**

**-Community and Relationships**

**-Ethical**

**-Respect and Dignity**

**-Reliability**

**Meetings with staff-** Annually, I try to have a short meeting with each staff individually, to check in and connect with them: so far, I have met with everyone in Coeur D’Alene and Lewiston. This week, I began meeting with staff from Twin Falls and next week, I will meet with staff in Pocatello. It is a joy to get to do this and I am grateful that our agency is small enough that this is possible. So far, our conversations have been very positive and vary greatly from person to person. This year, I did something a little differently and sent out the Core Values and a couple of question about the core values relating to the job. I also indicated that if there were other things that they wanted to discuss, we didn’t have to discuss that.

The questions are simply:

I am curious if your job allows you to focus on any one or two of these in your day to day work?

Is there one that you feel is hard for you to live in your job?

Do you feel these values do a good job of representing our work?

**Our Summer Programs** – Went great and I just want to thank all of the staff for all of their collaboration together in making it all come together. We had 16 participants in View and then we had College Days up in Moscow this year. I believe Jackie is going to talk about it briefly after Mike’s board report.

### **Performance Report**

**ICBVI served a total of 2046 people in FY 2024.** That is an increase of 10 total people from FY 23 and up from 1787 in 22 and 1531 in FY 21. So, that is quite a jump (25%) and this increase has been moving in this direction since covid ended. Therefore, we are needing to tighten our belts and be careful with our agency spending. We have a significant number of clients currently enrolled in 2 and 4 year degree programs.

VR 497

OB 700

IL 93

SR 64

ILOTR 10

OBOTR 185

LV Clinic 497

**Staff Update:** Angela- position was re-classed to be Office services supervisor and she is now supervising the VRAs and all of the Reader/Drivers- who are now also state positions

OM position opening – Kevin has been working hard to recruit and this position closes on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Becky Clarke is our new VR Counselor in Pocatello and Linda is officially back to Twin Falls. She was already working as a VRC with IDVR in the Pocatello areas and already has good relationships with the schools in Pocatello. Special recognition to both Matt and Linda for supporting Pocatello all of these years. Linda did this for 5 years and Matt did it for ???

Greg became a grandpa last week – his daughter had a baby boy.

**Budget** -We are tightening our belts in general, because it seems as though we are spending really quickly at the start of this year and this is partly due to the fact that we have 63 students enrolled in 2- or 4-year degree programs. Three of those are in graduate school programs. Due to the expectation that things might get tight this year, we had enough state match to request 200,000. In **RSA Re-allotment** money. We requested 100,000. In Older Blind and 100,000 in VR. Mike and I met with RSA the Friday before last and we were told that we will be receiving this funding this year. This will help ensure we are able to stay within our budget this year and still be able to meet all of the needs of our clients.

**IDVR update:** Some of you may know that IDVR authorized services in excess of their appropriated budget and had a significant shortfall this past year in State FY 24. Due to that, they have now gone on an order of selection. What this means is that an agency categorizes all clients into categories of MSD, SD and D. At this time all categories are closed, which means they will continue to serve the people who are already clients and who have plan, but that they cannot take on new clients. Down the road, they may be able to serve the MSD category first and then slowly, hopefully, they can open back up to serve all categories. What this means for ICBVI, is that in the 47 shared cases that we have with IDVR, we can expect to pay more of the share of the services on that client's plan. Therefore, we are moving forward cautiously so that we do not end up with a budget shortage ourselves.

**Business Enterprise Program-** Justin will be presenting later on all of the updates in the Business Enterprise program, but I wanted to take few minutes to talk about the training that I attended last Friday with the Blind Merchant's Committee. Afterwards, I presented a report from ICBVI and we has some discussion. Then Saturday, they came back to hold their meeting. The training which was by Vistar was very interesting and I think the vendors all got a lot out of it. Apparently, they have deal worked out with RSA and blind vendors to give really good rates or discounts when Blind Vendor's order products with them. The presenter used to be a blind vendor himself and he was very knowledgeable. What I wanted to share with you all is that after I gave my report, the vendors (Tony speaking as the chair) said that they felt that in the past couple of years that Justin and Arianah had gone way above and beyond to really make great improvements to the program. They feel strongly about the job they are both doing and they wanted to know how they could help prevent them from leaving. They wanted to know if there was any way

for them to impact that monetarily. I told them to write up a paragraph with the positive comments and recommend them for a bonus and that I would work on trying to get a bonus approved over the next few months. I explained that I would have to allow some salary savings to accumulate before the request, which will happen due to our open position. For those of you who have been around the commission for a while, you know that this is a great compliment coming from the Blind Merchant's committee. Over the past 8 years with Corey and now with Justin and Arianah, the committee has gotten better and better. There was no infighting at least while I was there on Friday. This is a big departure from years ago where merchants would argue you with one another openly in the meetings. There were no complaints, only compliments. It was really wonderful to see. So, I wanted to publicly thank Corey who oversees the program and Justin and Arianah who run the program for all that they are doing. Also, I will mention that we have a new AG and she is starting to learn about the program and is attending the Blast Conference in November and they are having a special all-day training for attorneys. Justin is working to get her a lunch with the attorney of one of our 3<sup>rd</sup> party "teaming partners" who will be one of the presenters at this conference, as we do have a situation pending that Justin may report on further. So, our program may be smaller right now (in numbers), but it is stronger than it has ever been since I have been here (almost 9 years). I am looking forward to going out to have lunch at the new Chinden campus where one of our 3<sup>rd</sup> party partners is currently running the cafeteria.

**SILC**-Steve has been serving on the State Independent Living Council for approximately the last 6 years or so. He has termed off of it, so I am now serving on the Council. I was appointed by Governor Little this summer and the term is 2 years. Then, Steve can re-apply once he has taken a break for a couple of years. Steve remains the main person involved in the meetings and the he worked hard on the recently approved SPIL (State Plan for Independent Living)- So we appreciate his efforts and contributions for ICBVI on that and that plans takes effect beginning Oct. 1 2024. And goes to Federal fiscal year 2025-27 State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

**CSAVR**-- This Fall, in about a month, is the CSAVR meeting which will be in Seattle this year. Mike and Corey and I will attend the CSAVR portion of the meeting. Then, I will stay for NCSAB and Steve will come up for one day to sit on a panel with participants from other state agencies to describe the work we are doing with our OB and IL programs and to talk about any challenges or other funding that states may be receiving.

**Case Management System update:** For the past year, we have been providing updates on the purchase of a new case management system, which previously we were assuming would be the Aware program. IDVR purchased aware approximately 20 years ago and was using a sole source agreement to do so. We applied for a sole source agreement through the Department of Purchasing. They then put that on a website for a period of time for comments. They received comments from two additional companies who say they can provide the CMS and would like to bid. Therefore, now we are in the process of working with Dept. of Purchasing to write an RFP and then this will be opened for bidding. The three companies who have expressed interest in bidding are Aware, Wellsky and Libera. We are hoping this can get completed quickly, so that we are able to spend the money that was provided to us in the time frame it needs to be utilized.

**Engagement Survey-** Earlier in the summer, the state sent out a staff engagement survey. They did this also in 2022. This time we had 70% of staff participate in the survey, whereas, last time we had 85%. Generally speaking, the survey results appear to be very positive for our agency. With highlights being positive in well-being, trust in manager, living the values, ethics (100%), respect, safety and authority and empowerment.

Areas to improve included pay and benefits as the biggest one, and next after that was survey follow up. Also, on the improvement side was performance and development, execution and resources.

We will be writing an action plan, communicating to employees and creating goals from this survey.

### **In-service**

We are having in-service October 2-4<sup>th</sup> in McCall this year.

We are really looking forward to this and have a big agenda which includes Jennifer M Browning who is our Keynote. She is a local counselor in Meridian.

She will be talking about...

“Helping professions providers” are often tasked with encouraging others to find their peace amongst their pieces. This is important for us to experience as well so we can be strong for those we serve.

Learning Objectives:

- Through the use of experiential activities, participants will be given the opportunity to identify where and how they charge and recharge their inner light
- Participants will explore and identify three new self-care ideas they can take from this seminar and use immediately in their everyday life to keep their light charged
- By working in collaborative discussion groups, participants will be able to share their own creative methods of self-care, and learn what others have found to be successful.

We also have the Idaho Assistive Technology project coming, Crystal Garry from the WinTac-QM coming to speak on Internal Controls, Scott White from the NFB presenting on Newslines, Bryan Basin speaking on Be My Eyes, Ingrid from McCall’s Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall coming, some updates from our staff on the summer programs and BEP, Mike updating on our goals and priorities and group breakout sessions. It should be really good and really fun!

That is it for me- questions?

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) – Mike Walsh**

**Federal Reporting:**

The RSA 911 Q4 report was submitted on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Data Dashboards**

*Program Summary*

	<b>PY23 Q4</b>	<b>Prior Quarter</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Open Cases</b>	437	451	-3%
<b>Quarterly Counts</b>			
Applicants	20	32	-38%
New Eligibilities	16	25	-36%
New IPEs	9	13	-31%
<b>Timeliness</b>			
Eligibility	100%	100%	0%
IPE	100%	100%	0%

*Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)*

<b>Number of Students with Disabilities (SWD) Reported</b>	<b>PY23 Q4</b>	<b>Prior Quarter</b>
Total Number SWD	99	96
Number of SWD who received Pre-ETS	23	28
Potentially Eligible	16	16

<b>Pre-ETS by type provided</b>		
Job Exploration Counseling	16	NA
Work-based Learning Experiences	8	+33%%
Counseling on Post-Secondary	4	-33%
Workplace Readiness	22	+18%
Instruction in Self-Advocacy	20	+567%

*Measurable Skills Gains*

<b>Quarterly Measurable Skills Gains</b>	<b>PY2023 Q4</b>	<b>Previous Quarter</b>
Total number of participants (IPE)	401	392
Number of participants eligible for MSG	125	117
% of participants eligible for MSG	32%	30%
Number of participants who achieved MSG	36	19
MSG rate for quarter	15%	16.2%
MSG rate PY YTD	22%	36.1%
<b>Breakdown by MSG Type</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent (of MSGs)</b>
Education Functioning Level	0	0%
Secondary diploma or equivalent	5	13%
Transcript/Report card	28	74%
Training Milestone	3	8%
Skills Progression	2	5%

*Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)*

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SOC Title	Number of participants	Median Hourly Earnings	Median Hours Worked
Marketing and Sales Mgrs	1	\$18	40
Industrial Production Mgr	1	\$28.60	40
Elementary and Middle School Teachers	1	\$38.85	40
Educational Instruction and Library Workers, Other	1	\$38.25	40
Cargo and Freight Agents	1	\$18.54	40
Misc. Office and Admin Support Workers	1	\$22	40
Construction Equipment Operators	1	\$52.71	40
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1	\$20.53	40
Dredge Operators	1	\$15.50	35

### **Performance Indicators**

Retention with the Same Employer, the newly defined Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator, will remain baseline in PY 2024. However, we are required to collect data throughout the year for our negotiations prior to PY 2025. This measure will be reported 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters after exit.

### **PY 2023 Performance Data**

The following is the Title IV performance for Idaho. It is preliminary, as the WIOA Annual Report (ETA 9169) is not due until the end of September. With that, we do not expect any changes.

	Target	Actual
<b>Employment</b>	60.0%	63.4%



<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>		
<b>Employment 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	58.3%	60.0%
<b>Median Earnings 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>	\$4,500	\$5,147.53
<b>Credential Attainment</b>	44.0%	65.8%
<b>Measurable Skills Gain</b>	57.6%	54.1%

**PY 2024-2026 Goal and Priorities**

The following are the goals and priorities for ICBVI in the WIOA Combined State Plan. These are the priorities that were identified on in our 2023 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA):

Goal 1 – Reduce barriers to employment for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.  
 Priority 1: Address transportation barriers for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.  
 Priority 2: Increase outreach to community partners about ICBVI services.  
 Priority 3: Improve outreach to the unserved/underserved.

Goal 2: Improve transition services for students.  
 Priority 1: Increase training around post-secondary education opportunities and transportation.  
 Priority 2: Improve outreach and education of Pre-ETS.

Goal 3: Improve services to businesses and other components of the WDS.  
 Priority 1: Increase outreach to our business partners.  
 Priority 2: Increase participation in the Idaho One-Stop System.

**Rulemaking Activity**

The Notice of Intent (NOI) for promulgating rulemaking under Zero Based Regulation (ZBR) has been approved and assigned a docket number from DFM. There is a public comment scheduled for Thursday Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 1-3pm.

RSA scheduled a meeting with us last week to review the final draft of the BEP rule. Unfortunately, they cancelled it and have not rescheduled.

### **Website**

The following table compares the website report from the March board report to this report. The June board report represent the 30-day time period between April 29 – May 29. This report captures the 30-day time period between July 28 – August 28:

	June Report	September Report
Total Users	646	554
New Users	587	492
Bounce Rate*	44%	40.7%

*\* Percental of sessions that do not meet the criteria for an engaged session. A session counts as engaged if the visitor completes an event (like a click or form submission), stays on the site for 10 seconds or longer, or views more than one page.*

### **Staff Updates**

Becky Clarke began her tenure as our counselor in Pocatello on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Welcome to the club Becky!

### **Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance**

In the month of August, Nick and I went to the regional offices to conduct program audits. This is the 3rd year of audit cycles in which only critical case / source documentation was evaluated. In each year, about the same amount of files were reviewed.

A total of 61 files were audited across the state.

The good:

- The start date of the IPE in Orion matching the signature date on the initial IPE has improved. In PY22: 45% of cases had findings. PY 24 28% of cases had findings).
- Supporting documentation for each MSG has improved. In PY 22, 23% of cases had findings. In PY24, 7% of cases had findings.
- Accurate completion of the education record has improved. In PY22, 29% of cases had findings. In PY24 7% of cases had findings.

The bad:

- The start date of the IPE in Orion not matching the signature date on the initial IPE.
- Initial IPE missing in file or missing date(s).
- MSG date match issues.
- Incorrect MSG reported.
- Credential date match issues.
- Employment start date: Date match issues.

The ugly:

- Mike and Nick!

**IDVR**

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation went on an Order of Selection (OOS) effective Friday September 6<sup>th</sup>. All of their priority categories are closed, meaning, all new eligible applicants will go on a wait list. All participants with an approved IPE will continue to be serviced. We expect all the categories to remain closed for the next 1-2 years. Until IDVR begins to service eligible applicants again, we will not be able share any new cases with them.

**Assistive Technology and Services to Businesses (Reported by Earl)**

As the hot and smokey days of summer and this 1st quarter of PY 2024 draw to a close, I reflect on how things went. During this quarter, I provided AT support as needed and continued to provide Assistive Technology Assessments to counselors. I continued working with Steve and the RT Staff to provide them with remote hardware and software training to update or refine AT skills. I participated in regional AT and ICBVI staff meetings via Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

On the Odyssey that is Luma, I recently met with the SCO's Luma Training Team to provide accessibility feedback on their training materials and the recent Luma updates. The Luma team lead and I met in group discussions via a hybrid of both live and virtual meetings with the developers in order to lend voice to those of us with accessibility needs. In these sessions, I guided them through areas of Luma which present significant challenges to JAWS users. These tours of actually seeing the JAWS experience in practice was "illuminating" said their Director of Product Development. These sessions were recorded via Webex and will be used by the developers as they attempt to resolve the accessibility issues throughout Luma. I, again, reinforced the caveat that ICBVI does not provide certification or advice regarding 508 compliance. My feedback and participation is based on my own opinion and experience as a JAWS user. The SCO Luma Team Lead and Product Developers acknowledged this and understand ICBVI's position regarding providing feedback. I was also invited to participate in ongoing monthly "Check in" sessions going forward which will allow ICBVI to provide ongoing feedback regarding Luma and its training materials as they continue to work on developing accessibility into both the system and supportive training materials.

### **Services to Businesses**

During this Quarter, I participated in regional Business Engagement Team meetings remotely using Zoom. I have participated in Business spotlight virtual sessions which highlight a particular business each time. In efforts to continue our partnership with local community businesses and other VR partner agencies. In an effort to build on-going relationships between ICBVI, IDVR, and businesses within the Boise Area and around the state, I am continuing to collaborate with Mikayla at IDVR to offer a series of lunch & Learns over the course of this year. These Lunch & Learns are being provided remotely and are geared toward disability and employment. To date, we have presented 4 of 5 sessions. These sessions have received ongoing positive feedback from the business community after each session. Mikayla and I are discussing the possibility of exploring other disability topics of interest by the business community as potential for other Lunch & Learn sessions in the future.

### **Pre-Employment Transition Services (Reported by Alison)**

The summer programs that took place for Idaho youth this summer consisted of the VISTA VIEW program, the IESDB “Ready, Set, Go to Work” Work Readiness Program, the NFB BELL and Beyond Academy, and the VISTA College Days Program.

This year, the ICBVI and NFB summer programs aligned so that it was possible for students to do all three if appropriate! This did not happen, but some students did pick two of the three. For the ICBVI View program I hired 22 staff, and we had 16 students attend. The Visually Impaired Experiencing Work (VIEW) Program is five weeks long and focuses on students getting work experience in the local community. We had students working across the city at the Discovery Center of Idaho, the Boise Zoo, the Grove Hotel, the Riverside Hotel, Computers for Kids, the Boise Co-Op, RISE Inc., Quality Logic, Boise Parks and Rec, and Garden City Police Department. Students relished their work, and the employers were engaged and interactive with them. In the main, these are employers that we have used previously with some new additions, notably the Boise Zoo who provided an excellent and educational experience for the two students placed there.

ICBVI collaborated with the Northwest Association for Blind Athletes (NWABA), the International School of Protocol, and NFB of Idaho to bring a variety of experiences, and more importantly, new relationships with strong and independent adults. While the activities the students participated in were valuable, it is the relationships they develop and the role models they meet that have the greatest impact now and in the future.

We had a fabulous staff with just under 40% returning staff and a similar proportion of staff who were blind or visually impaired. They put 100% of themselves into supporting the students, developing solid friendships in the process.

I had the following feedback from one of our regional offices:

“I just wanted you to know that you have made a huge difference in CT’s life. VIEW was so good for him. He came into the office with his mom this morning to purchase a cane for him to take on his family vacation. He had nothing but good things to say about VIEW and was excited with all the stuff he learned. He is now anxious to get O & M training, he wants to be a camp counselor for VIEW when he is old enough. He even mentioned wanting to work for ICBVI someday. He was very proud that he helped his roommates with cooking and house chores and kept their place clean. He mentioned that you taught him a lot and he was glad he went to VIEW. I just wanted to share the warm and fuzzies. I could sure see a difference in him from when we were signing the VIEW paperwork to now- WOW! He has made a lot of progress. Good job!”

While the VIEW program was in full swing, we also hosted the 3-day IESDB Work Readiness Camp in the BSU dorms. Linda and Kebbie were on staff for this program. 9 students participated in activities to build and strengthen their work Readiness skills. These included rock climbing, scuba diving, CPR/First Aid training and a visit to the Grove hotel. They also spent time in our ATC cooking, practicing interview skills and DIY skills, and exploring the BEP vending machine. It was a busy and productive time for all.

The VIEW program ended on Saturday July 20, and the next day, staff headed to McCall for the NFB BELL and Beyond Program. The NFB BELL and Beyond Academy is made possible in part due to a significant grant from ICBVI. Two VIEW staff and three students moved on to the BELL and Beyond Program at Pilgrim Cove Camp. There were a total 20 students ranging in age from 9 through 17, and 15 staff, with Jackie Stallings and myself co-leading the program. 9 of the students were ICBVI Pre-ETS clients. We stayed in cabins with bathrooms overlooking the lake with the mountains as our daily backdrop. Students participated in braille and literacy, and O&M classes each morning. In the afternoon we had various activities which always included getting in the lake at some point. This year, the schedule for a group of the older students was different, because for the first time, we introduced a "Challenge Track". These 7 Pre-ETS students spent three mornings practicing putting up tents, making a campfire, canoeing, and planned food to be ready for an overnight tent camping trip on Thursday evening. With 5 staff to support them, they had a fantastic trip, mosquitoes notwithstanding, and arrived back elated and with a sense of accomplishment next morning. One student told me he had been on camps before, and had always been on the sidelines, never being considered capable of helping out. On this trip he had done everything, paddling, lighting fires, cooking, and putting up tents.

As a finale to our week, we had a family day on the Saturday organized by IESDB. Campers and siblings took part in activities run by Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall (AWeSOMe), while parents and guardians, and staff were able to share stories and resources. The campers performed their Readers Theater Selection, "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs", with the families before everyone departed for home.

Everyone, that is, except Tyler Merren, Kyle Owens, and me, who headed up to Moscow ready for the start of the next program, College Days.

This year, College Days took place at the University of Idaho to give students the opportunity to get acquainted with another of Idaho's top Universities. We had seven students participating in College Days this year and the University staff were all incredibly cooperative and helpful, even providing audio description to their Thursday Screen on the Green community movie night at our request. Students spent time in classes learning Executive Functioning skills with Kathy Nimmer, Self-Advocacy and Listening Skills with Jerry Catt and Liz Alexander, and Fitness and Education with Tyler Merren. They got to know the campus well walking from the dorms at the north end to class in the Education Building at the South end of campus each day. They also had a class with Chelsea, a textiles teacher, who happened to be visually impaired and a client of ICBVI. On Wednesday we took a side trip to Lewis and Clark State College to expose students to one more option for college that they could take advantage of. By the end of the week, all students felt very much more prepared for college and all the opportunities and challenges it will provide. Another busy summer of youth programming was complete!

I want to recognize and thank all those who in some way helped this year's summer programs run so smoothly. Earl worked with setting up employers, Kevin submitted and managed finances, Rocio ran around doing various "other duties as assigned", Jackie coordinated the summer staff training, The counselors and VRAs chased up clients for paperwork and more paperwork, the ATC provided invaluable blindness training for our summer staff, Chris E. put together Braille materials, Angela helped me keep track of all the paperwork the VRC's and VRA's sent my way, RT's helped with job mentoring, and VIEW workshops, or with College Days. Thanks to all for their support and contributions!

**Independent Living (IL) Program, Independent Living Older Blind (ILOB) Program, Sight Restoration (SR) Program, Low Vision Clinic, and ICBVI Stores – Steve Achabal, IL Program Coordinator**

**IL/ILOB Programs:**

Our Rehabilitation Teachers at ICBVI have performed their roles and duties admirably during the last state fiscal year (SFY2024), effectively engaging with clients in the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Independent Living (IL), and Older Blind (ILOB) programs throughout Idaho. During SFY2024, our Rehabilitation Teachers successfully supported 700 clients in the Older Blind (OB) program and 93 clients in the IL program, serving a total of 793 clients. Additionally, they extended their services to 195 individuals who needed "one-time referrals" for combined IL and ILOB services. These "one-time referrals" allowed our agency to provide helpful guidance and assistance to individuals who did not need the comprehensive support associated with opening a formal IL or ILOB case.

This level of service is extraordinary, especially when compared to other states with similar populations, and I commend our Rehabilitation Teachers for their commitment and dedication to our clients. This level of engagement not only reflects our agency's mission but also reinforces the profound impact we have on individuals' lives by fostering independence and enhancing their quality of life.

Throughout SFY2024, ICBVI also continued its collaboration with the State Independent Living Council (SILC) and the three Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to develop the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for FFYs 2025 to 2027. On August 20th of this year, we received notification that Idaho's SPIL was approved at the federal level by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). This approval reflects the hard work and collaboration between ICBVI, the SILC, and the CILs, and sets the stage for continued collaboration and progress in supporting independent living in Idaho.

### **Sight Restoration**

In SFY2024, the Sight Restoration (SR) program at ICBVI provided services to 64 clients, a slight decrease from the 68 clients served in SFY2023. However, it is encouraging to see these numbers approaching the levels we observed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting a return to normalcy and renewed community engagement with our services.

Despite this small reduction, the program remains vital in offering life-changing support to individuals with visual impairments. Looking ahead, preliminary data for SFY2025 indicates that we are on track to meet or exceed the number of clients served compared to SFY2024, further highlighting the importance and impact of our Sight Restoration efforts. The positive trajectory hopefully suggests a sustained demand for our services and our ability to meet the needs of the residents who qualify for this program.

### **Low Vision Clinic**

Throughout SFY2024, the Low Vision Clinic and Dr. Hansen continued to provide high-quality care and education to a total of 361 patients that were seen in our Boise location. This is slightly fewer than the 382 patients served in SFY2023.

Notably, in SFY2024, ICBVI and Dr. Hansen conducted regional clinic sessions in both the Twin Falls and Lewiston areas, serving an additional 35 patients who would have not been able to come to Boise or see Dr. Hansen in the Rigby area.



Lastly, Dr. Hansen, between his own practice and now his part-time role at Eye Care of Rigby, completed 101 low vision evaluations. Combined there were nearly 500 (497 to be precise) people assisted by the Clinic and Dr. Hansen. These numbers underscore our Clinic's commitment to delivering accessible and specialized care to individuals across various locations.

### **ICBVI Store**

During SFY2024, the ICBVI Store successfully maintained its operations, catering to both clients and the general public, resulting in a total of 1,416 sales transactions. These transactions were distributed across our various regional locations as follows: Boise – 871 transactions; Coeur d'Alene – 167 transactions; Lewiston – 123 transactions; Twin Falls – 106 transactions; Pocatello – 74 transactions; and Idaho Falls – 75 transactions.

The store's sustained performance is a testament to its role in providing essential products and resources that enhance daily living for individuals with visual impairments. By continuing to offer these vital aids and appliances, the ICBVI Store supports both our agency's mission and the independence of our clients and community members.

We are continuously exploring new ways to improve and expand our product offerings to better serve our diverse clientele and respond to their evolving needs.

### **Success Story – Aletha Thomas, current ATC student**

I didn't grow up blind. This was my first time with blind people. I never used a cane. I had no idea what to expect and I was very intimidated and unsure. Marcie came to my house to help me because I had a stroke. Once I came here, everybody was so amazing. Before I came here, I had secluded myself in my house. If my daughter didn't go with me, I didn't go. That was not a good time for me. When I came here and met everyone, they were so wonderful. I never met anyone like the people at the ATC. The staff has probably changed my life. I wasn't going to take shop because it scared me. I didn't see the point in it. I thought I would never learn Braille, it's so complicated. I attend part time right now, and I spend most of my time in shop. I remember using the table saw blind

folded and we were going pretty fast. I remember stopping and laughing about how far I've come. I'm still learning Braille, but I learned the alphabet and I never thought I could. My daughter moved to Twin Falls so I stay here, I go all over by myself. I never thought that would happen. Everyone here is so wonderful, understanding, patient. I put baking powder in the cookies instead of sugar. It was ok to make those mistakes and everyone still ate them. The staff really understand because they live it everyday also and that makes a huge difference, especially when you're struggling. It really makes a huge difference. I was able to work in the VIEW program. I wasn't even going to apply but they pushed me to and it was really what I needed. You learn all these things but then you put it into action and that gave me the confidence. It was a great experience. I truly enjoyed working with the VIEW program, it was amazing. The community that comes along and all the other programs I didn't know existed. Every time I'm with them I learn about more and more and that helps tremendously. Driving go carts at Wahooz was a lot of fun.

### **Consumer Input**

Don Winiecki received the \$15,000 Bolotin Award at the NFB National Conference. The award was given for the work he did transcribing braille from several languages.

### **Assessment and Training Center – Kevin Jernigan, ATC Manager**

The ATC experienced a rare light term regarding student count. For example, in January of this year, we recorded 749 class hours with students. For the entire summer term, we recorded 721 class hours (not counting September numbers yet). We started the term with 10 students. Due to some medical and personal issues, one of our students left the ATC after the first week. One student completed their training at the end of July since they are a teacher and started back to work in August. Another student finished their training for the summer in the middle of August due to classes starting back up at BSU. The other cause for the light summer term is that several students opted to skip the summer term. As a result, we have instated a new ATC policy that if a student opts to skip a term other than to return to work or school, they will be moved to the bottom of the wait list with no guaranty that there will be an available spot for them in the next term. Hopefully, this new policy will encourage students to continue their training to completion instead of skipping terms. The students enjoyed two activity days. The first one took place at Wahooz and included a very competitive game of non-visual laser tag. The second activity day was cancelled due to poor air quality and only one student participant. The original plan was for a hike and bowling.

The ATC staff collaborated with Alison for a successful summer programs staff training in June. Several ATC staff members also worked as job mentors during the first week or two of the VIEW students work experience. The summer programs are just one of the programs requiring a lot of collaboration amongst the ICBVI staff and it is always so special to see how well everyone works together to create an amazing, yet very vocationally relevant experience for the students we serve.

During the term break, the ATC will be busy conducting a Blindness 101 to representatives from the Talking Book Library, ACHD, DHR, a traffic engineer from Six Mile Engineering, and one person from a job recruiting company known as Hidden Talent. We will be working with Becky Clarke, the new VRC for Pocatello, as she receives non-visual training next week. Additionally, IESDB has a tour scheduled for next week to introduce some of their students the ATC.

The fall term will begin October 8<sup>th</sup> and we expect to have 5 full times students and 8 part-timers. The students in attendance will be coming from the Treasure Valley, Idaho Falls region, and the Coeur d'Alene region.

Unfortunately, we are still in search of an O&M since the last candidate ultimately decided not to accept the job offer due to the high cost of living in the Treasure Valley area. I was contacted by an O&M out of Texas who expressed an interest in the job, but he has already signed a school O&M contract in Texas for the year. The newest job posting also includes the option of hiring an O&M with National O&M certification (NOMC) in hopes of opening up our options to a larger network of O&M's. For those who don't know, NOMC is the NFB's O&M certification program. The job posting went live August 28<sup>th</sup> and closes September 25<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully, by the next Board meeting, we will have found our new O&M.

At the last board meeting, a new ATC project was discussed that involved an accessible garden. The accessible raised garden bed was built this term by one of our ATC students. Chris plans to have students help fill it with dirt and get it ready for planting by next spring. In addition to the accessible raised garden bed, Chris is also planning to incorporate some vermiculture. Chris has a vermiculture system that he is planning to bring in and teach students how to grow worms :-). The worms and their byproduct go hand in hand with the raised garden bed.

We did not have a ceramics class this past term due to a lack of student interest, but Chris was able to incorporate some ceramics into the shop course. We are looking forward to the upcoming in-service and a busy fall term.

**Financial Update – Corey Bresina, Administrative Services Manager**

Fund	Name	Account Category	Budget	Actual Expenses	Encumbrances	Amount Remaining	% Actual	% Remaining
10000	General	CAPITAL	78,716.00	-	78,516.00	200.00	0%	0%
10000	General	OPERATING	372,700.00	65,097.34	11,144.13	296,458.53	17%	80%
10000	General	PERSONNEL	992,800.00	175,093.97	-	817,706.03	18%	82%
10000	General	T&B	615,762.08	214,913.33	38,239.44	362,609.31	35%	59%
21000	BEP	OPERATING	27,600.00	239.35	-	27,360.65	1%	99%
21000	BEP	T&B	100,100.00	32,762.00	-	67,338.00	33%	67%
28800	SSA	OPERATING	34,300.00	-	-	34,300.00	0%	100%
28800	SSA	T&B	13,000.00	-	-	13,000.00	0%	100%
34800	Federal	OPERATING	1,534,400.00	19,910.86	-	1,514,489.14	1%	99%
34800	Federal	PERSONNEL	2,774,500.00	498,896.33	-	2,275,603.67	18%	82%
34800	Federal	T&B	515,256.02	85,554.55	11,188.35	418,364.62	17%	81%
34900	Donation	OPERATING	28,100.00	7,520.19	-	20,579.81	27%	73%
34900	Donation	T&B	56,300.00	443.00	-	55,857.00	1%	99%
42600	Store	OPERATING	62,900.00	21,006.80	-	41,893.20	33%	67%
42600	Store	PERSONNEL	25,700.00	4,088.21	-	21,611.79	16%	84%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>7,232,134</b>	<b>1,125,526</b>	<b>139,088</b>	<b>5,967,372</b>	<b>15.56%</b>	<b>84.44%</b>

**\*Cognos, Agency Content, Statewide Reports, Budget Development, Budget Dashboard**

	FFY23	FFY24
Pre-ETS obligation	486,965.25	505,050.90
Pre-ETS draws 100%	-486,965.25	-499,890.74
Balance of 15%	0.00	5,160.16

50 - PC	678,078.51	17.88%
55 - O/E	113,774.54	5.52%
70 - CO	0	0.00%
80 - T/B	333,672.88	25.66%

State fiscal year 2025 started on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The total appropriation for SFY25 is 7,232,134. This total includes one-time (OT) Operating Expense appropriation of \$230,000 in the General Fund and \$849,900 in the Federal Fund. So far in SFY25 we have expended \$ 1,125,526 (15.56%).

The SFY 2026 budget was submitted to DFM and LSO on August 29th. The OT appropriations were removed from SFY25 and the total will be less because of this. Our General Fund request total is right at the 3% cap limit of \$1,786,900. The analysts are reviewing now and will let us know if any technical edits will be required.

The Federal fiscal year starts on October 1<sup>st</sup>. As of 9/10/24 we have drawn \$1,412,054 (33%) of the award amount, and we have spent \$499,891 (99%) of the Pre-ETS reserve requirement.

The Accounting department continues to become more familiar with Luma processes and capabilities. The system continues to challenge us daily, but it seems to be getting easier to navigate more efficiently. We’ve been cross training with the Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) for the last couple of months and eventually we hope to be able to incorporate the CAP aspect of our Grant Awards into Luma.

**BEP – Justin Fish, BEP Supervisor**

**FFY 2024 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter: Apr, May, June**

Our goal is to provide great food service to government employees, have our vendors be successful in their business and assure the success of the program.

**Financial Snapshot**

<b>FFY 2024</b>	<b>OCT-DEC (Q1)</b>	<b>JAN-MAR (Q2)</b>	<b>APR-JUNE (Q3)</b>	<b>JULY- SEPT (Q4)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gross Sales	\$327,584.63	\$432,556.51	\$493,266.89		\$1,253,408.03

Total Net Income	\$45,527.91	\$137,020.96	\$133,161.65		\$315,599.26
Average Income %	-129.14%	48.12%	41.55%		-13.16%
Set Aside Collected	\$4,664.99	\$13,702.22	\$14,416.79		\$32,772.91

<b>FFY 2023</b>	<b>OCT-DEC (Q1)</b>	<b>JAN-MAR (Q2)</b>	<b>APR-JUNE (Q3)</b>	<b>JULY- SEPT (Q4)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gross Income	\$322,617.42	\$436,383.03	\$416,144.92	\$459,229.14	\$1,634,374.51
Net Income	\$76,946.92	\$154,720.02	\$83,591.07	119,194.80	\$390,752.68
Average income %	32.41%	44.54%	39.03%	38.42%	28.60%
Set Aside Collected	\$7,796.16	\$15,472.00	\$9,563.09	13,773.62	\$46,604.87

### **BEP UPDATES**

Locations surveyed:

- INL - NRF Cafeteria: We submitted a bid for the cafeteria contract on 5/17/2024. We received an email on 8/5/24 that they awarded the contract to World Dinning. We requested a debriefing of the award decision from NRF on 8/13/2024, we have not herd back on the request. We also drafted a letter with legal counsel requesting reconsideration under the Randolph-

Sheppard Act, we submitted it to NRF on 8/15/24 within the 10-day limit. We are currently awaiting their review and decision. Please review the attached reconsideration letter.

- Mountain Home Airforce Base: The solicitation for the five-year military dining contract will go out this fall. We submitted a letter of interest and a request for direct negotiation on 8/9/2024. Please review the attached letter. We are currently awaiting their response.

#### New set up:

- Chinden Campus Cafeteria/Market: We are now fully up and running at the Chinen Cafeteria. The new additions of the Micro Market and self-ordering kiosks are a big hit. The introduction of the self-ordering kiosks has reduced the wait time by 50%, and the Micro Market kiosk has reduced the lines at the manned checkout, which has also reduced the wait times.

#### Changes:

- INL: We started the service back up at IAB building in May. Total sales from May-July were \$60.23, so we will be pulling the facility in September.
- Gowen Field: The contract at Gowen Field was renewed in July for another year. The Army has expressed their appreciation that Kevin Servatius and his crew provide an excellent service and experience for our troops.

#### General Updates:

- We are now developing our internal controls, assuring they are in alignment with the CFRs and revised IDAPA. Arianah and the committee representative Travis Beck will be heading up this project.
- Mike will update you on our progress with the IDAPA rule changes. I do want to recognize the team on this project. Arianah and Travis have worked very hard to assure that this will be relevant for a long time to come. I also want to thank Mike for keeping everything on track for board approval, RSA approval and getting it on the legislation docket.

- We meet via conference call with the vendor committee monthly to address issues around the State. This assures that the SLA is actively participating with the vendor committee. We go over various issues around the State and problem-solve as a team.

**New Business**

None

**Set Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday 12/18 in Boise