

Lumbee Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Presented by:
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North Carolina



Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina

- 57,200 Lumbee Indians reside in a four county area of NC.
- Largest American Indian tribe east of the Mississippi River
- The Lumbee tribe is a state recognized tribe seeking federal recognition

The Need

- According to State Center for Health Statistics (SCHS) there is a 38.5% disability rate for the Lumbee tribe.
- More than half of American Indians in NC are of the Lumbee tribe.
- Lumbee Indians with disabilities have a minimal understanding of their impediments to employment.
- Many Lumbee Indians with disabilities decline to seek help outside from established providers of counseling services due to fear and lack of trust. They needed a culturally sensitive VR program.

Population North Carolina Tribes

County	Total Population	American Indian Population	Total population with a Disability (5 years+)
Robeson	127,586	38.5% (49,120)	30,082
Cumberland	304,520	1.7% (5,176)	52,909
Hoke	41,016	10.1% (4,142)	7,151
Scotland	37,180	9.8% (3,643)	8,473

How It All Began...

- **June 11, 2007:** Submitted the grant proposal to:
 - Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S.
 - Department of Education, Washington, DC.
- **July, 2007:** Defended the Research Project:
 - Committee Members: Dr. Kundu, Dr. Dutta, and Dr. Puckett
- **September 2007:** Proposal Funded by RSA
 - \$2 million for five years
- **October 1, 2007:** Program Director for the Lumbee Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Mission

The mission of the LTVR is to provide VR services in a culturally appropriate manner for Lumbee Indian consumers with disabilities, to identify the issues that American Indians who live in communities with cultural diversity face in working toward successful employment outcomes and to increase the knowledge or understanding of these rehabilitation problems through monthly collaboration meetings with community services.

Goal

- The goal of the LTVR is to create and provide vocational rehabilitation services and promote successful employment for the members of the LTNC, consistent with individual strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and informed choice, so that the consumers can prepare for, secure and retain gainful employment.

Lumbee Tribal Vocation Rehabilitation Services

- Therefore, the motto of this program evolved into:
“Working to Improve the Quality of Life for Lumbee Indians with Disabilities”
- The National Council of Disabilities estimated a 22% disability rate among American Indians
 - 57,200 Lumbee Indians
 - 12,584 with disabilities
- Provide culturally sensitive services to Lumbee Indian with disabilities. Tribal members tend to decline to seek help from resources outside of its community due to fear and lack of trust.
- Provide a safe environment for the individuals with disabilities to seek the required services.

Objectives

The LTVR program will :

- **Establish** accessible office, hire and train staff to successfully implement the VR program.
- **Increase tribal awareness of disability** issues and VR services to improve community access and employment opportunities for VR consumers.
- **Provide culturally appropriate VR services** to 235 eligible tribal members with disabilities on or near the tribal service area that will result in 156 successful employment outcomes over the life of the 5 year grant.
- **Evaluate program goals and objectives** in order to ensure both
 - the improvement of service provision as well as the
 - attainment of consumer employment goals.

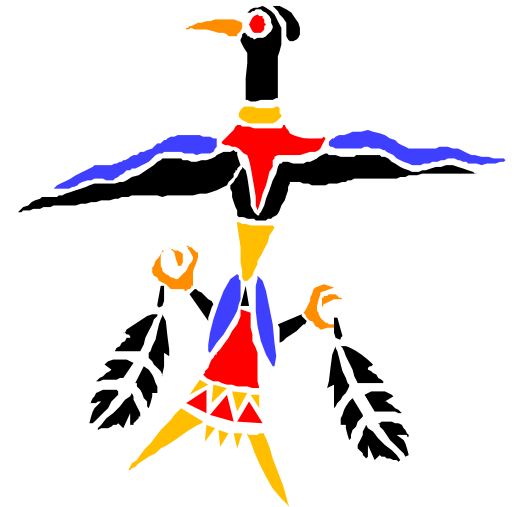
Service Area

- **The tribal service area in North Carolina consist of four counties:**
 - Robeson
 - Cumberland
 - Hoke
 - Scotland



Eligibility

- **Member of the Lumbee Tribe**
- **Live in the four county tribal area:
2,310 square miles**
- **Disabling condition or
impediment to employment**
- **A goal of seeking employment**



Target Populations...

- **Disabilities can be seen or unseen. They can be physical, mental or emotional.**
- **The illiteracy and low functional literacy rates have been a problem among the Lumbee Indians and leads to subsequent underemployment.**
- **LTVR provide services to individuals with:**
 - Blindness and Visual Impairments
 - Deafness and Hard of Hearing
 - Respiratory issues such as Asthma
 - Cardiac, CVA, and Circulatory issues
 - Amputation, Arthritis, Rheumatism,
 - Lupus, Burns, Back Pain, Obesity, and Cancer
 - Mental and Emotional: Learning Disabilities and Depression
 - Alcohol and Drug Dependency

Services Provided are:

- **Counseling and Guidance**
- **Evaluation and Assessment**
- **Vocational Training, technical assistance and/or transportation**
- **Assistive Technology**
- **Transition of students with disabilities**
- **From high school to college or employment**
- **Occupational licenses, tools, equipment and/or initial supplies**
- **Job search, Job placements and follow-up**

Collaborators...

- **North Carolina State VR Services**
- **State Employment Commission**
- **Private employment services and corporations**
- **University of North Carolina at Pembroke**
- **Robeson Community College**
- **One Stop Center**
- **Mental Health Agency**

LTVRS Staff

- Program Director
- Rehabilitation counselors (2)
- Rehabilitation Technician
- Administrative Assistant



Outcomes

- **Year 1: October 2007- September 2008**
Goal was 15 activations with 5
successful outcomes
**99 activations and 12 successful
outcomes**
- **Year 2: October 2008 - September 2009**
Goal is 40 activations with 27
successful closures
**110 activations with 15 successful
closures**
- **5 year goal is:**
**235 activations with 156 successful
closures**



Thank You!

Thank you to the **TACE Center: Region IV** for this opportunity to present our Lumbee Tribe Culture in North Carolina and to share with you our efforts to provide effective and culturally-based vocational rehabilitation services to our consumers.



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- Focus CRCC Code 008: Psychosocial & Cultural Issues in Counseling.

My TACE Portal: TACEsoutheast.org/myportal

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