

November 2019

## The Vocational Rehabilitation Center of Allegheny County

Francais G. Gyle

*Coordinator for Services to Deaf Clients*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.wcsu.edu/jadara>

---

### Recommended Citation

Gyle, F. G. (2019). The Vocational Rehabilitation Center of Allegheny County. *JADARA*, 6(2). Retrieved from <https://repository.wcsu.edu/jadara/vol6/iss2/54>

## **THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTER OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

---

**By FRANCIS G. GYLE, Coordinator, Services to Deaf Clients**

The Vocational Rehabilitation Center of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, has a history of over forty years of service to vocationally handicapped persons. During this time there has always been a number of deaf persons served by the agency in any given year, sometimes more, sometimes less.

In 1967 a Social and Rehabilitation Service expansion grant was obtained for "Expanded Services to Deaf Clients" which ran from 1968 to 1971. At present, the speaker is Coordinator of Services to Deaf Clients, functioning in a private United Fund agency with clientele mostly funded by Pennsylvania Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Vocational Habilitation, Mental Health/Mental Retardation funds, and sometimes by private individuals or insurance companies.

The Coordinator is expected to act as liaison with other agencies who serve deaf persons (outside function) and to facilitate use of the agency by teaching sign language to staff members and interpreting the problems of deafness in a vocational setting (inside function).

The chief areas of program of the agency are diagnostic evaluation (including testing and general medical examination), work adjustment training, basic education and social training, and recreation. There is also a small offset print shop in which a one year program of training is offered for a number of clients. Most of our clients go from program to either placement by our own agency or training elsewhere, followed by placement. Extended employment is also offered in a workshop for persons not yet ready for the competitive market by reason of skills or attitudes.

Many of our deaf clients at present also come from the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf for a period of twelve weeks. Their time in our agency is spent partly in diagnostic evaluation and partly in vocational information sessions, field trips, and simulated work experiences. This is not a real work-study program, but it affords more experience than can be arranged in the community elsewhere at the present time.

Out-of-town and out-of-state clients can be housed in our dormitory, or in private homes, or in transitional living, or at the Home for Crippled

## **THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTER OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

---

Children. Many of these clients are academic "drop-outs" or functionally illiterate persons who have had no schooling. For behavior modification some of our teenage clients live at the Home, come to us for evaluation and work adjustment, and receive basic communication skills from the Counseling Center for the Deaf.

Staffings are held at each of the agencies and schools. DePaul Institute seniors and alumni are also among our clients from time to time. The staff members from the various agencies meet together as needed to plan and carry on programs designed to fit the individual needs of the clients as seen by the various agencies, the BVR counselor and the client himself. Suggestions and services are shared among the agencies involved with the client in the attempt to provide a united front effort to help him overcome the vocational handicaps imposed by his deafness or by other disabilities of whatever description.

Other agencies, such as the Hearing and Speech Society, the Pittsburgh Club for the Deaf, and the churches for the deaf, also make their programs available to those who may wish to utilize them. Individual initiative and independence are encouraged so that the deaf person may become as self-sufficient as possible.