

WELCOME TO OUR Quarterly Newsletter

A NOTE FROM NITA Chief Executive Officer Nita Hobbs

It's been just under a year since I stepped into the CEO role at WVARF, and what a year it has been! My mission this past year has been to refocus on WVARF's mission supporting nonprofit organizations that empower individuals with disabilities to find meaningful employment through planning, training, and advising. The path to making the mission of a nonprofit come to fruition can take different forms with different leaders. For me, it's simple WVARF isn't just a facilitator of business between CRPs and our customers WVARF's role is to strengthen the state use program by strengthening our CRPs.

We've made some significant strides to strengthen our program this last year (and felt some growing pains along the way).

Here's some highlights:

Rate Increases – In the first increase since 2017, we received approval for a 10% increase for janitorial and rest area services. WVARF will continue working towards a comprehensive fair market rate adjustment for these services in the future.

Awards Banquet – If we don't acknowledge our accomplishments, then who will? Our first Awards Banquet Post-COVID was a huge success, and I look forward to next year.

Fair Market Rate Submissions – All CRPs who provide janitorial services participated in a huge initiative to standardize our cost loading reporting and submission process for fair market rate adjustment requests.

Apprenticeship Program – We are proud to be spearheading the first apprenticeship program of its kind focusing on career development for individuals with disabilities. Our efforts have been recognized by the US DOL Office of Apprenticeship, and WV DRS is funding our training initiative. Thank you to all our partners!

Legislative Reform – Our CRPs, WVARF, & WVADE had a huge presence at the Capitol this legislative session. Raising awareness of the State Use Program among legislators is a constant process of education and campaigning. Our bill to reinstate our status as a preferred purchasing program passed the House this year without compromising the language of the proposed legislation Next year we hope to get even further.

Training & Advising – We are focusing on reinvesting in our CRPs this year. I pride myself on listening to the issues CRPs face and problem-solving with you to overcome them.

I hope you enjoy the first issue of our newsletter. Thank you for your continued support of the State Use Program.

Nita Hobbs



CRP Spotlight

RECOGNIZING LISA LAYDEN

In recognition of her exceptional dedication and adaptability, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to Lisa Layden. Amidst the transitions within Goodwill Industries of Kanawha Valley, including the departure of William Rose and subsequent staffing changes, Lisa has demonstrated remarkable leadership. Her willingness to step into various roles, coupled with her commitment to ensuring the seamless management of financial operations, is truly commendable. Her efforts in promptly updating our SharePoint with invoices have not gone unnoticed.

We at WVARF acknowledge the challenges such changes can bring and stand ready to offer our support. Thank you, Lisa, for your unwavering service and resilience.



Coming Up!

APPRENTICESHIP TRAIN THE TRAINER

8 am -4 pm Tuesday , April 23 -
Thursday April 25th.

APPRENTICESHIP SIGNING CEREMONY

2:30 on Thursday, April 25th at
The Cottage.
400 Patterson Ln
Charleston, WV 25311

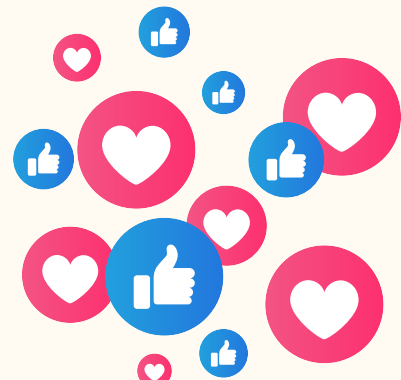
ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

Thursday, October 10th

STATE USE DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Tuesday, February 25th

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WVARF and our CRP's

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Contractual Developments



THIS IS BIG NEWS - DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND!

We are pleased to announce the completion of several key agreements this year, including the 2024 Stream Access, Low Impact Monitoring Dispatching, and an innovative Internet-based data collection system for Time Study information in collaboration with JCDC and DHHR.

Currently, we are in the process of renewing our Grounds Maintenance contracts.

The upcoming renewal of the Janitorial & Rest Areas contract signifies a notable development, with a 10% increase set to take effect from July 1, 2024. This step is part of a broader strategy to enhance service excellence and operational efficiency. The engagement with key clients such as DOH, DMV, DoHS, and DH has resulted in the return of spreadsheets for all agreement data, which is now subject to a thorough accuracy review. These systematic updates to existing agreements underscore a commitment to continuous improvement and client satisfaction.

We have sent every CRP their updated CRP Master Service Agreement through DocuSign.

State Use Commodities Spotlight

HIGHLIGHTING NEW COMMODITIES FROM DIFFERENT STATE USE PROGRAMS

The strategic expansion of our commodities and service portfolio is imperative for sustained growth. Annually, the West Virginia Association for Rehabilitation Facilities (WVARF) meticulously evaluates new offerings from fellow State Use Programs nationwide to determine their viability within West Virginia. A notable product is battery packaging, a sector pioneered by Georgia's State Use program. The compact nature of batteries means that production can be conducted in a minimal space, allowing for a seated work environment which can enhance worker comfort and efficiency. The current focus is on the CR2032 coin-type batteries, featuring a safety bitterant coating, available in single or eight-pack options. This product has garnered significant interest from educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and corporate offices. Despite their diminutive size, batteries represent a potent opportunity for market penetration and revenue generation.

New Etching Commodity from Gateway Industries Now On The Statewide Contract

Gateway Industries has added a new commodity to the statewide contract – etching services! The etching service offers a unique product line in which a customer can customize with their own logo or wording on a variety of products. These products include desk nameplates and holders, plaques, glass ornaments, and a variety of tumblers and glasses. There are also a few pre-printed signs for restrooms, exits, stairways, and no smoking areas.



A SMALL EXAMPLE OF WHATS AVAILABLE

We are excited to see what Gateway Industries can do!

Do You have News You want to Share?

If you have any newsworthy updates such as the initiation of a new program, the proposal of a unique service or product, an upcoming event, or the desire to highlight an outstanding employee, please inform us. Your contribution may be selected for inclusion in our forthcoming newsletter. We encourage you to reach out and share your stories with us.



**"WITH THE NEW DAY COMES NEW STRENGTH AND NEW THOUGHTS."
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT**