

## Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Mature Worker Program

### Program Overview

The Mature Worker Program has two major areas of responsibility.

- 1) The first major area is managing the US Department of Labor funded Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, SCSEP provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors. SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities, including schools, hospitals, day-care centers, and senior centers. Participants work an average of 20 hours a week, and are paid the highest of federal, state or local minimum wage. The training serves as a bridge to unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants, who must be at least 55, unemployed, and have a family income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level. Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses, then to individuals who are over 65, have a disability, have low literacy skills or limited English proficiency, reside in a rural area, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, have low employment prospects, or have failed to find employment after using services through the American Job Center system. (source: <https://www.doleta.gov/seniors/>).
- 2) The second major area involves advocating for the hiring and retaining of mature workers. An activity that promotes this goal is the Governor’s Award for Business Excellence in Supporting Mature Workers. Each year, DAIL co-sponsors this award, recognizing businesses that embrace practices that are effective in hiring and retaining mature workers:
  - Recruitment and Retention Policies
  - Work Schedule Flexibility and Accommodations
  - Training and Skill Development Opportunities
  - Retirement and Retirement Planning

Other activities include promoting a multi-generational approach to Vermont’s economy and economic development.

### Staff and Partners

Multiple DAIL staff support and promote activities for the State’s mature population. DVR’s Mature Worker Program Coordinator has the responsibility for managing the SCSEP and establishing partnerships with multiple partners, including:

- Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD)

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- Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL)
- Higher Education (Vermont State Colleges and University of Vermont)
- AARP
- State’s Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
- Vermont Associates for Training and Development (VATD)
- Business Community
- Business Associations

### Recent Developments and Accomplishments

The second annual presentation of the Governor’s Award for Business Excellence in Supporting Mature Workers took place in September 2017, at the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) fall conference. Four employers received awards, presented by Governor Phil Scott.

### Future Directions

- DAIL will continue to manage the SCSEP during Program Year 2017.
- The Department will again administer the Governor’s Award for Business Excellence in Supporting Mature Workers.
- Existing partnerships will be supported and enhanced, and new ones developed.
- Special efforts will be made to engage, educate and learn from the business community.
- Grant opportunities will be identified, prioritized and pursued.

### Results

The State’s SCSEP grantee, Vermont Associates for Training and Development (VATD), achieved the highest level of performance in the country during Program Year 2016 (July 2016-June 2017). VATD achieved 123.8% of required program outcomes. In the first quarter of Program Year 2017 (July 2017-June 2018), VATD achieved 126.6% of required program outcomes.