

VSP is a vocational rehabilitation and workforce development department at Sinai Hospital – a LifeBridge Health System entity. In existence for over 55 years, VSP provides vocational rehabilitation, workforce development services and employment opportunities to over 300 individuals with disabilities and economic need, on an annual basis. VSP’s mission includes “maximizing the employability of persons with significant barriers to employment through an array of workforce development services.”

As one of the Baltimore region’s workforce development leaders, VSP’s mission and track record are consistent with the hospital’s active participation in public and nonprofit initiatives to revitalize its community. VSP is recognized locally and regionally for its high-quality assessment, job training, placement and business services. VSP operates two service divisions – Vocational Services and Business Services.

**Vocational Services Division**

Individuals are typically referred to VSP for vocational services through a single point of entry system (intake) from one of the following collaborative partners: the Maryland Department of Education - Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment unit, injured worker vocational case management providers, Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, Sinai Hospital’s Population Health department, and many local community agencies.

***Adult Services***

**Work Readiness at LifeBridge Health**

The Work Readiness at LifeBridge Health (WRLBH) program focuses on job readiness and promotes the development of job-related skills, appropriate work behaviors, abilities and retention skills. All services are delivered within a LifeBridge Health department through department-based training and bi-weekly group training sessions. WRLBH is designed to meet the needs of individuals with a history of difficulty in obtaining or retaining employment who are motivated to reenter the labor market. WRLBH encourages individuals to improve task quality, production speed, stamina, attendance, and interpersonal skills through emphasis on the demands and value of work. Job placement services may be provided to job-ready program graduates. Other program graduates who require on-going support such as job coaching or supported employment are recommended and connected to such services.

**Contemporary Office Technology Training**

Contemporary Office Technology Training (COTT), a 17-week program using state-of-the-art equipment, provides progressive, performance-based instruction in industry-based clerical office procedures and computer applications using the Microsoft Office Suite. Small group instruction and hands-on activities cover keyboarding, computer literacy, basic customer service, receptionist techniques, records management, business communication and job readiness skills. Job placement services may be provided to job-ready program graduates.

**Job Placement Services**

Job-ready graduates of a VSP training program, such as COTT, WRLBH and Win through Work, may be referred and funded to receive Job Placement services. These services consist of two phases: job development and job retention with support. Job development services include intensive job-seeking efforts covering job lead provision, internet job search techniques, interview skill-building, networking, application completion, resume updating, and cover letter and thank you letter writing. Effective post-interview follow up methods are covered in detail. Once job placement has been achieved, job retention services are provided for the first 90 days of employment to ensure a smooth transition into the job. A full range of job retention skill-building activities are included in this service.

***Youth Services***

Youth services are provided to 14 to 24-year-old in-school Baltimore area youth. High school students receive career exploration and planning guidance, paid internships, and support during high school and as they transition from school into post-secondary education or employment settings.

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

Offered to Baltimore area high school students with disabilities based on school grade level, PreETS Job Exploration Counseling and Explore Work services include career exploration, interest and learning style testing, self-advocacy training and job search skills analysis. Students also gain disability awareness skills and acquire strategies to identify and communicate accommodation needs. As a result, students determine a career direction with short and long-term vocational objectives and are prepared and supported to enter paid internships, such as Work-Based Learning or Win through Work.

**Work-Based Learning Services (Paid Internship)**

Work-based Learning offers Baltimore area high school students with disabilities, ages 16 and older, a paid internship at LifeBridge Health. Work-based Learning students participate in job readiness training within a LifeBridge Health department, while fostering career exploration through assessment of vocational strengths, weaknesses and skills. Through individual plan development, issues of self-esteem, work behaviors, and interpersonal relationships are addressed, while students acquire job-related skills.

**Grant-funded Services**

**Healthcare Careers Alliance Program**

VSP’s Healthcare Careers Alliance (HCA) is a Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Employment Development-funded program that provides workforce development services to low-income, out-of-school youth ages 18-24 residing in Baltimore City and who possess a GED or high school diploma and an interest in entering the healthcare field. HCA is a funded collaboration between Sinai Hospital/VSP and Civic Works, Inc. Services include career assessment, job readiness, life skills training, paid internship and work training, transitioning into permanent employment at LifeBridge Health or other local healthcare institutions, or entrance into post-secondary training. Youth are supported for 12-months post-placement to ensure job retention and promote career ladder advancement.

**Grads2Careers**

VSP’s Grads2Careers program is a Baltimore’s Promise-funded program, serving young adults, ages 18-21, who are recent Baltimore City high school graduates, or GED recipients. Grads2Careers services follow the HCA program model.

**Pathways and Training in Healthcare (PATH)**

VSP’s PATH program is a West Baltimore Renaissance Foundation-funded initiative to provide vital workforce development services to 50 West Baltimore residents with interest in healthcare-related training and employment. Through PATH, participants will determine a career direction, gain healthcare-related certification through hard skills training and acquire work readiness through a paid internship at LifeBridge Health. Participants develop state-of-the-art skills to conduct an effective job search and are offered job placement assistance in applying at LifeBridge Health or with local employers. These placements can lead to financial independence and positive lifestyle changes. After placement, employed graduates receive 6-months of support and job retention services to ensure job success. Barriers to success are identified and addressed through referral to wrap-around support services.

**Career Empowerment**

In partnership with current LifeBridge Health community support services, VSP offers Career Empowerment program, an opportunity for individuals who have experienced domestic violence or other trauma, to determine career direction and acquire work readiness and job search skills through paid LifeBridge Health internships. Clients develop state-of-the-art skills to conduct an effective job search and are offered job placement assistance in applying at LifeBridge Health or with local employers. These placements can lead to financial independence and positive lifestyle changes. After placement, employed graduates receive 90 days of support and job retention services to ensure job success. Women’s barriers are identified and addressed through wrap-around support services, including financial assistance with childcare and bus passes, as needed.

**Business Services Division**

VSP operates a Business Services Division, which offers an array of business support services to LifeBridge Health, to federal, State, and local governments, and to private industry. These services include janitorial, digital printing, digital publishing, document and forms management, and direct marketing mail processing, packaging, and assembly. These services, in turn, provide jobs to over 140 individuals with disabilities, and training to many others.