**Orientation Center for the Blind Program Report**

**November 2023**

The Orientation Center for the Blind (OCB) is a Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) owned and operated residential immersion training facility that helps individuals with visual impairments adjust to blindness and prepare for competitive integrated employment.

In concurrence with the Blind Field Services (BFS) vision, the OCB vision is that every blind and visually impaired Californian who wants to work should be working; and every blind and visually impaired Californian who may not believe they can work, is provided the requisite counseling to overcome their barriers to employment.

## Training Status

On September 18, 2023, participants for the Fall Session began their 12-week on-site training program. The OCB Team continued the delivery of direct, in-person services to 16 consumers as follows:

* Computers and Related Technology training;
* One-on-One Daily Living Skills & Cooking instruction;
* Individual Orientation & Mobility instruction;
* Individual Braille instruction;
* Individual Vocational Counseling; and,
* Job Readiness and College Preparation classes.

## OCB Program Census Results Year-to-Date State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023/2024

* 14 participants are enrolled and receiving on site services in the OCB program in the month of November;
* OCB is currently serving three participants between the ages of 18 and 21;
* one DOR Adult with a disability is beginning their paid work experience in the cafeteria during November;
* Two DOR consumers completed their paid work experience with OCB in September. One consumer worked as a Food Service Technician in the cafeteria and the other worked as a Custodian.

## Outreach Efforts

As a means for advancing awareness about OCB, BFS/DOR, and promoting involvement and inclusion in the local community, outreach efforts continue to be a focus for staff. Additionally, maintaining regular communication by meeting with BFS counselors individually, attending BFS unit meetings, and participating in bimonthly BFS managers’ meetings have continued.

## Administrative and Personnel Updates

Eric Mazariegos has been hired as the OCB Administrator with a start date of October 1, 2023. Kerry Stamps will begin as the OCB Acting Assistant Administrator over Programs and Services in November.

Active job postings and interviewing as of this report include:

* Vocational Instructor Computers and Related Technologies.

## Curriculum Enhancement/Development/Strategic Planning

The following program enhancement activities and curriculum modifications have continued since the last BAC report:

* OCB participants attend the following seminars on the topics of healthy relationships, consent, and healthy boundaries: Boundaries in the Workplace; Safety While Out in the Community; and, Sexual Health and Education.
* OCB continues to be a paid work experience site for DOR students with disabilities.
* OCB continues to be a paid work experience site for DOR adults with disabilities.
* Orientation and Mobility two-week, 40 hour-Bootcamp continues.
* Work-Related and Skills Assessments continue.
* OCB is able to serve day-students.

## The Family Integration Program

OCB continued the Family Integration Program (FIP). The FIP’s goal is to support participants with the transition back to their homes and communities after training at OCB. FIP gives family/guardians the opportunity to discuss their loved one’s progress with OCB’s onsite rehabilitation counselor and teachers. Most of all, the collaboration and integration of family/guardians will assist in the smooth transition home so that the participants’ skills of independence will continue to be encouraged.

## **Gymnasium**

In response to participants’ requests, the gymnasium continues to be available for use.

## OCB Facility Improvement Projects

* A grease trap was installed in the cafeteria.
* Roof repairs ongoing.
* Completed final phase of internet service upgrade. Programming and activation of the new cable/port have been completed.
* Fire service waterline repairs to fix two leaks.
* Two electric vehicles added to OCB’s fleet.
* Working on the scope of work phase for the entire OCB campus fence replacement.
* Working on the scope of work phase for enhancing and replacing all existing campus security cameras.