



Testing Limits: Entering the workforce & the CVRP exam

By Katelyn Riley, Hons. BA, CVP

After completing my undergraduate degree in psychology at York University, I realized that vocational rehabilitation would be the perfect way to tie in what I learned in my undergrad with helping people with disabilities, so I enrolled in the York/Seneca rehabilitation program and found the classes captivating. While at Seneca, I learned about VRA Canada and CVRP. The presentations about these organizations pulled together everything we had learned in school and showed us how we could apply it in the working world.

I decided to participate in the testing phase of the CVRP exam because I was interested in taking a further leap in my career. I wanted to be able to work directly with individuals in assisting them in returning to work as well as conducting transferable skills analyses and labour market surveys. The opportunity to obtain an additional designation was extremely exciting to me. The exam consisted of seven different knowledge domains to ensure competency as a vocational rehabilitation professional. The domains included: vocational rehabilitation theory and practice; aspects of disability; vocational interviewing and counselling; vocational rehabilitation assessment and evaluation; diversity; job development and placement; and case management and disability management. The exam now consists of 9 domains. Although I was nervous going into the exam due to the lengthy study guide, I felt that the questions asked were very fair. I also felt that the questions were a true reflection of

the topics I had covered in the York/Seneca rehabilitation program. Finding out that I passed the exam was an extremely rewarding experience as I knew this would advance my career opportunities.

Janice Ray, of CVRP, and I worked together to get as many students as possible from my program to write the exam. I am a proud advocate of taking this exam as having the CVP designation is a necessary step in order for me to fully commit to a career in the rehabilitation field. I will be joining Janice Ray in presenting to first and second year students in the York/Seneca rehabilitation program on the benefits and rewards of writing the CVRP exam. I recommend writing the exam to both students as well as current rehabilitation professionals. The exam helped me apply theoretical knowledge to my work "in the real world." It broadened my horizons with respect to assisting someone with a specific disability in various ways. I also learned ways of helping people with mental illnesses, awareness of which is on the rise, which are not always easy to manage due to the non-physical symptoms. After writing the exam, I feel prepared to assist people back to work who are experiencing a multitude of varying disabilities. My sense of preparedness and confidence in dealing with individuals with disabilities is one of the greatest benefits I obtained from writing the CVRP exam.

I am currently working at AGS Rehab Solutions, where I have learned about WSIB as well as automobile, short-term and long-term disability insurers.

In addition to everything CVRP has provided me with professionally, I am very excited to be a member of VRA Canada. I enjoy being part of this professional community and am excited about all the career benefits its membership offers. The rehabilitation field is so broad; it interests me to learn about the different types of employment in the field through various VRA publications. The VRA website is a great resource and, as a life-long learner, I enjoy reading about opportunities to advance my education. I find it fulfilling to work in a field that encourages learning.

The rehabilitation field is growing and it is great to see so many professionals with various designations joining VRA. It really is a multi-disciplinary field and we couldn't do our jobs without the contributions of people from other sectors. I look forward to collaborating with all of these professionals in the future as I embark on what will hopefully be a long and fulfilling career in vocational rehabilitation. ☺



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