

Hello, my name is Geraldine Rivero. I am the Vocational Lead for The Disabilities Network of Eastern CT, Inc. We are one of five Independent Living Centers within Connecticut.

My consumers strive not only to contribute to their community but to become taxpaying citizens, just like you and me. Vocational services offered by DNEC assist individuals with visible and invisible disabilities in the Southeastern corner of the state in obtaining and maintaining competitive employment. Services include, but are not limited to, evaluations within real world work settings that are tailored based on the consumer's strengths, weaknesses, and disability barriers; fostering exchange of information with local businesses, creating professional and social contacts to assist with developing job sites for individuals; provide one-on-one mentoring to employed individuals who need the supports to learn or maintain skills related to their job; Educate individuals on interviewing skills, techniques and interpersonal skills.

Although 2020 was a challenging year across many areas. It was particularly challenging in employment services. However, vocational services were provided one-on-one to 59 individuals. These types of services helped those individuals with obtaining and retaining competitive employment, it helped them gain a greater sense of self-worth, provided them with income to put back into their communities and become taxpaying citizens.

Again, with the assistance of an Independent Living Center, more individuals with disabilities can accomplish their goals and, in the process, save the state money.

Please don't cut our funding as Independent Living Centers keep people in the community safe and teach individuals with disabilities in the State of Connecticut independent living skills to remain in the community and an integral part of our society.