

Eugene woman gets her personal and career independence back with help from Oregon Department of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation

By Christine Decker, Oregon Department of Human Services

With the help of Oregon's [Vocational Rehabilitation](#) (VR) program, Christy Albin transformed a debilitating diagnosis into a comeback story for her long-time mobile notary business, which she had originally established in 2012 under the name Lady of the Lake Mobile Notary.



When Albin's knees gave out in 2022, her thriving business came to a halt.

Diagnosed with bilateral osteoarthritis, the Eugene entrepreneur could no longer walk long distances or stand for extended periods — essential tasks for someone who regularly visited retirement homes, hospitals, and assisted living facilities to notarize wills, trusts and power of attorney documents.

"It was car-crash-level of pain in both knees," Albin said. "It was like having two flat tires. I could still walk a little ways, but I couldn't stand or walk very far. My knees would just buckle."

Albin could make it up a few stairs and a few steps, but most of her clients were down long halls, such as in nursing facilities. Her doctor sent her to be outfitted for a wheelchair. She needed it just to get to her mailbox and to be able to do many of her normal daily living tasks at home, such as cook and minor cleaning and anything that required extended time on her legs.

But she had no way to load her wheelchair into her Toyota RAV 4 to get to her clients. She feared losing her independence. And then she came across information online about VR.

"I saw a story about a man getting his vehicle outfitted for his mobility at his job. Vocational Rehabilitation helped him. If they could do that for me, I could get back to work," she said.

That same day, she called her local Vocational Rehabilitation office, which is part of the Oregon Department of Human Services.

Her first counselor, Chelsea Miller, recognized the urgency.

“As a Mobile Notary by trade, it was hard for her to travel to get to her clients. Her business had gone by the wayside,” Miller said.

Miller brought in mentor Shawn Winkler-Rios of Soloprenur to help her reimagine her business and write a business plan, which was subsequently submitted to OR VR for approval.

“She already knew the notary business,” Winkler-Rios said. “We identified gaps such as financial and marketing. We looked at strengths and weaknesses. I created an AI customized system for her.”

Albin’s determination impressed him.

“Christy really has that drive. When I was able to guide her, Christy would come back the next week and she had done what was needed. She’s a do-er,” Winkler-Rios said.

With a solid business plan in place, VR helped Albin develop an Individualized Plan for Employment, identifying what she already had in place from her previous Mobile Notary business and what she needed to relaunch the new business, Legal Eagles of the Lake..., a mobile notary service.

In December 2023, Stephanie Kirkland took over as Albin’s counselor and helped finalize the most critical piece: a new vehicle with a ramp for her wheelchair. Exact vehicle specifications were determined and the requests for bids were sent out in mid 2024. VR purchased the vehicle and it was delivered to Christy in November 2024.

VR secured a 2021 obsidian blue Honda Odyssey with a wheelchair ramp and wrapped it with Albin’s new business name and logo: [Legal Eagles of the Lake](#). The business name is a nod to her previous business, Lady of the Lake Mobile Notary and to her partner, Henry “Butch” Grambusch’s notary service, Eagle Mobile Notary. They frequently work together at the same appointment, sometimes one acting as a required “witness” if the signer needs a witness, or sometimes just for fast and efficient service for the client.

Grambusch’s and Albin also collaborate on marketing efforts, as well as work task efforts, as needed. His primary focus is on General Notary Work. Albin handles both General Notary Work as well as Loan Signings directly for Title Companies and Escrow Officers and occasionally works as a subcontractor to loan Signing Services from out-of-state.

VR also funded additional notary certifications and supported Albin in launching a marketing blitz, helping her reconnect with local title companies. She even printed branded t-shirts, posters, postcards, banners, and other logo-wear to promote her services.

“Now Christy is able to get back out there and start working again. She gets calls from people who used her in the past,” Kirkland said. “It’s so nice to see somebody who felt like they can’t work, to seeing the change in them.”

With her mobility restored, Albin’s business is thriving again. She is also bilingual in German, has emerging language skills in Spanish and French, all of which she uses in her businesses to help her customers when needed.

“I was just hired by a North Dakota title company for a Buyer’s signing, and I am also doing General Notary Work that includes signings for wills, trusts, powers of attorney forms, advanced healthcare directives and other basic documents that need to be notarized” she said. “I am now able to again take the attorney prepared documents out to clients. They are more comfortable meeting in libraries, cafes and public spaces or their homes to sign things privately. I know the notary laws. I have the experience. I enjoy it a lot.”

Albin is thankful for all the support that she receives through VR to help her get back to work and to be able to once again become financially independent doing the business that she has been doing for the past 13 years.

“Vocational Rehabilitation has given me so much, I am really amazed,” she said. “It is wonderful to be able to reclaim my personal and financial independence once again with the help of Oregon VR.”