



Two clients complete their sheltered employment support training by packaging the ball point pens in groups of 12.

S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons

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ment training programs from 45 weeks to 39 weeks.

Berger estimated the statewide rehabilitation program cuts total \$2.4 million, but he added that other OVR-sponsored services, including college occupational training programs and the like, also will be reduced in fiscal 1978.

Joan Hodum, executive director of Staten Island Aid, anticipated the reductions not only will have an impact on community-based day workshops but will affect general care of the handicapped.

She explained, for instance, that residents of group homes or foster homes are required to be engaged in a day care program, six hours a day, five days a week. "If the cuts are not restored," she said, "it will be impossible for us to accommodate the growing numbers in such residential programs."

The Willowbrook Developmental Center, Mrs. Hodum pointed out, is

under a court order to reduce its population from 2,500 to 250 in 1981. "That is why we were relying on more OVR money for support programs, not less," she said.

"In a time that deinstitutionalization is being stressed," Vincent Scalfani, director of Port Richmond's UCP satellite, contended, "these cuts seem rather inconsistent."

Of the 100 clients the Island's UCP center serves, approximately 75 are affected directly by state rehabilitation office funding, he said.

If the \$5-million shortfall in the OVR budget is not restored by the Legislature, Scalfani said, it would be virtually impossible for a retarded person to find a place in any rehabilitation day facility. "We have a waiting list now," he said, "and there would be no hope for ours or any other program."

Berger said the state office is "hoping and praying" the Legislature will approve a supplemental budget of ap-

proximately \$1.6 million so that rehabilitation facilities can be maintained at current levels.

The directors of workshops for the handicapped throughout New York State, including the two on the Island, plan to conduct a demonstration in front of Albany's state Department of Education building to protest the budget reductions. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is part of the department.