

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Human Services announces 2010 Leadership Program graduates

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services honored 17 graduates of the agency’s 2010 Leadership Development Program. Employees were selected from across the agency to participate in the 10-month program designed to help them explore leadership concepts, styles, and interpersonal traits while developing a greater understanding of the department’s programs and services, and its personnel, planning, and budgeting processes. Participants also learned about the legislative process and completed team projects.

Graduates included the following **Bismarck**-based employees: **Michelle Gayette**, West Central Human Service Center; **Lisa Hedstrom**, Economic Assistance Policy – Quality Control; **LuWanna Lawrence**, Executive Office; **Dawn Pearson**, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; **Andrea Peña**, State Council on Developmental Disabilities; **Patty Wanner**, Fiscal Administration; **Michelle Watne**, Information Technology Services; and **Diana Weber**, Children and Family Services.

Leadership program graduates from other department locations included: **Shelly Alexander**, Northwest Human Service Center, **Williston**; **Jerolyn Austin** and **Laurie Gotvaslee**, North Central Human Service Center, **Minot**; **Karla Bachmeier** and **Sherri Kleinknecht**, North Dakota State Hospital, **Jamestown**; **Amy Hultgren**, Lake Region Human Service Center, **Devils Lake**; **Karen Linstad**, North Dakota Developmental Center, **Grafton**; **Lynden Ring**, Badlands Human Service Center, **Dickinson**; and **LeAnn Pollert**, South Central Human Service Center, **Jamestown**.

“In order to provide quality services to the people of North Dakota, we need to attract and retain qualified and talented staff and to develop future leaders in the Department of Human Services,” said Executive Director Carol K. Olson. “With long-serving staff members retiring in increasing numbers, we recognized the benefit of establishing the leadership development program in 2008 to complement other professional development efforts and to support our succession planning.”

Olson said the department’s management team looks to program graduates, as well as other emerging leaders, as resources. About half of the 2008 graduates have either received a promotion or taken on additional responsibilities since completing the program.

The department is responsible for health and human services, which impact vulnerable North Dakotans, including thousands of children, elderly individuals, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals and families. The agency works in partnership with county social service offices and private providers of health care and other services. The department employs about 2,200 people. Many work directly with clients at the eight regional human service centers, regional child support enforcement offices, State Hospital, and Developmental Center. For information, go online to www.nd.gov/dhs.

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