

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services

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High School Teachers Learn About Available Services and Supports for Students with Disabilities

BISMARCK, N.D. – The N.D. Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) selected five high school teachers to participate in its Teacher Internship Project, which provides educators with an in-depth look at supports and services available for students with disabilities through the state's vocational rehabilitation program.

The individuals selected to participate in the internship project included Becky Backman, **Mandan**; Diane Boutilier, **Minot**; Sue Danielson, **Wahpeton**; Pam Smith, **Devils Lake**; and Lori Spaulding, **Bismarck**.

"This opportunity gave teachers a better understanding of how they could help a student with a disability become more successful by either pursuing employment or post-secondary training," said Russ Cusack, director of the department's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The three-week internship project included a three-day orientation focusing on disability-related legislation and regulations, an overview of the vocational rehabilitation process, building relationships, college options for people with intellectual disabilities, transitions and referrals. Participants also job shadowed a DVR counselor to learn about client intakes, writing eligibility statements, administering assessments, guidance and counseling, developing a comprehensive assessment, writing an employment plan, and reviewing financial aid letters. Their final project included the development of a resource portfolio to share with colleagues in their school, school district or special education unit.

Cusack said each participant earned three graduate credits through Minot State University for completing the project.

The DVR Teacher Internship Project was a joint effort between the N.D. Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, N.D. Department of Public Instruction, and Minot State University. This was the first year the project was offered to high school teachers.

For more information on services and supports offered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, go online to <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr>, or call 701-328-8950, or ND Relay TTY 1-800-366-6888.

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