

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505

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For more information, contact: Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933 or LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892.

Counselors Honored for Helping People with Disabilities to Achieve Employment

BISMARCK, N.D. - The N.D. Department of Human Services' (DHS) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation joins disability organizations nationwide in recognizing March 22 as National Rehabilitation Counselor Appreciation Day.

Last federal fiscal year, department vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors assisted 431 North Dakotans with significant disabilities to obtain competitive employment. About 4,500 state residents are currently receiving VR services.

VR counselors help qualifying individuals evaluate their interests, strengths, and abilities, set employment goals, and create plans to achieve those goals. Training, education, and job placement support are provided if appropriate. Adaptive aids and assistive technology may also be explored.

"Our qualified counselors are highly motivated and meet the highest level of professional standards," said Vocational Rehabilitation Division Director Russ Cusack. "It is a pleasure to honor these hardworking individuals who dedicate years of experience and expertise to provide professional VR counseling services leading to successful employment."

Cusack said there is an ongoing need for professionals in the field who have the expertise and passion to assist individuals with disabilities to reach their employment goals. The department employs over 40 VR counselors and is the largest provider of VR services in North Dakota.

For more information about the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and its services for individuals and employers, go online to www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/index.html, or call 701-328-8950, toll free 1-800-755-2745, ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888, or email dhsvr@nd.gov.

To find a North Dakota VR office, go online to www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/about/regional-contact.html.

Annually, Congress designates March 22 as National Rehabilitation Counselor Appreciation Day at the request of the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA).

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