

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 21, 2017**

Contacts: Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933 or LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892

## **Rehabilitation counselors recognized for connecting people to jobs**

BISMARCK, N.D. - The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors take work seriously. During the 2016 federal fiscal year, state vocational rehabilitation counselors provided individualized counseling and guidance to connect 3,371 people with disabilities to training, education and other employment-related services. They also helped 537 people become employed.

Division Director Russ Cusack said counselors are motivated by helping others achieve their goals, and they deserve the recognition traditionally bestowed by Congress designating March 22 as *National Rehabilitation Counselor Appreciation Day*.

The division also assists employers to retain workers experiencing vision loss, hearing loss, or other disabling conditions, and invests heavily in services for young adults with disabilities as they transition from high school to work.

Cusack said the division is pleased to support North Dakota's workforce development efforts. He credited division staff, the strong work ethic of people receiving VR services, supportive employers and partner agencies, and North Dakota's economy and low unemployment rate for contributing to the program's success.

In addition to employment-related services, the division also funds centers for independent living, as well as the Older Blind Program for people age 55 and older.

For information about the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and local office locations, go online to [www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/index.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/index.html) or contact the division at 701-328-8950, toll-free 800-755-2745, or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888, or [dhsvr@nd.gov](mailto:dhsvr@nd.gov).

###