PURPOSE STATEMENT
WE ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO IMPROVE THEIR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND WE ASSIST BUSINESSES IN SOLVING DISABILITY-RELATED ISSUES.
MESSAGE FROM THE SRC CHAIR

Honorable Doug Burgum
Governor of North Dakota
600 E Boulevard Ave
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Governor Burgum:

The ND State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is pleased to present the 2020 Annual State Report for the Vocational Rehabilitation Division. The report highlights the activities of the SRC and the ND Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the delivery of quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities throughout North Dakota. The report fulfills the requirements of 34 CFR Part 361.17(h) (5).

We look forward to working with the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the coming year to advocate for and assist North Dakotans with disabilities to obtain competitive integrated employment.

Respectfully,

Joseph J Hall
Chair, ND SRC
VISION, PURPOSE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF DVR

Vision

North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is the leader in disability-related solutions.

Purpose

We assist individuals with disabilities to be successfully employed.

Guiding Principles

- Serving our consumers is the primary focus of everything we do.
- Collaborative partnerships with employers are essential to our success.
- All people have value regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender, or disability.
- Good communication is essential to delivering quality rehabilitation services.
- Quality outcomes are a result of the commitment of consumers and qualified staff working together towards mutually agreed upon goals.
- Change is inevitable and provides opportunities for innovation and creativity.
- Effective partnerships are critical in achieving results for consumers.
- Informed choice is central to sound decision-making and allows decisions to be based on all relevant information, options, and consequences.
- When all things are equal, legal, and based on good rehabilitation counseling, decisions will be made in favor of the consumer.
EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES

Vocational Rehabilitation services include:

- **Professional Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling & Guidance**
  evaluations of strengths and how an individual’s disability may affect their ability to work, a comprehensive assessment of their rehabilitation needs, planning and implementing strategies to overcome barriers and helping the individual adjust to and live with a disability.

- **Employment**
  identification of an employment goal that is consistent with the individual strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, priorities, concerns, interests and informed choice.

- **Accommodations**
  adaptive aids, assistive technology, accessibility and work site evaluations to assist in achieving individual employment goals.

- **Training**
  tailored to meet individual rehabilitation needs and attain individual employment goals. This may include on-the-job training, internships, job mentoring, job coaching and/or academic training.

- **Job Placement**
  develop résumé writing skills and interview strategies, job referral, placement, and follow-up services.

Through a “dual client” approach, the division also assists business owners and employers through a variety of business and disability-related services, including:

- Staff Retention
- Accessibility and ADA Consultation
- Recruitment Source
- Financial Incentives
- Disability Consultation
- On-the-Job Training/Job Coach Services
- On-Site Consultation and Recommendations

These services are available to a legally operated and registered North Dakota business, non-profit organization, or government agency. There are no costs associated with services except for those accommodations or modifications chosen as a result of DVR recommendations.
PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES INCLUDE:

Pre-Employment Transition Services
services provided to students with disabilities ages 14-21 and includes self-advocacy training, workplace readiness training, work experience, counseling in post-secondary opportunities, and job exploration.

Accomplishments include:

- Established contracts with 15 school districts for a total of 62 schools throughout the state to provide pre-employment transition services to transition age youth with disabilities
- Served 2,241 students with disabilities through contracts and VR counselor services

"When I started working it built up my confidence. While working my VR counselor helped me with obtaining my bachelor’s degree and now I’m working with high school students to help them find their way. Thank you VR."

"If it wasn’t for VR helping me I would not have gotten my job. They will do whatever it takes to help the person achieve. I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for them."

"Thank you VR for helping me find my career. It was a long journey for me to get where I am and I’m grateful to be employed in a job where I can stay in my hometown."
The purpose of the North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is to advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) on issues concerning policy and program, delivery of services, and methods for reaching potential consumers.

The Council

- Informs and advises DVR on the effects its programs may be having on North Dakota communities and consumers
- Facilitates public input into the Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan
- Advocates for consumer rights and services
- Communicates to public and community leaders the purpose and need for vocational rehabilitation

The council members are selected to serve on the SRC by the Governor of North Dakota. They are selected to serve based on their interest, knowledge, and understanding of the needs of individuals with disabilities. Members are advocates for equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in their communities and throughout North Dakota.

The Council must have at least 17 members representing:

- 4 Business, Industry & Labor Sectors
- 1 Statewide Independent Living Council
- 1 Parent Training & Information Center
- 1 Client Assistance Program
- 1 Disability Advocacy Group Advocate
- 1 Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider
- 1 State Workforce Investment Board
- 1 Current or Former VR Applicant or Recipient
- 1 American Indian VR Program
- 1 Department of Public Instruction
- 1 Developmental Disabilities Division Director
- 1 ND Association of Community Providers (NDACP) Executive Director
- 1 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- 1 Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Director
SRC COMMITTEES

- PLANNING/EVALUATION COMMITTEE
- RESOURCE COMMITTEE
- MEMBERSHIP/PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
- EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

SRC RECOMMENDATIONS

- SRC REVIEWED AND APPROVED DVR POLICY.
- A COMMITTEE REVIEWED AND SELECTED THE 2020 STATEWIDE DVR EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR.

ND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

TINA BAY
Developmental Disabilities Division
Bismarck, ND

SHANNON COOK
Business/Industry Representative
South Heart, ND

JOSEPH HALL
Job Service ND
Bismarck, ND

UMA HOFFMANN
ND Workforce Development Council
Grand Forks, ND

RUSS CUSACK
Statewide Independent Living Council
Mandan, ND

TERESA LARSEN
Client Assistance Program
Bismarck, ND

CATHERINE QUINTANE
Vocational Rehabilitation
Bismarck, ND

MARSHALL LONGIE
Spirit Lake Vocational Rehabilitation
Fort Totten, ND

MATTHEW MCCLEARY
Federation of Families
Bismarck, ND

BRUCE MURRY
ND Association of Community Providers
Bismarck, ND

TERRY PETERSON
Rehab Services, Inc.
Velva, ND

GILLIAN PLENTY CHIEF
Good Road Recovery Center
Bismarck, ND

RENEE SPEIDEL-WETZSTEON
Federation of Families
Bismarck, ND

BRANDY JOHNSON
Halos Foundation Inc
Dickinson, ND

JASON SUTHEIMER
Job Service ND
Bismarck, ND

GERRY TEEVENS
Department of Public Instruction
Bismarck, ND

ROBYN THROLSON
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Bismarck, ND

TREVOR VANNEET
Statewide Independent Living Council
Bismarck, ND

JODI WEBB
Pathfinder, Parent Training and Information
Minot, ND
2020 Award Recipients
Two North Dakota businesses receive statewide awards for supporting the employment of people with disabilities

DAKOTA ESTATES RETIREMENT CENTER OF LIDGERWOOD

AND SCHEELS IN MINOT
BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has recognized two businesses for supporting an inclusive workforce by hiring, training and inspiring people with disabilities to excel in the workforce.

The agency and State Rehabilitation Council selected Dakota Estates Retirement Center of Lidgerwood as the 2020 North Dakota State VR Employer of the Year award recipient. Scheels of Minot was recognized with the You Make A Difference Award.

Dakota Estates Retirement Center was selected from among six nominees and was recognized for efforts to support and inspire individuals with disabilities to achieve employment goals and to reach their full potential in their community.

Fargo VR office team members who nominated Dakota Estates for the honor said the retirement center is willing to make opportunities work for individuals with disabilities and provides flexibility and stability along with a welcoming environment for both employees with disabilities and for VR clients.

“Dakota Estates has been blessed to serve as a host agency and to work with Vocational Rehabilitation,” said facility Administrator Curt Brownslee. “We have been fortunate to have had employees who have come to us through the Vocational Rehab Program, and it has definitely been a true joy to watch these individuals turn their disabilities into abilities, as they strive and work to accomplish their goals.”

These other nominees received honorable mention: Montessori of Minot Inc. – Acorn Hollow Early Learning Center, Minot; Sam’s Club, Grand Forks; Z’s Fresh Market, Ellendale; North Dakota Department of Human Services – Human Resources Division, Bismarck; and Walmart, Dickinson. All have established ongoing partnerships with the division and its regional offices and support the employment of people with disabilities.

The statewide You Make a Difference Award honors one business annually for consistently recognizing individuals’ unique abilities, providing work experience opportunities for students with disabilities, and actively supporting, developing and inspiring students to achieve goals in a competitive and integrated employment setting.

Scheels’ in Minot was recognized with the You Make a Different Award for providing students with disabilities with temporary work experiences in a variety of departments and roles so students could find a position matching their talents and interests and leading some to transition to long-term employment.
She said the division can help employers reach their employee recruitment and retention goals. Division staff members also provide assessments and counseling to help individuals identify strengths and goals, to connect individuals to training, education, assistive technology and supportive services and to provide job placement assistance.

To receive VR services, North Dakotans must have a disability that is an obstacle to employment, and they must want to work and be available to work.

Nominators also praised the store’s workplace culture. They said work experience students from the Minot area feel welcomed and accepted from the moment they begin the HR onboarding process, through on-the-job training and afterwards as students work alongside experienced employees who are quick to answer questions and assist as needed.

Kim Popinga, the human resource assistant store lead for Scheels in Minot, commented on the recognition. “Scheels is very honored to receive the You Make A Difference Award from VR. We enjoy the ability to make a difference in the lives of the individuals VR serves. Scheels takes great pride in seeing them achieve the personal goals they set for themselves, and we are so grateful for the unique talents, contagious smiles and great attitude they bring to our store every day.”

Acting VR Division Director Robyn Throlson said, “The division is happy to recognize this year’s business award recipients who have collaborated with us and our agency partners to give individuals opportunities to achieve their employment goals and work competitively, utilizing their unique strengths and abilities.

She said the division can help employers reach their employee recruitment and retention goals. Division staff members also provide assessments and counseling to help individuals identify strengths and goals, to connect individuals to training, education, assistive technology and supportive services and to provide job placement assistance.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Expenditures $13.8 Million
Individuals Employed 525
Average weekly earnings before rehabilitation $172.29
Average weekly earnings after rehabilitation $468.05
Individuals receiving training and other services 3363
Percent of individuals served who have a significant disability 94%

RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

DVR uses ROI to show how clients benefit economically from VR services as well as how their increased income positively impacts the economy.

- For every dollar spent by DVR, clients earn $9.12.
- For every dollar spent by DVR, the clients pay back $1.82 in taxes.
PRIMARY IMPAIRMENTS OF INDIVIDUALS ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT
OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT

- Administrative Support: 21%
- Executives/Managerial: 3%
- Craft Workers: 7%
- Laborers: 8%
- Operatives: 12%
- Professionals: 11%
- Sales: 6%
- Service: 29%
- Technicians: 3%
58% of NDVR's Case Service Expenditures was for training individuals with disabilities.

Training Services include:
- Postsecondary Tuition
- On the Job Training
- Work Experience
- Job Development
- Supported Employment
- Customized Employment

- Assessment/Evaluation: 6%
- Maintenance: 4%
- Tool/Supplies/Small Business Services: 5%
- Adaptive Aids/Interpreters/Personal Attendant/Vehicle Modifications/Student Support Services: 7%
- Benefits Planning: 5%
- Transportation: 1%
- Treatment/Restoration: 13%
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND THE NORTH DAKOTA DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

VISIT WWW.ND.GOV/DHS/DVR