

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 325, Bismarck ND 58505**

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North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation employees recognized

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) recently recognized employees from its regional offices across the state for their work helping people with disabilities become employed.

The division presented **Brenda Vennes** of the Minot DVR office with the *Director's Award for Excellence*. Peers nominated Vennes for this prestigious award for demonstrating dedication, productivity, and dependability while leading the division's ongoing business services effort.

Jennifer Moldenhauer of the Jamestown DVR office and **Kyle Peterson** of the Minot office received the *Award for Counselor Achievement*. This award recognizes the top 10 percent of counselors who helped the most people become employed.

Minot office employee **Tanya Ide**, Fargo employee **Rebecca Martin**, and Jamestown employee **Heather Haugan-Messmer** received the *Award for Counselor Achievement–Honorable Mention*, which recognizes counselors who had the second highest number of clients placed into employment.

DVR presented **Bev Turbiville** and her colleagues in the **Dickinson DVR office** with the *Exemplary Service Award* for providing outstanding case service to clients through creative thinking, direct work with multiple agencies, and consistent client follow-up. Dickinson office employees also received the *VR Team Participation Award* for their involvement in community activities on behalf of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The division named Minot office employee **Rebecca Schmaltz** *Rookie of the Year*. This award honors a DVR employee who has less than two years of service, exceeds performance goals, and displays a high level of community service and involvement.

The division also presented *Career Achievement Awards*, which are based on the number of people with disabilities placed into employment over the course of a vocational rehabilitation counselor's career. This recognition begins at the *100 Club Award* level and increases in increments of 100.

Derek Kimmes, of the Jamestown office, and **Ann Yatskis** of the Fargo office, received the *Career Achievement–100 Club Award*, and **Lori Petrick** and **Frank Strom** of the Grand Forks DVR office received the *Career Achievement–300 Club Award*.

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Vocational rehabilitation professionals help individuals with disabilities achieve their employment goals. Division staff members provide assessments and counseling to help clients identify strengths and goals, connect individuals to training, education, assistive technology, and supportive services, and provide job placement assistance.

DVR also connects businesses to new employees to meet their workforce needs, and provides assistance so businesses can retain employees affected by disabilities and find solutions to other disability-related issues.

Information on vocational rehabilitation services is available online at www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/index.html and by contacting the division at 701-328-8950, toll-free 800-755-2745, TTY 701-328-8968 or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888.

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