

**NEWS from the N.D. Department of Human Services  
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck ND 58505-0250**

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

## **Businesses honored for supporting employment of people with disabilities**

BISMARCK, N.D. - The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) announced that **Bethel Lutheran Nursing and Rehabilitation Center of Williston** has been named the *2016 North Dakota State DVR Employer of the Year*.

The State Rehabilitation Council and the division selected the nursing facility from among eight regional employer award recipients. Bethel representatives accepted the award during a recognition luncheon at the DVR annual training last week in Bismarck.

The annual award honors North Dakota business owners and employers for their efforts to support, develop, and inspire individuals with disabilities to achieve employment goals and to reach their full potential in their community.

**Regional award recipients included: Auto Therapy**, Bismarck; **Drayton Foods, LLC**, Fargo; **Big Sioux Cafe**, Grand Forks; **Valley City Barnes County Public Library**, Valley City; **K-Mart**, Devils Lake; **Taco John's**, Dickinson; and **Somerset Court**, Minot. Award nominees and recipients have established ongoing partnerships with the division and its eight regional offices.

"Award recipients include a variety of businesses who each have demonstrated a commitment to recruiting and retaining individuals with disabilities to meet their workforce needs," said DVR Division Director Russ Cusack. "Their inclusive recruitment strategies have created outstanding opportunities for individuals with disabilities to become employed and engaged within their communities."

**Paradiso** of Fargo received a new award recognizing youth employment. DVR officials presented the "You Make a Difference" award to Paradiso for providing work experience opportunities for students with disabilities and for consistently recognizing 'ability' in disability.

"Employers can make a huge difference in the path students will follow as they transition out of school and into the adult world," Cusack said.

Vocational rehabilitation services help people with disabilities find meaningful work and also help employers connect with a valuable, often untapped workforce, as well as retain trained workers whose abilities have changed. Rehabilitation counseling and consultation is available at no cost to qualifying individuals and businesses, non-profits, and government agencies.

For information, visit [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, TTY 701-328-8968 or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888, or via email at [dhsvr@nd.gov](mailto:dhsvr@nd.gov).

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