

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

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Business engagement expert to lead training at vocational rehabilitation conference

BISMARCK, N.D. – Monica Zumach, an expert on creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities by engaging businesses, is the featured trainer at the North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s annual training conference, Oct. 25-27, at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck.

Over 100 participants, including state and tribal vocational rehabilitation professionals and business services specialists, community service providers, advocates and representatives from the centers for independent living in North Dakota are expected to attend to learn strategies for providing excellent customer services to employers and job seekers.

“The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act directs public workforce development agencies to focus on meeting the needs of both employers and jobseekers, including youth and adults with disabilities,” said acting division director Robyn Throlson. “This training will help the division become a better partner with businesses and connect more people to work, including those with significant barriers to employment.”

Zumach, who consults nationally on supported employment, marketing strategies and job development for people with disabilities, enhancing job coaching, will lead training on conducting environmental analyses to identify the types of jobs and skills needed at worksites, engaging businesses and negotiating with employers, and available employer incentives. She is the director of technical assistance and training at WISE in Seattle.

Frances Smith of VR Development Group will provide ethics training for counselors on ensuring respectful boundaries. Gary Bornsen of the North Dakota School for the Blind will discuss technology applications (apps) for people with vision loss, and Jeannie Kroll of ND Assistive will provide information about wearable apps benefitting people with disabilities.

Other training sessions focus on diabetes and its impact on vision and complications that make self-management difficult, the basics of orientation and mobility, serving students with hearing impairments, working with Native Americans, work safety, therapeutic responses through positive behavior, and signs and symptoms of stress and job burnout. The conference also features an annual awards ceremony recognizing employers and vocational rehabilitation professionals.

Last federal fiscal year, the North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation made over 2,200 employer contacts and helped 613 North Dakotans with disabilities obtain competitive, integrated employment in their community.

Information about services is available online at www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/index.html or by contacting the division at 1237 W. Divide Ave., Suite 1B, Bismarck, N.D., 58501, 701-328-8950, toll-free 800-755-2745, ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888 or dhsvr@nd.gov.

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