



## NEWS RELEASE

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# NEBRASKA VR JOINS BROAD EFFORT TO OBSERVE NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

Nebraska VR today announced its participation in National Disability Employment Awareness Month, an annual awareness campaign that takes place each October. The purpose of National Disability Employment Awareness Month is to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. This year's theme is "America's Workforce: Empowering All"

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

"Americans of all abilities must have access to good, safe jobs," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. "Smart employers know that including different perspectives in problem-solving situations leads to better solutions. Hiring employees with diverse abilities strengthens their business, increases competition and drives innovation."

Reflecting this year's theme, throughout the month, Nebraska VR will be acknowledging a variety of Nebraska businesses across the state for their partnerships in providing Work-Based Learning Experiences for students with disabilities. Their partnerships provide real-life skills and experience to help develop employability for students and disability-friendly work cultures. The businesses recognized will be featured on social media outlets throughout the month.

"Nebraska VR is proud to be a part of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month," said Nebraska VR Director Lindy Foley. "We want to spread the important message that the key to empowering all in the workforce is to build a workforce inclusive of the skills and talents of all individuals, including individuals with disabilities."

To learn more visit Nebraska VR's website <http://www.vr.nebraska.gov/>

Employers and employees in all industries can learn more about how to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month and ways they can promote its messages — during October and throughout the year — by visiting.

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