



NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov)

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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 the public about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. This year's theme is, "The Right Talent, Right Now."

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 as "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 or NDEAM.

"Every day, individuals with disabilities add significant value and talent to our workforce and economy," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. "Individuals with disabilities offer employers diverse perspectives on how to tackle challenges and achieve success. Individuals with disabilities have the right talent, right now."

Reflecting this year's theme, Nebraska VR will be engaging in activities throughout the month to educate partners about disability employment issues and its commitment to an inclusive work culture. These efforts include social media campaigns designed to recognize business partners who have either hosted work-based learning opportunities for students in a real-life work setting or provided adult job seekers with on-the-job experiences. The Lincoln Service Office will also host an event to educate area businesses about building an inclusive workforce, disability etiquette, customized employment, and tax credits.

"Nebraska VR is proud to be a part of this year's NDEAM," said Nebraska VR Director Lindy Foley. "Workers with disabilities are an essential part of our state's future. With considerable growth and investment in Nebraska and consistently low unemployment rates, there are thousands of open jobs available. Businesses who adopt inclusive hiring practices have the opportunity to manage this growth by accessing Nebraska VR's untapped pool of skilled job seekers."

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 <http://www.dol.gov/ndeam>.

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David Jespersen