



NEWS RELEASE

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NEBRASKA VR RECEIVES \$8.4 MILLION GRANT TO EXPAND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The United States Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has funded Nebraska VR's Career Pathway Advancement Project through September 30, 2026 with a \$8,469,796 Grant Award. The Disability Innovation Fund – Career Advancement Initiative Model Demonstration Project Grant will be used to advance careers and open new opportunities to advance or enter a career pathway for eligible individuals with disabilities. A proven Upskill/Backfill business model will be used to meet the needs of both businesses seeking skilled employees and individuals with disabilities beginning January 2022.

Eligible individuals with disabilities, including previously served Nebraska VR clients, will be provided with the tools to advance in high-demand, high-quality careers, such as science, technology, engineering, math, computer science, construction, healthcare, manufacturing and transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL) careers through apprenticeship and training programs. The goal of the grant is to improve and maximize competitive integrated employment outcomes, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion in both work and community while reducing reliance on public benefits.

"We are pleased to announce the grant award as a follow up to October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month or NDEAM. This grant is aligned with this year's theme 'America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion'," said Nebraska VR Director Lindy Foley. "The grant and the use of Upskill/Backfill model will support the state's and the nation's recovery from the challenges of the pandemic through continued partnerships with businesses and work with clients to advance careers."

More details about the grant and the Career Pathway Advancement Project can be found online at <http://vr.nebraska.gov/pathways/index.html>.

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