



Communications Office

News Release

Vocational Rehabilitation • Florida Department of Education
Tallahassee, FL 32301 • (850) 245-3415 • Fax: (850) 245-3362 • www.rehabworks.org

For Media Use:
October 29, 2012

Contact: Rachel Smith
850-245-3415 or
850-727-3149

Hiring People with Disabilities Benefits Employers

By Aleisa McKinlay

“A person with a disability is often more loyal and dedicated; you can count on them to come to work,” says Walmart representative Joel Hullet. “It’s more than a good business practice; it’s the best thing to do for my business.” Linda Nunes with T.J. Maxx has had similar experiences. “You get so much more out of it [hiring people with disabilities] than any amount of money,” she says. “You can’t buy that kind of feeling. It’s so rewarding.”

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. It’s a time to learn about the advantages of employing qualified people with disabilities. It’s also a time to spread the word about how this untapped workforce can become a valued and vibrant source of productivity and increase your bottom line.

By focusing on Disability Employment Awareness Month, employers are reminded that people with disabilities should not be overlooked when filling job openings. Unfortunately, that is often the case, and it has been particularly difficult during the economic downturn.

“People with disabilities are available for employment, want to be employed, and are prepared to be employed,” says Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Communications Director Rachel Smith. “Employers just need to give them a chance.” Walmart, T.J. Maxx, Walgreens and Publix are among those businesses tapping into this valuable pool of qualified, dependable employees.

“Businesses that give our customers a chance to show the valuable contributions they can make in a workplace stand to benefit greatly, not only because they get loyal, hard-working employees, but also from other incentives,” says VR Director Aleisa McKinlay.

VR offers On-the-Job-Training (OJT), a program that gives VR customers the opportunity to work in an actual job site and gain real-world experience. VR pays 100 percent of the employee’s salary during OJT and for any accommodations that may be needed. It’s a win-win situation for both employers and employees.

Hiring people with disabilities makes financial sense, and it also helps businesses achieve their long-term goals. People with disabilities are dependable and stick with their employers. That means

MORE

less time and cost for recruitment, hiring, and training, and more time for getting work done.

VR helps people with disabilities find or maintain employment by providing services that prepare them for the working world. Understanding that businesses of all sizes continue to struggle in this economy, they are encouraged to reach out to VR when positions open to find their next employee.

Employers can post jobs for free and search for talent at FLJobConnections.com. To learn more about VR services and the advantages of hiring people with disabilities, visit Rehabworks.org.

That first step can lead to a more fulfilling lifestyle and a more diverse workforce that benefits everyone.

Florida's Vocational Rehabilitation program is committed to helping people with disabilities become part of America's workforce. Our employer-focused website, **FLJobConnections.com**, allows businesses to search at no charge for employees who are ready to go to work, as well as to post available jobs. VR has 80 offices across Florida, and last year helped 6,071 Floridians with significant disabilities find or keep a job. For more information about VR and its services, call (800) 451-4327 or visit **Rehabworks.org**.

###

REMINDER FOR MEDIA--When reporting on stories about people with disabilities, remember to use language that puts the person first, rather than the disability. For example, use phrases such as "people with disabilities" (instead of "the disabled") and "person who uses a wheelchair" (rather than "wheelchair bound"); and "people with a mental illness" (rather than "the mentally ill").