

Dept. of Workforce Development: Gov. Walker proclaims October as Disability Employment Awareness Month

Posted on Wednesday, Oct 4, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

CONTACT: DWD Communications, [608-266-2722](tel:608-266-2722)

On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

On Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/WIWorkforce>

On Twitter: @WIWorkforce

Throughout October, DWD and workforce officials will recognize workers with disabilities and their employers

MADISON – Governor Scott Walker has [proclaimed](#) October as Disability Employment Awareness Month to recognize the contributions that individuals with disabilities make to Wisconsin's economy and highlight this vital segment of Wisconsin's workforce. Throughout the month, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) officials and workforce partners throughout the state will recognize individuals with disabilities who work across Wisconsin and the employers who have recognized the value that they bring to their workforce.

"Over past six federal fiscal years, over 25,000 individuals with disabilities have achieved their employment goals to work, earn income and move toward greater independence," Governor Walker said. "Disability Employment Awareness Month provides another way to recognize this critical population in our labor force and encourage employers looking for skilled talent to hire job seekers with disabilities."

In federal fiscal year 2017, over 4,100 individuals with disabilities reached their employment goals, with estimated annual earnings of nearly \$75 million. From federal fiscal year 2012 through 2017, the estimated annual earnings of all DVR consumers who reached their employment goal is over a half-billion dollars.

"Thanks to the hard work of DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff, along with employer partners and local organizations, together we are advancing opportunities for these highly talented and dedicated workers to fill employers' needs for skilled talent," DWD Secretary Ray Allen said. "We thank Governor Walker and the Wisconsin Legislature for investing in our ongoing work, and we appreciate the national recognition Wisconsin has received through

organizations such as RespectAbility.”

The RespectAbility [study](#) ranked Wisconsin in the top 10 for the percentage of individuals with disabilities who were employed in the state in 2015. Wisconsin’s 41 percent employment rate for individuals with disabilities outpaced numerous Midwest states including Ohio, Michigan and Indiana.

Wisconsin was also recently [recognized](#) at the Project SEARCH National Conference in Pocono Manor, PA for having the **3rd highest number of Project SEARCH sites recognized**. Three Wisconsin Project SEARCH sites were recognized for having a 100 percent successful employment outcome for the 2015-2016 school year: Aspirus Riverview Hospital and Clinics in Wisconsin Rapids, Kalahari Resort in the Wisconsin Dells, and Ministry St. Joseph’s Hospital in Marshfield. Six additional sites were recognized for achieving successful employment outcomes between 80 and 89 percent and two sites were recognized for successfully placing between 70 and 79 percent of Project SEARCH participants.

During Disability Employment Awareness Month, dozens of Wisconsin businesses will be honored for their commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce while highlighting individual success stories of DVR consumers.

[Division of Vocational Rehabilitation website](#)

[The Governor’s Disability Employment Awareness Month Proclamation](#)