IDHS/DRS helps more than 5,000 individuals with disabilities find jobs

Program provides necessary tools to earn a living wage and become more independent

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois – A program operated by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) helped 5,155 individuals with significant disabilities find gainful employment last year (fiscal year 2014). This was the third consecutive year of positive growth for the program, with more than 15,000 people with disabilities becoming employed during that time period.

“The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program helps people with disabilities find quality employment that pays a living wage and offers a chance for advancement and independence,” said IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler. “This is just one of the ways we work in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to help them achieve full community participation through employment, education and independent living opportunities.”

Many people with disabilities of working age (16-64 years old) are eligible for VR services. Eligible individuals are those who have a significant physical or mental impairment that impedes their ability to go to work. IDHS provides services in 46 local offices located in communities throughout the state.

DRS, the state’s lead agency for services for people with disabilities, also works with corporate partners and offers training, education and incentives to increase the number of people with disabilities in the workforce.

In addition, the division assists high school students who have disabilities plan for their futures after graduation through our Transition and Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP). The Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program helps people who receive SSDI/SSI benefits understand how working will affect their benefits. The Supported Employment Program (SEP) serves eligible people with significant disabilities who want to go to work and need on-going support services to succeed on the job.

For more information and personal success stories, please visit www.dhs.state.il.us.
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