

# Partnerships for Employment

## News for Nevada Businesses

...teamwork to build a stronger Nevada workforce



### Sometimes all it takes is a little help to pull yourself up by your boot straps

Almost a year ago, Alice came to the Nevada State Welfare Division seeking help. She wasn't much different than the hundreds of women who came before her. She was young, abused, and had nowhere else to turn.

The emotional baggage that she arrived with was enough to overwhelm most people. But Alice was different. She was determined. She had a vision of becoming self-sufficient and carving out a better life for herself and her four children.

Achieving what on the surface seems simple was not going to be easy for Alice. She had clinical depression, was a victim of domestic violence, had only a seventh grade education, possessed few job skills, had a language barrier, and her children were almost out of control. In other words, Alice's life was a mess.

It wasn't long before she began attending counseling and taking anti-depressant medication. She and her children moved in to subsidized housing, and she entered training at the Culinary Union. She applied for, and was granted Social Security Disability

*BOOTSTRAPS .....Continued on other side*

### In a perfect world no one would have to worry about...

- .. Age
- .. Color
- .. Disability
- .. Gender
- .. National Origin
- .. Race
- .. Religion
- .. Sexual Orientation



State of Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation  
Nevada Equal Rights Commission

**In a not so perfect world** the Nevada Equal Rights Commission can help employers learn how to uphold discrimination laws and how to make a conscious effort to end discrimination in the work place.

The Nevada Equal Rights Commission (NERC) oversees the state's equal rights program, handling discrimination complaints relating to age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation when the discrimination is linked to employment or the Americans With Disabilities Act. The commission also handles complaints regarding retaliation for discrimination suits.

NERC works in cooperation with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Justice in the administration and referral of complaints regarding discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations.

NERC Administrator Lynda Parven, said often discrimination

*NOT SO PERFECT WORLD .....Continued on other side*



Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation  
and  
Department of Human Resources, Welfare Division

...proud partners in the Nevada JobConnect system



## In a not so perfect world..... from page 1

complaints are filed against an employer when the complaint is completely avoidable. More often than not, when people define discrimination, they think only of overt acts. They don't take into consideration subtle behaviors that make up the largest number of complaints that we receive, she said.

Discrimination is an ongoing problem in the workplace and education is the primary solution. Although every day a few more companies adopt a zero-tolerance discrimination policy, Nevada is far from being a *Discrimination-Free Zone*, Parven said.

All employers should take a hard stance against discrimination, she advised. But to effectively draw the line in the sand they must first thoroughly familiarize themselves and their management staff with the true definition of each type of discrimination.

Parven says adopting a policy is merely the beginning. Enforcing the policy is the true test of any business' intent to have zero-tolerance for discrimination. One way to take the first step is for upper management to take a long hard look at their behavior and the behavior of the company's employees, she suggested.

Parven is a firm believer in the value of employers being proactive in curtailing discrimination in the workplace. Creating a more positive work environment for all employees creates a win-win culture, she said. Employees don't spend time worrying about being discriminated against, which means in most situations their productivity will be higher. "In other words, a hostile work environment affects your bottom line," she advised.

NERC provides a wealth of information to help employers enhance their knowledge regarding discrimination. Several brochures are available from NERC offices or on the

department's web site at [www.NVDETR.org](http://www.NVDETR.org) such as

- Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide
- Stop Sexual Harassment on the job
- Nevada Equal Rights Commission Fact Sheet & Frequently Asked Questions

In addition to printed and on-line materials, Nevada businesses may request training from the agency.

"Ignorance never negates an employer's responsibility to provide a work environment free of discrimination. NERC can help employers create a discrimination-free workplace which can also help avoid having discrimination complaints filed against them," Parven said.

## Boot straps..... from page 1

benefits for two of her three disabled children.

In a few months Alice became a certified Cook's Helper. Armed with that certificate and a more positive outlook on life she landed a full-time job.

In less than a year she has discontinued taking the medication and stopped going to counseling. She is holding her family together and carving out that vision of a better life. Alice has achieved many of the goals she initially set when she first sought help from the Nevada State Welfare Division. She is self-sufficient, and continues to look for a higher paying job to provide even more for her family.

Her short-term success of being on the job for six months earned her a \$350 bonus from the division's retention program.

Alice's long-term success will be measured by the happiness she and her children find. Her steadfast determination will more than likely take care of the rest.

Employers can receive tax credits for hiring individuals like Alice. Contact your nearest welfare Division office for more information.



**Economic and  
labor market  
information you  
can use today**

- ✓ *State and local*
- ✓ *Employment and industry*
- ✓ *Jobs, workers, and wages*

**NO COST  
to you!**

Log on NOW

[www.NevadaJobConnect.com](http://www.NevadaJobConnect.com)

or call

Southern Nevada (702) 486-0129  
Northern & Rural Nevada (775) 688-1169

Nevada JobConnect

... a proud member of America's Workforce Network  
National toll-free hotline (800) US2-JOBS