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State's rehabilitation experts observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month

CARSON CITY—As the nation observes National Disability Employment Awareness Month throughout October, the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation's Rehabilitation Division is counting on the observance to draw attention to the value of providing employment opportunities to people with disabilities.

During October the division is heightening its focus on public education about programs and services for the rehabilitation and training of disabled job seekers. Division Administrator Mick Coleman said, "Although we work year-round providing services to both employers and disabled individuals, this is a perfect time to enhance community awareness for a wider acceptance and greater understanding of the value of hiring people based on ability —not disability."

"We encourage Nevada's employers to explore the value of hiring workers with disabilities," Coleman said, explaining, when employers hire workers who happen to have a disability it's a win-win situation: disabled workers find their place in Nevada's workplace —and employers not only add a loyal member to their staff, they can also receive monetary incentives such as tax credits through several programs designed to put the abilities of disabled Nevadans to work.

Coleman noted that about 10 percent of people ages 16-64 have an employment disability. That figure equates to more than 225,000 Nevadans with employment disabilities. More than half of those people are working —but thousands more are capable and willing to become a viable part of Nevada's work force.

Coleman urges employers to contact the department's local Rehabilitation Division or Nevada JobConnect office to learn more about programs and services that can help almost any employer find the abilities of disabled workers. Employers may also call (775) 688-1450 in Reno, (775) 684-4040 in Carson City, or (702) 486-5230 in Las Vegas. There is also a wealth of information about the Rehabilitation Division on the department's Internet Web site at www.NVDETR.org.

