



# ICED NEWS

State Interagency Committee On Employees With Disabilities

Volume 9, Number 1

June 2006

## WOULD YOU ATTEND ICED TRAINING?

ICED is planning a series of training classes/conferences on career advancement issues. These programs will be offered to employees free of charge and available through teleconferencing or the internet. Dates are to be determined with a tentative list of topics to include:

- Breaking Down the Barriers: Maximizing Your Potential as an Employee. Presented by Robin Jones, Executive Director, Great Lakes ADA & Disability Center. June 28, 2006, 1-2 PM
- What is the Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities? Representative of Co-Chairs, ICED: Marva Campbell-Pruitt and Susan Allen (50 min. includes 10 min. Q & A)
- Tools and Strategies for Success in State Employment. Guest Presenters: Healthcare & Family Services Trainers (50 min. including 10 min. Q & A)
- Mentors and Networks: Legislative Advocacy Guest Presenters: (50 min. w/ 10 min. Q & A)

If you or anyone you know would be interested in participating in these training classes/conferences, please contact Susan Allen, Department of Human Rights, [susan\\_allen@cms.state.il.us](mailto:susan_allen@cms.state.il.us)



## BEST PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN STATE GOVERNMENT

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued their "Final Report on Best Practices For the Employment of People with Disabilities In State Government." This report highlights best practices of nine states that promote the hiring, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities in state government jobs.

Despite progress made since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, people with disabilities still experience unemployment at a rate far above the national average. With more than five million workers nation-wide and with the unique opportunities they have to serve as model employers, state governments can play a significant role in enhancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The governors of the nine participating states voluntarily allowed the EEOC to review a wide range of best practices affecting individuals with disabilities who are state government employees or applicants for state employment. The EEOC examined state government practices related to:

- the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities for state jobs;
- the provision of reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities;
- the retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities within state government; and
- the employment of people with disabilities more generally - that is, in both public and private sector jobs.

This report also lists a number of what may be inadvertent barriers to the employment, retention, and advancement of qualified individuals with disabilities. The EEOC suggest that all states evaluate their practices to determine whether they include these or other barriers.

This report has two purposes. First, all employers, including the participating states, can learn from the best practices outlined in this report. Second, it offers states free, informal technical assistance to promote voluntary compliance with the ADA.

A link to this report can be found on the ICED website.

### MENTORING DAY

In 2004, the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DHS/DRS), hosted its first statewide Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) with 55 students with disabilities participating in communities throughout Illinois. In 2005, DRS expanded DMD to Disability Mentoring Week in response to requests for greater flexibility in scheduling mentoring experiences. The expansion was a phenomenal success: 116 individuals with disabilities were paired with employers throughout Illinois during the week of October 17-21, 2005.

What happens on Disability Mentoring Day™ varies to best fit the needs of all parties. The following is an example of one experience.



*Participants help with the Disability Mentoring Day luncheon*

Community based agencies which included the local One-Stop/Disability Navigator, Community Rehabilitation Center, West Central Illinois Center for Independent Living, along with John Schnauer, who represented DHS-DRS, formed a committee to orchestrate local mentoring activities.

These activities included a business luncheon where the mayor of Quincy, Illinois declared October 19, 2005 as Disability Mentoring Day while local TV and radio stations highlighted Mentoring Day in the city. And local employers enthusiastically participated. During the luncheon, representatives spoke about the great relationships and interests developed between customers and businesses. The participants discussed their experiences at the job site. Local agencies briefly summarized available services.



*John Schnauer is a DHS-DRS counselor in the Quincy is interviewed by the local NBC affiliate.*

Because of this effort, several employment outcomes were achieved. Six customers were matched with employers. A person with a disability was provided a job shadowing opportunity that was beneficial. Another mentored at a grocery store preparing meals for the buffet and deli. He was offered and accepted a position at their new store working part-time while he is finishing school. Two persons with disabilities worked in the kitchen and housekeeping units at the Senior Center. One was offered and accepted a position as a kitchen helper. Knapheide, a metal fabrication plant, provided a job match with a person interested in working in their office, possibly as a computer programmer. At this time, a position is not available but when one becomes available, it is certain this DRS customer will be strongly considered. Another person with a disability was matched with Home Depot because of his interests in gardening and other outside activities. An offer is anticipated in the spring when the Lawn and Garden department opens.

## !! SUCCESS STORIES !!

In a continuing effort to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities and promote awareness of the work state agencies are doing, the ICED has added the *success stories* section to this newsletter.

### Department of Transportation

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is an agency that has received awards from ICED over the last several years. This agency has hired numerous ICED interns, some of whom gained permanent employment following their successful internships. IDOT is currently in the process of placing two summer interns with disabilities in permanent positions within the agency.

IDOT has also worked in the last year in a unique partnership with the Division of Rehabilitation Services, United Cerebral Palsy, and the Blind Services Vending program to provide transitional employment opportunities for school-aged youth with disabilities in the food service and clerical fields. Currently, this program is serving seven students with disabilities, and an additional five students are forthcoming. Through these efforts, one student has already obtained permanent employment for the coming year. IDOT's Harry Hanley Building is the pilot location for the project that will soon be operated on a statewide basis.

For more information about IDOT's program, you can call the EEO/AA Officer, Elbert Simon, at (217) 782-2762, or Dave Dailey, at (217) 557-5900.

### Student Assistance Commission

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission continues its affirmative action efforts in cooperation with local agencies to reach and attract disabled job applicants. The agency maintains a relationship with a number of organizations that have provided qualified applicants with disabilities for employment, including the Chicagoland Project with Industry, the Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Job Resources for the Disabled, and the Northeastern Illinois University-Handicap Educational Liaison Program, among others. The agency also believes that reaching out to high schools will provide a qualified pool of candidates with disabilities. It maintains a relationship with District 214, Prevocational Program.

For more information on this agency's program, call William Merrell, at (847) 831-8305.

## SECOND LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

On March 28, 2006, ICED held its second Legislative Reception in the State Library Atrium in Springfield. About 100 people attended the evening event, including state legislators, agency directors, community groups, and people with disabilities. Co-hosts for this event included the ICED Co-Chairs, Department of Human Rights' Director Rocco J. Claps, and Department of Human Services' Secretary Carol L. Adams, Ph.D., Senator Dan Cronin, Senator Deanna Demuzio, Representative Patricia R. Bellock, and Representative Sara Feigenholtz. In addition to these co-hosts, Ann Ford, Executive Director of the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, supported the event with a contribution from her organization.

During the evening, Director Claps, Jerome Butler, on behalf of Secretary Adams, Senator Demuzio, and Representative Bellock all made remarks relative to the importance of issues facing people with disabilities around the state. Director Claps stressed the importance of recruiting more employees with disabilities in state government and providing a workplace free of discrimination. ICED materials, including the annual report, a Frequently Asked Question card, and information about the Internship Program, were distributed at the event.

ICED wishes to thank its reception co-chairs, Kathy Day, of the Department of Agriculture, and Jack Kanady, of the U. of I. Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC), for ensuring a successful evening. ICED also appreciates the printing of invitations and fact cards by DSCC.



Ann Ford, Audrey McCrimon, Director Rocco Claps, Jerome Butler, Bobbie Wanzo, Director Sheila Romano and Senator Deanna Demuzio

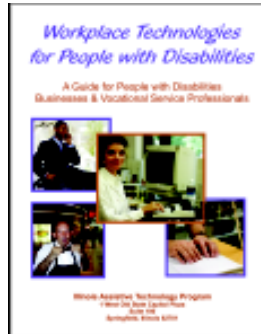
## WORKPLACE TECHNOLOGIES HANDBOOK

In an effort to remove barriers to employment, the Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) with funding by DHS/ORS has developed "Workplace Technologies: A Guide for People with Disabilities, Businesses, & Vocational Service Professionals." It is free and available on IATP's website, [www.iltech.org](http://www.iltech.org).

The guide covers valuable information about people with disabilities and work including how to make a job accessible, exploring options, universal design, the Americans with Disability Act, and tax incentives for businesses.

It also highlights specific technologies for people with disabilities including devices that support vision, hearing, manipulation and fine motor, mobility and balance, memory, cognitive and mental illness, organization, planning and learning disabilities communication.

This is a great resource for employers, job coaches, rehabilitation counselors and other interested individuals in your area. For multiple print copies or alternate formats, contact Jane Teeter at IATP 217-522-7985 v, 217-522-9966 tty, 217-522-8067 fax.



## ICED SEEKS NOMINATIONS

The ICED is seeking nominations for the 2006 Awards Ceremony. Awards will be presented in the following areas:

### State Employee of the Year:

This award recognizes a state employee with a disability who, despite everyday challenges, exemplifies the model of an outstanding public servant through his/her work ethics, collegiality with co-workers and continuing effort to deliver quality work.

### Service Partnership Award:

Presented to an organization that works in cooperation with a State agency to help reduce the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities in Illinois.

### Candlelight Award:

Presented to the organization or individual that has raised visibility and awareness regarding the barriers or issues that impact persons with disabilities locally, regionally or nationally.

Nomination forms can be obtained at the ICED website ([www.state.il.us/ICED](http://www.state.il.us/ICED)). Completed forms and supporting information must be mailed to Susan Allen, 222 S College Ave, Room 101A, Springfield, IL 62704 and postmarked by June 15, 2006.

## Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities

**Rocco J. Claps**, Co-Chairman, Director, Department of Human Rights  
**Carol L. Adams**, Ph.D., Co-Chairman, Secretary, Department of Human Services  
**Paul J. Campbell**, Acting Director, Department Central Management Services  
**Roy Dolgos**, Director, Department of Veterans Affairs  
**Chris Kolker**, Chairman, Civil Service Commission  
**Deborah Johnson-Small**, Employee Member, Department of Human Services  
**Michael Knepler**, Employee Member, Department of Agriculture  
**Elaine Lazell**, Employee Member, Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
**Debbie Primm**, Employee Member  
**Susan Allen**, Department of Human Rights  
**Andrew Barris**, Civil Service Commission  
**Marva Campbell-Pruitt**, Department of Human Services  
**Kathy Day**, Department of Agriculture  
**Gwen Diehl**, Department of Veterans Affairs  
**Katherine Gardner**, Department of Human Services  
**Patty Greene**, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission  
**Christina Griffin**, Department of Central Management Services  
**Tammy Hall**, Department of Financial and Professional Regulation  
**Margaret Harkness**, Council on Developmental Disabilities  
**Jack Kanady**, Division Of Specialized Care for Children  
**Brenda Montgomery**, Department of Central Management Services  
**Karen Wordelmann**, Illinois Employment and Training Council

### ICED

c/o: Department of Human Rights  
222 S. College, Room 101A  
Springfield, IL 62704

(217) 785-5119 (Voice)  
(217) 785-5125 (TTY)  
(217) 785-5106 (Fax)

**E-Mail:** [susan\\_allen@cms.state.il.us](mailto:susan_allen@cms.state.il.us)

**Website:** <http://www.state.il.us/iced>

Note: This newsletter is available in alternative formats upon request.