



News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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DES Supports National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Helping people with disabilities gain employment

PHOENIX – For seventy years, the United States has conducted an awareness campaign to support equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. As part of this campaign, Governor Ducey proclaimed October 2015 as Disability Employment Awareness month, emphasizing that the skills and abilities of people with disabilities needs to be recognized in order to support an integrated and robust economy. Several divisions within the Department of Economic Security are committed to recognizing and optimizing the strengths of people with disabilities from birth helping them and their families.

“Americans with disabilities make up almost one-fifth of our population, but are unemployed at a rate that is twice that of people without disabilities,” said DES Director Tim Jeffries. “This year’s campaign theme of ‘My Disability is one part of who I am’ is perfect because these are people first, people always and should be treated like anyone else.”

The Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) are all part of the Department of Economic Security and work with people with disabilities and their families. Services and supports are provided to educate and train people with disabilities and their families so that individuals may reach their full potential in the community and obtain competitive employment.

The Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) provides services and supports to families with children birth to three who have developmental delays or disabilities. AzEIP’s mission is to build upon and provide supports and resources to assist family members and caregivers to enhance children’s learning and development through everyday learning opportunities.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) provides services and supports for people with developmental disabilities across their lifespan. The majority of the Division’s services and supports are tailored to meet the needs of individuals and their families at home and in community-based settings. In the annual report “The Case for Inclusion 2015,” compiled by United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), Arizona ranked first in the nation for “Best Performing” state in the country when it comes to key outcomes for citizens with developmental disabilities.

Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) works with people who have disabilities to achieve their goals for employment and independence. RSA recognizes abilities and provides services and supports which helps put Arizonans with disabilities to work. This year, 1,338 people with disabilities successfully entered the workforce and maintained employment with the assistance of RSA services.

“DES colleagues are proud and grateful for the opportunity to promote Disability Employment Awareness and spread the word that people with disabilities bring amazing skills, abilities and talents to the workplace and community,” said Director Jeffries.

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