

Governor's Office of Disability Affairs

Report to the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

September 30, 2017

Disability Employment Awareness Month in Louisiana

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and Gov. John Bel Edwards has issued a proclamation to highlight the importance of this month.

Throughout the month of October there will be several events emphasizing the importance of employment for individuals with disabilities and why it is great for our businesses and communities. In conjunction with NDEAM, the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs will be traveling the state on an Employment First Tour. Employment First is a national movement for competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs is working with the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Families Helping Families to set up the employment first roundtables so we can have discussions regarding the integrated, competitive employment for people with disabilities with representatives from Louisiana Rehabilitative Services, Louisiana Workforce Commission, Human Service Districts/Authorities (Office of Behavioral Health and Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities), local school district transition coordinators, support coordinators, supported employment providers, businesses, economic development agencies, self-advocates, and other interested parties. The Employment First Roundtables will be held in the following areas on these dates:

October 10	Lafayette*	Heymann Convention Center, 1373 College Road
October 12	Lake Charles*	Lake Charles Civic Center, 900 Lakeshore Drive
October 13	Monroe	Public Safety Center, 1810 Martin Luther King Jr Drive
October 16	New Orleans*	Xavier University, 1 Drexel Drive
October 18	Baton Rouge *	Perkins Rowe, 10000 Perkins Rowe (job fair only)
October 18	Ville Platte*	Civic Center, 704 North Soileau Street (job fair only)
October 20	Covington	Northshore Pastoral Ctr, 4465 Hwy 190 E Service Rd
October 24	Gray	Terrebonne Parish Library, 4130 W Park Ave
October 27	Pineville	Main Street Community Center, 708 Main Street
October 31	Shreveport*	Wyndham Garden Inn, 1419 East 70th Street

(*indicates Diversity Job Fair to be held from 9am to noon)

The topic for GOV Talks this month will be Employment First, and it will be held in the Press Room of the 4th floor of Louisiana's State Capitol on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 11 am.

Website and Newsletters

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs publishes a monthly newsletter, which is posted on the Governor's webpage at <http://gov.louisiana.gov/disabilityaffairs>.

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Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Symposium

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs hosted the ADA Symposium at the Claiborne Building on July 26, which was the 27th anniversary of when the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law. The ADA Symposium was free to attend and featured national accessibility expert Kristi Avalos, CEO/President of Accessology. Over 140 people attended the ADA Symposium and were able to participate in one of the breakout sessions for Higher Education, Employment, and Local Disability Awareness which allowed attendees to network, collaborate, and discuss next steps.

GOV Talks on Elderly Services

The Governor's Office of Programs and Planning hosted GOV Talks on August 23, 2017. The discussion of this GOV Talks was focused on the types of services offered for Louisiana's aging and elderly population, and the panelists were Tara LeBlanc with the Office of Aging and Adult Services as well as Sharon Buchert and Teresa Broussard from the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs. They spoke on a range of topics such as assistance for prescription drugs, eligibility requirements, and access to services. You can watch [GOV Talks on Elderly Services](#) at this link. For more information regarding the services offered by these programs please visit www.LouisianaAnswers.com or call the Office of Aging and Adult Services at 1-866-758-5035.

Governor's Office Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs will host the 2017 Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards on November 15, 2017 at the Old State Capitol. The GOLD Awards is an opportunity for Louisiana to pay tribute to the achievements and dedication of individuals in the disability community. Governor John Bel Edwards is scheduled to participate in the GOLD Awards. These awards are as follows:

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| Distinguished Merit Award | Patsy Barrett Memorial Award |
| Ken Vince Memorial Award | Educator of the Year |
| Youth of the Year | Family of the Year |
| Volunteer of the Year | Employer of the Year |
| Service Provider of the Year | Direct Support Professional of the Year |
| Veteran of the Year | Service Animal of the Year |
| Public Servant of the Year | Elected Official of the Year |

Winners of the Inclusive Arts Contest will also be recognized at the GOLD Awards by First Lady Donna Edwards.