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Governor Proclaims October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Arkansas Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities Issues Challenge to Employers to Review Hiring Practices During October

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Oct. 5, 2022) – Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson has proclaimed October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. On Wednesday, Oct. 5, the Arkansas Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (the Council) and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) held a special ceremony at the State Capitol to commemorate the month.

During the ceremony, the Governor's proclamation was read and the Council issued a statewide challenge to all Arkansas-based employers to review their hiring practices during October and gain access to vital resources to help them practice more inclusive and equitable employment.

"Many employers are hesitant to hire Arkansans with developmental disabilities (DD), leading to a gap in inclusivity in the workplace," said Jonathan Taylor, executive director of the Council. "This month, we want to challenge Arkansas-based employers to look at their hiring processes and see where improvements can be made to help us provide a more integrated and equitable workforce for all Arkansans."

Every October, the Council, ARS and its partners across the state celebrate the month as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This year's event was attended by representatives from Disability Rights Arkansas, Arkansas Association of People Supporting Employment First (Arkansas APSE), Sources for Community Independent Living Services, employers and community members.

"ARS is committed to preparing Arkansans with DD to lead independent lives," said Joseph Baxter, commissioner of ARS. "This work couldn't be done without the assistance of our incredible partners who help us further integrate individuals with DD into the workforce. If you're an employer, we want to encourage you to join us in our efforts to make competitive, integrated employment more accessible."

Employers looking for resources on providing more competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with DD can visit the Council's website for more information: <https://bit.ly/GCDDNDDEAM22>.

About The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities is a member of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD). The Council's purpose is to connect people with developmental disabilities to the resources and programs they need to be independent, be productive and be integrated and included in all parts of community life. GCDD, along with network partners, works to implement the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act in Arkansas to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of community services that allow increased opportunities to live and work locally. GCDD is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Community Living (ACL) through the Administration on Disability's Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD). Learn more at GCDD.Arkansas.gov.

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