

**NEWS from the N.D. Department of Human Services
600 E Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505-0250**

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Contacts: Natasha Adamson, Rehabilitation Consulting and Services (RCS) Bismarck Consultant and Assistive Technology Coordinator, 701-328-8812; or Harley D. Engelman, RCS Marketing and Business Relations Director, 701-328-8957

**Expanded Assistive Technology Center to open in Bismarck
*Career Resource Center also showcased***

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services, through its Rehabilitation Consulting and Services (RCS) initiative, is celebrating the opening of an expanded assistive technology lab and a newly created RCS Career Resource Center in Bismarck. The lab allows people with disabilities and employers to try specialized employment-related equipment, and the career resource center assists clients with employment searches. The public is invited to an open house and ribbon cutting event for these two community resources on May 19, 2009, 3-5:30 p.m., at Prairie Hills Plaza, 1237 W. Divide Ave., Bismarck.

“The ‘*SOLUTIONS using AT*’ Assistive Technology Lab showcases employment-related devices that promote independence and functional abilities at work and school,” explained Natasha Adamson, Bismarck RCS Consultant and Assistive Technology Coordinator. “The lab will give employees and employers an opportunity to learn about available assistive technology through a hands-on experience.”

She said the expanded lab builds upon the success of the department’s first assistive technology lab, which opened in Bismarck in 2001. It was created to provide direct service and to build awareness of technology solutions for workers with disabilities. The Career Resource Center complements the assistive technology lab.

RCS Consultant Candace Hanson said, “Our goal is to assist individuals in their current and future employment searches. By teaching them basic foundational skills, they are empowered to search for jobs.”

The department’s Vocational Rehabilitation Director Nancy McKenzie said, “We are excited about the expanded lab because of its potential benefit to job seekers, employees, and employers. In light of the state’s need for quality workers, this lab gives individuals with permanent injuries, illnesses, or impairments an opportunity to see and use technology that may help them enter the workforce or maintain their current employment. It also gives business owners and employers a chance to view technology that may keep productive employees on the job should they incur a disability.”

For information about these resources, contact the Department of Human Services’ Rehabilitation Consulting and Services office in Bismarck at 701-328-8800, toll free 1-888-862-7342, or TTY at 701-328-8802.

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