



## Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

# Disability Mentoring Day



## 2014 GRANTS NOW AVAILABLE

The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities announces the availability of funds to help local groups develop and sponsor activities associated with Disability Mentoring Day. Grants of up to **\$500** each will be awarded through an application process.



*Ericka Ward at Texas Roadhouse (Idaho Falls)*

Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) is a nationwide effort to promote career development for students with disabilities through hands-on career exploration.

Students with disabilities (mentees) are matched with workplace mentors according to expressed career interests. Mentees experience a typical day on the job and learn how to prepare to enter the world of work. Employers gain an increased awareness that people with disabilities represent an overlooked talent pool.

Disability Mentoring Day is a project of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). Through this project, local communities organize activities that bring students and other young adults together with

employers for informational sessions about career opportunities and one-on-one mentoring with volunteers at public and private places of employment.

### What are the goals of Disability Mentoring Day?

- To enhance internship and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- To promote disability as a central component of diversity recruitment for a more inclusive workforce.
- To dispel employers' fears about hiring people with disabilities.
- To increase confidence among students and job seekers with disabilities.
- To launch a year-round effort to foster mentoring opportunities.

### Who participates?

Employers (private, non-profit, government, educational), students with disabilities, and educators participate in Disability Mentoring Day.

DMD is recognized nationally on the third Wednesday of every October, which is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. We encourage DMD Coordinators to schedule their local DMD activities near this date or sometime during the month of October.

**In 2014, we hope to see planning groups encourage students to look into jobs in the trades and explore the variety of post-secondary/vocational education options available.**



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### **SUMMARY OF RECENT IDAHO ACTIVITIES:**

In October 2013, DMD activities were held in four Idaho communities: Idaho Falls, Twin Falls, Moscow, and Boise. From all areas combined, 169 students participated in job shadowing activities with 124 employers. Highlights include student preparation activities, Employer Mentor luncheons, student presentations, and workplace experiences in local businesses. Activities included pre-DMD workshops for students covering topics like: dress for success, how to be successful in an interview, soft skills and attitude, planning for your future, and motivational presentations by local community leaders and self-advocates who are leaders of organizations, self-employed, or even business owners themselves.

### **Student comments:**

*"I wish I could have stayed the whole day." "I learned exactly what I have to do to go to college."*

*"I found out that health care is hard work." "I learned that anything is possible."*

Groups have created mentor packets for employers to prepare them for the job shadowing activity. In addition, each project is encouraged to seek media coverage of their events to build public awareness about employment of people with disabilities. Projects have been successful in many locations through newspaper articles, radio spots, and television interviews/broadcasts on local stations.

### **Employer comments:**

*"I appreciated the opportunity to provide a service to the community and partner with other agencies to accomplish worthwhile projects."*

*"I felt well informed and had time to prepare for my mentee." "I wish I could have more time with my mentee." "I enjoyed introducing a trade to someone."*

*"I also appreciate the exposure I received from the Times News article, I could never afford to pay for that kind of advertising. This experience was a win-win for everyone involved."*

To see if this is something your community group would be interested in doing, go to the [AAPD website](http://www.aapd.com/what-we-do/employment/disability-mentoring-day/) - <http://www.aapd.com/what-we-do/employment/disability-mentoring-day/>

**Applications must be received by  
Monday, August 18, 2014**

For more information, please contact the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities at 1-208-334-2178 or 1-800-544-2433 or download an application from the Council website at

<http://www.icdd.idaho.gov>