

RSA Commissioner's Update

FROM COMMISSIONER LYNNAE RUTTLEDGE

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Welcome to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) *Commissioner's Update*. The purpose of the *Update* is to increase awareness and knowledge of RSA activities. A new edition will be sent via email each month.

RSA is proud to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the *Randolph-Sheppard Act*.

RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD ACT - DID YOU KNOW?

- The *Randolph-Sheppard Act* was passed in 1936 and was amended in 1954 and 1974. It was authorized for the purpose of providing blind individuals with remunerative employment, enlarging economic opportunities for the blind, and stimulating the blind to become self-supporting members of our society.
- Since the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* was passed, thousands of blind individuals have been licensed and trained to manage Randolph-Sheppard vending facilities nationally.
- In FY 2009, the program had gross sales of \$758,352.
- In FY 2009, the average annual earnings for a blind vending facility manager were \$51,664.
- During FY 2009, there were 2,358 blind vendors nationally.
- In FY 2009, there were 885 vending facilities on federal property.
- Although there is no legislative mandate, in FY 2009, blind vendors voluntarily employed 1,919 persons with visual and other disabilities, as well as 12,482 other individuals.
- Over the years, the Randolph-Sheppard program has changed dramatically from single vendor-managed concessions and newsstands to large military food service contracts, kiosks, convenience stores, laundry facilities, restaurants, highway rest-area vending machines and much more.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

The celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) heightens awareness of Americans with disabilities while recognizing their contributions to both our workforce and our society. The 2011 theme, Profit by Investing in Workers With Disabilities, emphasizes the rich diversity and talent that workers with disabilities bring to the workplace. For the month of October, RSA and the U.S. Business Leadership Network (USBLN) plan to work in partnership to highlight success stories as we promote NDEAM. Please visit <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ndeam2011poster.htm> for resources available.

WEBINARS

RSA will sponsor a series of technical assistance webinars on topics that will serve a variety of professional communities. Please visit <https://ncrtm.org/moodle/course/view.php?id=193> to take part in previous, current, and future webinars.

Upcoming Webinar Events:

9/21/2011

Strategies for Providing Effective Vocational Rehabilitation to Underserved Populations

9/22/2011

Contract Development and Administration

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY OCTOBER 19TH

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) Program is a national job-shadowing and career exploration program designed to link students and jobseekers with disabilities to employers interested in hiring people with disabilities. The theme for the 2011 DMD national launch is Transition to Independent Futures, focusing on the importance of education, employment, and independent living for people with disabilities.

AAPD coordinates the national DMD through a network of more than 350 volunteer coordinators. DMD coordinators are responsible for local DMD programs and share information about their programs at www.DisabilityMentor.net. Please visit this website to obtain information regarding your local program.

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COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

Located on the RSA website at <http://rsa.ed.gov>, you will find the Commissioner's Corner. The Commissioner's Corner was created with you in mind in an effort to share information. At the Commissioner's Corner you will find information regarding events and federal partnerships, as well as archived Commissioner's Updates and Quarterly Times. Please visit this site as updates are posted frequently.