

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Date: April 7th, 2009

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Region 1 Workforce Partners Employ New Navigator

Dubuque, IA – Michael Murray will be the new Disability Navigator for the Dubuque area Workforce partners. Iowa Workforce Development, on behalf of a collaborative partnership with seven state agencies, would like to welcome him to the Dubuque Workforce Development office, located at 590 Iowa Street.

Murray received his Masters Degree at the University of Dubuque, and is a graduate of University of Maryland European College. He previously worked for American Cancer Society and has a variety of work experiences in health care environments.

In addition to working in the Dubuque area, his region includes Howard, Winneshiek, Allamakee, Chickasaw, Fayette, Clayton and Delaware counties. He will facilitate access to employment and services for area job seekers who have disabilities. In addition, Murray will work to enhance their ability to facilitate quality employment outcomes.

If you have questions or would like his assistance, Murray can be contacted via e-mail at Michael.Murray@iwd.iowa.gov or phone at (866) 227-9874, ext 115.

According to the 2000 US Census, Iowans with disabilities have an unemployment rate that exceeds 34%, but most would prefer to be pursuing a career. Disability program navigators do not duplicate services offered by agencies supporting local workforce services, but support job seekers with information and connection with service programs that will provide career enhancement.

The Navigator program began in Iowa in 2003, and has been instrumental throughout the state and in 46 states. One of the priorities of the Navigator program is to promote a work incentive called the Ticket to Work, available to people who have a disability and are receiving benefits from the Social Security Administration. Ticket to Work is one of many work incentives offered by Social Security. The workforce centers are Social Security Administration approved Employment Networks under the Ticket to Work program, and works closely with the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Iowa Department for the Blind. To help people with disabilities understand other work incentives and other programs available in the state, the Navigators partner with the Iowa Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program and the Iowa Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. These collaborative efforts all endorse a model that strives for improved customer services, to ease “navigating” a complex system with the ultimate goal of obtaining employment.

The seven state agencies that oversee the Disability Navigator program include the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Iowa Department for the Blind, Iowa Division of Persons with Disabilities, the Iowa Governor’s Developmental Disabilities Council, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Human Services and Iowa Workforce Development.

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