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DVR Administrator Dwyer Receives Leadership in Government Award

Kohler – Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Administrator Charlene Dwyer today received the Leadership in Government Award, presented by the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Association and Rehabilitation for Wisconsin for her success in serving people with disabilities and for raising public awareness of how much they have to offer if given the opportunity.

Under her leadership, the Division within the Department of Workforce Development helped more than 2,600 people with disabilities achieve their employment goals last year. Their annual earnings are estimated at \$42 million, which represents a 213% return on investment in DVR services and adds to the economy, as they purchase goods and services.

“Thanks to Charlene’s leadership, DVR customers enjoy the rewards of work, a new level of independence and a better quality of life,” DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman said. “We all benefit from their success. We applaud their success. Most of all, we applaud Charlene Dwyer, who truly is deserving of this award. I am so pleased she is receiving this honor.”

In nominating her for the prestigious award, community advocates and colleagues within the division praised her for eliminating waiting lists for services and meeting the needs of clients. Since July of 2005, more than 23,000 individuals have been able to access programs and services they need to become more independent.

Dwyer was further recognized for her efforts to educate lawmakers at the state and federal level, urging them to eliminate barriers to employment and let people with disabilities to work without fear of losing benefits.

“Her ability to guide others to improve the present and improve the future makes her a very effective leader and advocate for Wisconsin’s citizens with disabilities,” the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council’s executive committee said in nominating her. “Every opportunity and challenge is approached asking the question, ‘How can we make it better for citizens with disabilities in Wisconsin?’”

Dwyer received the award at the 2007 Rehabilitation and Transition Conference, held at the American Club and attended by over 600 administrators, educators and advocates for people with disabilities.

“I am deeply honored to receive this reward and feel very fortunate to lead such a dedicated group of individuals in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation,” Dwyer said. “I share this honor with them, our partners, and also the people we serve who have achieved greater independence because of DVR services. They are a source of inspiration to all.”