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County of Orange Celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month

SANTA ANA, Calif. (September 29, 2022) – The County of Orange, in partnership with the Orange County Workforce Development Board (OCWDB) and California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), will be participating in National Disability Employment Awareness Month, an annual awareness campaign intended to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America’s workers with disabilities.

“The County of Orange is proud to be a part of this year’s National Disability Employment Awareness Month to spread the important message that we value everyone, including those with disabilities,” said Chairman Doug Chaffee, Fourth District Supervisor of the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

“Orange County’s recovery from the pandemic cannot be completed without the inclusion of all Americans, especially people with disabilities. From my staff to the people in our community, I want to ensure that our workforce is diverse because it’s instrumental to the growth of our economy. We must stand up for any resident who wants to be productive and wants to contribute to OC’s future success,” said Vice Chairman Donald Wagner, Third District Supervisor.

Throughout the month of October, the OCWDB and DOR will engage in a variety of activities to educate the Orange County community on disability employment issues and its commitment to inclusive work culture. These efforts include various outreach campaigns to educate the community, community-based organizations, and employers on the variety of services that the OCWDB and DOR have available, including but not limited to: individualized career services, training services, vocation rehabilitation, supportive services, apprenticeship opportunities, and independent living services.

“As we celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness month, it’s important to recognize the talent and drive of those living with disabilities and the contributions they’ve made to Orange County’s workforce,” said Supervisor Andrew Do, First District.

“Individuals with disabilities are integral members of our community. As unemployment decreases and businesses recruit for vacancies, please consider hiring from this untapped population of workers who offer loyalty, care, valuable skill sets, insights, and talents. I encourage employers recruit broadly to ensure no qualified candidates are overlooked,” said Supervisor Katrina Foley, Second District.



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“As we celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we wholeheartedly recognize the value and talents that people with disabilities bring to the workforce and the employers and businesses who support them,” said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District.

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945 when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

"I applaud those employers who have committed to having their workplace reflect the community they serve and have made diversity, equity and inclusion an integral part of their recruitment process," said Joe Xavier, DOR Director. "Providing people with disabilities equitable employment opportunities allows them to not only earn a living wage but also provides the freedom to live independently and in their community of choice."

To learn more about activities for National Disability Employment Awareness Month, email info@ocworkforcesolutions.com, visit ocworkforcesolutions.com, or call (714) 480-6500.

To learn more about DOR services, visit dor.ca.gov or call the Orange San Gabriel District Office at (714) 991-0800.

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The Orange County Workforce Development Board, through the Orange County Business Service Center and Orange County Workforce Solutions Center, offers comprehensive services such as hiring assistance, career transition services, and employment services to businesses and job seekers at no cost.