



Disability Mentoring Day

A glimpse of a promising future was in store for students with disabilities who turned out in record numbers for Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) activities at SCVRD locations throughout the state in October. 871 students and job seekers interacted with 169 employers statewide. Many local businesses participated along with national DMD sponsors such as Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Red Lobster, Olive Garden and Aramark.



Andriqous Mark, right, High School/High Tech student from Pendleton High School, with Bart Smith of Airwolf Aviation at Anderson Regional Airport.

In Greenville alone more than 80 students from 12 schools learned about career options through visiting work sites, mentoring, job shadowing, and inspirational talks from guest speakers. Carlos O'Neal of the Continuum of Care offered guidance as a person with a disability, encouraging students to advocate for themselves, utilize community resources and take proactive steps to achieve their dreams. Former USC and NFL player Brandon Bennett and 107.3 JAMZ Radio's Rev. Curtis Johnson also participated. North American Rescue hosted a networking event for the students and job shadows were held there and at Firestone, Olive Garden, local police and fire departments and other employers.

"Disability Mentoring Day was again both a wonderfully entertaining and productive event for everyone—definitely our biggest and best DMD to date," said Kerry Reece, High School/High Tech employment coach for SCVRD in Greenville.

Walterboro students had great first-hand experience in their job shadowing ventures. Vaniya Issac, an animal lover who recently adopted a dog from the Colleton County Animal Shelter, spent her DMD there. She fed and watered the animals, learned to clean the cages, and groomed the cats that were eligible for adoption. Meanwhile, Cody Stephens spent the day at Tire King observing the mechanic and lube technician and says he'd like to do that type of work.



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Students in Columbia job shadow at Sam's Club.

In the Midlands, the Richland office had a tremendous turnout, with about 100 students taking part. They visited and learned from a diverse group of employers such as Dick Smith Automotive, Lizard's Thicket restaurant, Virginia College, Banfield Animal Clinic, Academy Sports, Sam's Clubs and the local sheriff and police departments.

As in many other locations where DMD activities were held, local restaurants donated meals where participants gathered to celebrate and discuss their experiences. It was so successful that VR counselor Modoria Smith is already looking forward to next year. "Due to the participation of the students we may have to move to a bigger location to accommodate everybody!"

Jarrett Named DDS Director

Shirley W. Jarrett was recently named director of Disability Determination Services (DDS) by Commissioner Barbara Hollis.

Jarrett has worked with DDS since 1990, and was assistant director since 2003, with responsibilities in the areas of budget, operations, training, quality, policy and program services. She has coordinated responses to constituent inquiries by legislators and she established and maintained memoranda of understanding with partner agencies served by DDS. She has been recognized on numerous occasions by Social Security Administration, including the SSA Commissioner's Citation in 2008.



"Shirley brings great experience, ability and enthusiasm to her new position," says Commissioner Hollis. "We look forward to her building on what is already a strong, effective program with talented and dedicated staff."

Jarrett will oversee administrative offices and state claims unit in West Columbia and regional offices in West Columbia, Greenville and Charleston. She replaces Thomas Paige, who retired in November after 15 years with SCVRD.

"It's an exciting time to assume the role of Director of DDS," says Jarrett. "While our current economic climate brings many challenges, the creativity and resourcefulness of our staff is truly amazing. I am looking forward to many years of continued success at the SCVRD DDS."

Around the state

Service Anniversary Celebration

Congratulations to the following employees who were recently honored for their 20 and 30 years of state service.





30 year honorees (l to r): Gloria Miller, Chester Rodrigues, Mylinder Luke, Janice Wilson.



20 year honorees (l to r): Mike Werts, Audrey Fields, Jane Moore, Steven Horton, Laura Spears, Dale Horton.

Waller Honored with Atlanta Region Anti-Fraud Award

Dr. Ed Waller, Columbia Regional Office Lead Psychologist with the SC Disability Determination Services (DDS), is the FY2012 4th quarter DDS winner of the Atlanta Region Anti-Fraud Award. This award recognizes Dr. Waller for his superior dedication and perseverance in detecting and reporting fraudulent activity.

Did you know...



...that Palmetto Center in Florence is marking its 50th anniversary?

Palmetto Center opened in 1962 through the leadership of the late Dr. Walter Mead, former Chief of Staff at McLeod Hospital, and was the first state operated treatment center for alcohol addiction.



In 1967 the Vocational



Rehabilitation Department began operating Palmetto Center through a legislative directive, receiving referrals from throughout the state through the agency's network of [area offices](#).

Thousands of VR clients have received services at Palmetto Center and at Holmesview Center in Greenville, helping

them address their substance abuse addiction, turn their personal lives around and return to successful employment.

Happy birthday, Palmetto Center!

Enabling eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to prepare for, achieve and maintain competitive employment

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