



Business Partnership Network NEWS

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Spring 2007

Coming up

The **Southeastern Regional Institute on Deafness (SERID) Conference** will be held Sept. 30–Oct. 4 at the Hyatt Regency in Greenville. For more information, see www.serid.org.

The next **Disability Awareness Training** will be held Oct. 25 in Columbia in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Contact Brenda Williams at bwilliams@scvrd.state.sc.us for more information.

The **S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Association Conference** is slated for March 2-4, 2008, in Myrtle Beach.

Welcome new members

The VR Business Partnership Network welcomes its new members:

AccuTrex Products Inc., Lancaster
Allied Air Enterprises, Orangeburg
Anderson Brass Co., Hartsville
Carolina Contract Window Coverings, Greenville
Diamond Hill Plywood, Darlington
Highland Enterprises Inc., Cheraw
International Machinery Sales Inc., Lancaster
ITW Angleboard, Darlington
JBE Inc., Hartsville
Mar-Mac Wire Inc., McBee
McClancy Seasoning Co., Fort Mill
Rico Industries, Lancaster
S&W/Smead Manufacturing, Florence
S.C. Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Statewide
Sonoco, Hartsville
Swift Galey, Society Hill
Synteen Technical Fabrics, Lancaster
USA Supply, West Columbia
Wi-Carolina, Walterboro.

Greenville company wins military contract

North American Rescue Products has won a five-year, \$31.9 million contract to supply litters, medical kits, accessories and similar products to the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

NARP has been a business partner of the S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Department for about two years. Clients at the agency's Pelham Road Work Training Center in Greenville assemble and pack medical supplies for Unconventional Medic, a division of NARP. The center also provides adjacent warehouse space for the company.

NARP has about 20 people on staff to handle administrative tasks and VR clients make up the rest of the workforce.

The philosophy behind the Unconventional Medic is to provide the necessary equipment for managing combat injuries until the injured soldier can reach a medical treatment facility.

Quality is critical and quality



Sean McKay, right, domestic tactical sales representative for North American Rescue Products, show one of NARP's casualty response kits to Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-S.C. Graham recently visited the NARP operation at SCVRD's Pelham Road Work Training Center in Greenville. With him are Darline Graham, an SCVRD business development specialist, and Bob Castellani, founder and president of NARP.

control is strict.

"If any one of the components is not done correctly, it could mean disaster on the battlefield," said Jim Carino, chief operating officer for NARP.

Up to 45 clients a day work on the contract, assembling litters, performing subassemblies on products and packing the 45-item backpacks and three smaller kits that can be attached to the belt or leg.

Sixty percent of combat deaths

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Rick Fountain, left, shakes hands with Willie Fuller, VRBPN president, at the 2007 S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Association meeting in February.

Fountain wins contest

Rick Fountain, business development specialist for the Hartsville/Marlboro areas, recently won a Business Partnership Network membership recruitment contest, adding seven new members to the rolls.

Hyatt Hotels honored

The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation recently honored Hyatt Hotels Corp. for its record of supporting and training people with disabilities.

Through a partnership with Florida VR and Hands on Education, the Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay developed a two-week culinary arts training program that includes 100 hours of hands-on instruction.

One trainee, who is now an employee, has paraplegia and works as a chef from a stand-up wheelchair. Another, who is blind, is a PBX operator and several employees who are deaf are employed as cooks.

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Commissioner—Larry C. Bryant
Editor—Sharon H. Kelly

SCVRA honors Lowe's stores

Lowe's stores in Sumter and Camden received Business Partner Awards during the 2007 S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Association Conference.

Lowe's is a charter member of the VR Business Partnership Network. Willie Fuller, Lowe's Human Resources manager for the area, has served as the BPN president since its inception.

In Lexington, Lowe's manager Ed Comer has supported the VR program, calling when vacancies occur at the store.

The store has hired several clients with significant disabilities and has



Dr. H. Lucius Laffitte, right, vice chairman of the S.C. State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation, shows off the Lowe's Business Partner Award. From left are Gary Little, a former VR client who works at the Lowe's store in Camden, Roy Hewett, SCVRD Lexington area supervisor, Chris Hoopengarden, Willie Fuller and Lowell Person, all of Lowe's, and John Hornsby, seated, SCVRD Sumter-Camden area supervisor.

made accommodations to help them become successful employees.

In Camden, three former VR clients are working at the Lowe's store.

NARP

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come from extremity bleeding; 33 percent from chest injuries; and 6 percent from airway obstructions, according to statistics provided by the company.

The company estimates that use of its products can reduce preventable deaths by 60 to 90 percent.

The advantage of working with VR is its flexibility.

"We can maneuver people to increase production," said Houston Matthews, Greenville center manager. "If we change what we're doing every day, it doesn't matter. Industry can't do that."

If deadlines get tight, as they sometimes do, there are few complaints from the clients.

"There's a sense that they might

save someone's life," he said.

Various quantities of backpacks, called Warrior Aid and Litter Kits (WALKs) are shipped from the center each day, some directly to Iraq. Constructed so a litter can be slipped down the middle, the WALKs' pockets contain everything from tourniquets and dressings to splints and needle/catheters.

All are in quick-release packaging and everything is arranged in the same order for quick access.

Carino said the partnership with SCVRD is working well because of the center's ability to match services to needs, the clients' attention to detail, customer service and frank communication.

"It's cost effective for us and it's an effective use of tax dollars," he said. "And, it's a stepping stone to employment for the clients."