



NEBRASKA

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JUDY VOHLAND
Employee of the Year

2016

Judy began employment with NDE and Nebraska VR in August 1993 as a counselor in our Hastings office. She became an Office Director/Area Administrator in August 1999 for the Grand Island area moving to her current role as Program Director for Community Services in August 2012.

Judy's commitment and dedication to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with mental health issues, has been instrumental in the development of innovative strategies to improve VR services.

Judy took on the challenge of improving the accountability of Supported Employment Services to VR clients by developing and implementing a revised process and fee structure to pay providers for these services. This new innovative funding model allowed SE providers to work with more VR clients which in turn allowed for more successful outcomes for VR clients. Judy's leadership was instrumental in making this transition a smooth and transparent one.

Judy recognized that the number of VR clients who received social security benefits was on the rise but the successes of these clients was not. Judy collaborated with Easter Seals staff to develop a process resulting in more clients having the necessary benefits information to be comfortable making a good decision about going to work and reducing or getting off of benefits. Her efforts had the added benefit of improving the working relationship between the VR Team across the state and Easter Seals staff.

Judy is currently working on several disability-related committees. Her experience, input and guidance in these work groups is expected to result in more individuals with disabilities becoming eligible for DD and VR services.

While Judy can clearly let you know her stance on a subject, her ability to communicate with people who have different perspectives as well as different focuses is one of her strengths. This skill has contributed to the success of the initiatives she has worked on. Judy provides a tremendous amount of support and encouragement to field staff and recognizes and respects the work of the staff dealing directly with clients. And they likewise recognize her expertise and hold her with high regard and respect for her contributions.