



# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Agency Honors Five with Leadership Recognition Award**

Richmond, Virginia — Commissioner James A. Rothrock of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), along with the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), announced today the recipients of the 2010 Roy J. Ward SRC Employee Leadership Recognition Awards for outstanding service and contribution to the field of vocational rehabilitation (VR) and the disability community. The presentation was held on **May 10, 2010** at the Richmond Marriott Hotel.

“In federal fiscal year 2009, over 3,200 of DRS consumers found successful employment through our vocational rehabilitation (VR) program,” said DRS Commissioner Jim Rothrock. “This is due, in part, to the leadership, guidance, and commitment to service that this group of awardees has exhibited. Their creativity and resourcefulness, especially during these economically challenging times, are to be commended.”

The SRC Employee Leadership Recognition Award honors select VR staff who have distinguished themselves not only by the quality of service they provide to VR clients, but by their contributions at the national, state, or local level to advance the employment and independence of people with disabilities. Each of the recipients actively serves on boards and organizations. They provide expertise and leadership in community or agency-based initiatives that enhance VR services and develop future leaders of VR.

The award is named after Roy J. Ward, a long-time leader in the disability community, former member of the SRC and former chair of the DRS Board.

The 2010 Roy J. Ward Employee Leadership Recognition Awardees consist of:

- **Joe Fangman** of Stuarts Draft, Virginia, has been at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) for 10 years as a senior physical therapist, enhancing and promoting recreational activities for individuals with disabilities. Fangman also runs an adaptive ski program at Wintergreen Resort. As vice president of the Mid-Atlantic Wheelchair Athletics Association (MAWAA), he led the 37<sup>th</sup> Mid-Atlantic Wheelchair Games at WWRC, and on behalf of MAWAA, successfully secured grant funding to purchase replacement equipment for the nationally sanctioned Wheelchair Paralympics at WWRC. Fangman is currently working to develop Virginia’s first Wheelchair Tennis Program.
- **Sinclair Hubard** of Harrisonburg, Virginia, is a DRS disability program navigator (DPN). For the past five years, Hubard led the efforts to establish DPN services in Virginia’s One-Stop Centers to better direct jobseekers with disabilities to employment services and resources. Her work included training One-Stop staff on customer service to individuals with disabilities; creating partnerships with other disability-related organizations; and developing cross-agency resource teams to blend resources around an individual job seeker’s employment needs. Additionally, Hubard was instrumental in establishing the first Assistive Technology kits in the One-Stops and training staff on its use.

- ***Doug James*** of Fairfax County, Virginia, serves as DRS’ Northern Virginia regional director. With over 22 years experience, his leadership and commitment to quality services has led to increased employment opportunities for VR clients in his region and statewide. He is a recognized leader on numerous boards and advisory councils, including the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board and the SE Forum, to enhance collaboration between DRS and Employment Services Organizations. He helped develop an outreach and training plan for serving individuals with Limited English Proficiency, and was the agency’s first regional director to establish a model outreach program to Hispanic community organizations. As president of the Virginia Association of Rehabilitation Leadership, he helped revitalize the organization, and on his own initiative, he helped sponsor statewide training for VR staff regarding best practices for working with individuals with psychiatric disabilities.
- ***Kristi Lockhart*** of Richmond, Virginia, is the agency’s new statewide transition coordinator. Lockhart previously spent the last 15 years as a VR school counselor for Chesterfield County, gaining considerable knowledge and experience working high school students with disabilities. During this time, she obtained start-up funds from Virginia’s Medicaid Infrastructure Grant to create internships that provide workplace learning experiences for students with disabilities. Despite financially challenging times, Lockhart managed to not only sustain the internship program, but expand it to serve more students by enlisting the assistance of a number of community partners, as well as collaborating with Chesterfield Schools and the Chesterfield Community Services Board. She also worked with a local One-Stop Center last year to develop paid summer employment for a number of students.
- ***Donna Martin*** of Stuart, Virginia, has served as a VR counselor at DRS since September 1992, working with youth and adults with disabilities in Patrick County and the City of Martinsville. Martin was responsible for bringing DRS’ Job Seeking Skills Program to Patrick Henry County Schools and has been active in the Workforce Investment Area 17 Youth Program since its inception. She was instrumental in the development of the Blue Ridge Southwest Ethics Services Committee, and for over five years, she has served as the liaison for the Martinsville Henry County Disability Services Board. Martin is currently working with the Patrick Henry Community College and MARC Workshop to increase apprenticeship opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

***About DRS:***

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) is the state agency that provides and advocates for the highest quality of services to help persons with disabilities maximize their employment, independence, and full inclusion into society. Through its 5 regional offices, 35 field offices, and various partnerships within the private and public sector, DRS assists more than 20,000 consumers annually with services such as vocational counseling, career exploration, training, assistive technology, and other specialized programs that cater to individual needs. For employers, DRS offers staffing services, accessibility analysis, disability education, and other resources that enable businesses to successfully hire and support people with disabilities in the workplace. For more information, visit [www.vadrs.org](http://www.vadrs.org).