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Secretary Newson: Super One Foods in Superior Example of How Employees with Disabilities Can Help Employers Succeed

DWD Assistant Deputy Secretary Anderson highlights Governor Walker's Better Bottom Line initiative

SUPERIOR – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today cited Super One Foods in Superior as an example of how recruiting and hiring people with disabilities can help employers succeed, what Governor Walker envisioned with his *Better Bottom Line* initiative.

"I want to commend Patrick Miner, Store Director, and Tim Michalski, Store Manager at Super One Foods for doing their part in growing Wisconsin's economy," Secretary Newson said. "People with disabilities really do have much to offer, and the partnership that Super One Foods has with our agency's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is a good example of what Governor Walker wants to achieve with his *Better Bottom Line* initiative. He wants to encourage employers in search of good workers to consider hiring qualified people with disabilities. They can improve a company's bottom line, benefitting both the employer and the employee. And, by working with our Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, employers can connect with job seekers with disabilities to meet their hiring needs."

Governor Walker proclaimed 2014 *The Year of the Better Bottom Line* to highlight successful operations businesses throughout the year that have hired people with disabilities who have the skills to do the job, and to urge other employers to do the same.

On behalf of Secretary Newson, Assistant Deputy Secretary Dave Anderson congratulated Josh Bolts, an individual with a disability and former DVR consumer, on achieving his employment goal with the assistance DVR. Bolts works as a stocker and bagger at Super One Foods in Superior.

During his visit, Assistant Deputy Secretary Anderson highlighted DVR's Business Services initiative to engage more employers across the state. As part of the initiative, 20 Business Services Consultants were hired by DVR last year and have dramatically expanded DVR's outreach efforts to employers. In a little over a year, DVR Business Service Consultants have contacted over 5,000 businesses and have assisted more than 430 job seekers with disabilities connect to permanent employment. In addition, they have arranged more than 250 on-the-job training experiences and more than 340 internships/temporary employment experiences that will help DVR job seekers with disabilities gain the skills they need to be successful in employment.

DVR assists over 17,000 individuals with disabilities every year, and in fiscal year 2013, it helped 3,840 consumers achieve their employment goals. These newly employed individuals are projected to earn \$66.3 million annually, more than double the taxpayer investment in their services.

In December, Governor Walker signed legislation providing over \$2 million in additional state funding per year so that DVR can secure more federal aid to serve more people with disabilities. More recently, he signed legislation authorizing \$35 million more in funding for his *Wisconsin Fast Forward* initiative. DVR will share in the funding and use its portion to help expedite services for people with disabilities.

For more about DVR services, visit: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/>.