



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 9, 2015

For more information, contact
A.J. Hostetler, Public Relations Director
aj.hostetler@dars.virginia.gov
804-662-7372

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL HONORS TWO WITH LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION AWARD

(RICHMOND, Va.) — Ellen McIlhenny, chair of the State Rehabilitation Council, and Commissioner Jim Rothrock of the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services have announced the council's 2015 Employee Leadership Roy J. Ward Recognition Awards for outstanding service and contribution to the field of vocational rehabilitation and the disability community.

The annual awards are named in memory of Roy J. Ward, a longtime leader in the disability community and former member of the [SRC](#), which works on behalf of people with disabilities by serving as a source of advice, information and support for DARS' vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

The award honors DARS vocational rehabilitation employees who distinguish themselves by the quality of service they provide their clients as well as their contributions to advance the employment and independence of people with disabilities. Recipients provide leadership to local, state or national organizations and bring expertise to community or agency-based initiatives that enhance vocational rehabilitation services and develop future leaders in the field.

"I think I can speak for the members of the council when I say that we are proud to be able to present this annual award to much-deserving vocational rehabilitation employees from across the Commonwealth," McIlhenny said. "These individuals embody the idea of going above and beyond."

The 2015 SRC Roy J. Ward Employee Leadership Recognition Award honorees are:

Sherrina Sewell, a unit supervisor in the Chesterfield office, supervises and leads a team of three specialty transition counselors in addition to carrying her own caseload. Sewell served on the planning work group for the statewide transition counselors meeting. She co-teaches two courses in new counselor skills training, and provides training, support and guidance to

vocational rehabilitation staff who serve consumers on the autism spectrum. Sewell is an active member of the Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst, serving on its board and representing APSE at local, state and national conferences. As an adjunct faculty member of Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Rehabilitation Counseling, she taught graduate-level coursework in multicultural counseling.

Shawn Zimmerman has served as a vocational evaluator in the Manassas office since 2008 and provides evaluation services to consumers served in the Fredericksburg office. She is recognized as a national leader in the field of vocational evaluation. Her leadership as a member of the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association led to her nomination as the group's president. She served for six years as the VEWAA representative to the National Rehabilitation Association and as a board member for the Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals. She is a board member for the Virginia Rehabilitation Association and is a VRA representative to the NRA Mid-Atlantic Chapter.

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The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, in collaboration with community partners, provides and advocates for resources and services to improve the employment, quality of life, security, and independence of older Virginians, Virginians with disabilities, and their families. For more information, visit www.vadars.org.