



# CONGRATULATIONS!

## YOU MAY ALREADY BE A WINNER!!

You ARE a winner, if (1) you have at least five years of experience with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation OR are a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor with at least two years of experience; (2) believe that a career of vocational rehabilitation counseling is challenging and rewarding; and (3) believe that the profession may benefit by your experience and expertise!

If this describes you, you are invited to apply for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Mentoring Program.

**READ ON**

Dear Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor:

Ongoing departmental efforts for continuous improvement have revealed a pronounced need for a statewide mentoring project. This effort has been developed as a strategy to

- address concerns identified in the 2001 Strategic Planning Forums;
- provide support to field office administrators in skill development of new counselors;
- complement the Skills Enhancement Training for new employees;
- stem the flow of new counselors leaving the department;
- aid in preparing new counselors for the challenges ahead; and
- help develop consistent statewide preferred practices.

The Rehabilitation Counselor Mentoring Team has been charged with developing and implementing a statewide program. An application process has been developed and qualified personnel are invited to apply to become a mentor. Applicants are required to have worked a minimum of 5 years with the department or be a CRC with a minimum of 2 years with the department. The attached application packet consists of three parts: review of a case chosen by the applicant to indicate his/her best work, a section of the application form for your supervisor to complete, and three short essay questions.

**If interested, please send the completed application including the supervisor's section, your essay questions, and a recent, successfully rehabilitated case of your choice, to Allison Jessee by April 1, 2002.** Should you be interested in becoming a mentor at a later time, applications will be accepted again in September with October 1, 2002, being the second deadline for applications. Thereafter, applications will be accepted twice a year, with dates and applications to be available on the department Intranet site.

Counselors accepted into the mentoring program will be notified by May 1, 2002 and will be expected to participate in a 2-day training session May 21 – 22, 2002 in the DVR training room in Frankfort. At that session you will receive a Mentor's Guide to use as a resource.

You will be expected to commit to this program for a minimum of two years and may renew if interested. Planned implementation is for June 2002.

Counselors accepted into the mentoring program would be expected to work with their assigned new counselor very closely, especially during the first few weeks of the new counselor's employment. Recommendations are for at least ten days during the new counselor's first month of employment, with half of that time to be at the new counselor's work station and half of the time at your work station. Thereafter, you will be available to provide ongoing support to the new counselor and to guide and advise the new counselor as needs are identified.

It should be noted this effort is not to replace SET training or training administered by the field administrator, but to complement those current processes. Field administrator authority is not to be impeded or impacted by this effort.

The Rehabilitation Counselor Mentoring Team is hopeful there will be at least two mentors per district and more in larger districts. Plans are to have a mentor work with one person at a time. Efforts will be made to ensure that a mentor is from a counselor's own district, but if one is not available, consideration will be made to working with a mentor from another district.

Many of you are currently mentoring new counselors and are valued by your coworkers for your expertise and knowledge. This program will recognize you for what you are already accomplishing.

The Rehabilitation Counselor Mentoring Team is excited and available to answer questions and support your efforts.

Sincerely,

Allison Jessee  
Susie Edwards  
Mindy Yates  
Tom Combs  
Jodi Harris

Kelly Scott  
Malinda Davis  
Laurie Wilson  
Susan Montgomery