November 6, 2019

Dear Partners and Friends,

As the new Director of the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), I am honored to work in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The SRC works in conjunction with DVR to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities throughout New Mexico.

Since joining NMDVR in June, I have travelled throughout the state meeting staff to our field offices and participating in state-wide partnership meetings. New Mexico is a beautiful state, both environmentally and culturally. Traveling the entirety of the state affords me the opportunity to not only view our beautiful landscape, but to work within our culturally diverse communities. People with disabilities live and work everywhere—in our rural towns, big cities, villages, pueblos and sprawling ranches.

NMDVR has 26 locations throughout the state and in every county. We provide services and specialized programs for people with disabilities who want to gain, maintain or advance in employment to improve the quality of their lives. Some individuals with disabilities may need guidance, assistance and services to find or retain a job. DVR counselors are charged with helping people clarify and define their work goals. It takes teamwork, planning and coaching to ensure employment goals are met successfully.

My vision for NMDVR is to provide improved, quality services for all people with disabilities in New Mexico who are seeking employment; and to be responsive and proactive while working in collaboration within the disability community. I will address the challenges in leadership, staff vacancies, waiting lists for services, and other organizational matters. DVR is currently on Order of Selection which means that we do not have the capacity to serve all individuals with disabilities, at this time. My excellent and hard-working staff of counselors and program specialists are mandated to expand services to students with disabilities ages 14-21 and to work in the schools. At the same time, we want and need to provide services for all ages of people with disabilities. To do this, getting off of Order of Selection is our major priority.

For my vision to be realized, I need the support, resources and commitment from our constituency—and beautiful state. This includes state and local governments, schools, colleges and universities, advocates and partners. DVR is open to all opportunities for continued and renewed partnerships, public forums for discussion, and addressing issues that may still need to be resolved. With partners like the SRC, State Independent Living Council, the Commission for the Blind, Disability Rights New Mexico, and many, many others, NMDVR can and will fulfill its goals.

Yours in partnership,

Diane Mourning Brown
Director