Summer Program for Students With Disabilities Offers College, Career and Life Skills

CHEYENNE – Students with disabilities have a unique opportunity this summer to hone skills and prepare for college or a career at a summer program on the University of Wyoming Campus. The program, which will run from July 11-14, is a partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Career Innovations, and the national organization "Some 1 Like You," a leader in connecting persons with disabilities with each other and with service providers and mentors across the country.

Jessica Rasmussen, Transition Consultant for the Department of Workforce Services, says the program is a great way to give students exposure to the college environment while simultaneously building real-world skills. While the program happens to be located on the University of Wyoming campus, it is not just for college-bound students. "We wanted to give students exposure to a campus setting but also help them make more informed choices about what they want to do after high school," said Rasmussen, "this program lets us do both - and it allows students to connect with peers who also have a disability."

The program will include a tour of the University of Wyoming campus, total immersion into dorm life to encourage problem-solving and independence in a new environment, a program orientation, instruction on self-advocacy, building a professional image, how and when to disclose a disability and matching with providers. The national organization Some 1 Like You will bring a team of mentors including former Miss USA Shawnae Jebbia to the program to assist students with building real-world skills. Program participants will also receive professional headshots from Special Olympics photographer Brian Johnson. Career Innovations, a Cheyenne firm specializing in career exploration and placement, will assist students in developing social skills and career goals.

The program is free to participants and open to any student in Wyoming between the ages of 14-21 years old with a disability. Applications for the program are due May 21.

For more info regarding the program, please contact Jessica Rasmussen at (307) 745-3160.

Purple Heart Recipient and Author to Present Keynote Address at 2018 Safety & Workforce Summit

CHEYENNE – Corporal Josh Bleill, recipient of the Purple Heart for his service, will present the keynote speech at the 2018 Safety & Workforce Summit on June 20 at Little America Hotel in Cheyenne.

While serving in Fallujah, Iraq, Corporal Bleill lost both his legs when a bomb deployed under his vehicle. He then spent two years recovering at Walter Reed Medical Center and went on to land a job working in the NFL with the Indianapolis Colts.

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Director John Cox says Corporal Bleill’s spirit and perseverance are an inspiration to people across the country. "We are honored to have Mr. Bleill as our keynote speaker for this year’s Safety & Workforce Summit. His perseverance in the face of multiple obstacles and his ability to overcome these challenges is remarkable. His drive and discipline are traits we strive to embody every day and we look forward to learning from his experiences."

Corporal Bleill has traveled the country delivering his message of perseverance and hope for the last eight years. His book, "One Step at a Time," has sold more than 10,000 copies and has been featured on CNN, The Colbert Report, and Parables of War.

The Summit presents safety and workforce solutions for workers, business owners, job seekers, human resources managers and educators. During the Summit, awards will be presented to Wyoming employers demonstrating a strong safety culture and excellence in safety and health programs. Additionally, the Wyoming Workforce Development Council, in partnership with the department, will honor Wyoming employers who have made exceptional contributions to Wyoming’s workforce.

To learn more about Corporal Bleill, please visit joshbleill.com/about. To register for the Safety & Workforce Summit please visit cheyenne.regfox.com/wyoming-safety-workforce-summit.

Nominations Sought for Workplace Safety and Workforce Development Awards

CHEYENNE – The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and its partners are accepting nominations for workplace safety and workforce development awards. The awards will be presented at the 2018 Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit on June 20 at the Little America Hotel and Resort in Cheyenne.

The Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit is a joint effort between DWS, the Wyoming OSHA Commission and the Wyoming Workforce Development Council.

Workers’ Compensation Officer/Owner Average Wage for 2018
$11,339.25/quarter; $3,779.75/month

Unemployment Insurance Taxable Wage Base for 2018
$24,700
The Wyoming Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will present safety awards to Wyoming employers demonstrating a strong safety culture and excellence in safety and health programs. Wyoming Oil and Gas Safety Alliance will present the Governor’s Stop Work Authority Award.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council will present four new awards this year: Veteran Employer of the Year, Youth Employer of the Year, Large Employer of the Year and Small Employer of the Year. These awards will honor Wyoming employers for their commitment to developing Wyoming’s workforce. The nomination period closes May 25.

For more information on the 2018 safety and workforce awards, please visit wyomingworkforce.org/_docs/summit/2018/awards-overview.pdf. For more information on the Wyoming Workforce Council Development Council awards, please visit wyowdc.wyo.gov/council/council-awards. For registration and sponsorship information please visit visitcheyenne.regfox.com/wyoming-safety-workforce-summit.

New Laws Could Impact Your Business
The 2018 Wyoming Legislative session convened on February 12 this year. The below new laws passed by Wyoming legislators during the session affect operations of the Department of Workforce Services and could have impacts on businesses in Wyoming. Below, please find brief summaries of the new laws that were monitored by the department during the 2018 Legislative Session.

HB0010 (Enrolled Act No.: HEA No. 0021) Worker's compensation-extraterritorial reciprocity
Effective: 7/1/2018
Prime Sponsor: Joint Labor, Health & Social Services Interim Committee
Catch Title: Workers’ compensation-extraterritorial reciprocity.
Subject: Requiring reciprocity for a nonresident employer’s workers’ compensation to apply in Wyoming.
Major Elements:
• This bill requires recognition of Wyoming’s workers’ compensation coverage in a nonresident employer’s home state before Wyoming will recognize that nonresident employer’s home state worker’s compensation coverage in Wyoming.
For more info: call (307) 777-5476 or email DWS-AskMeWC@wyo.gov

Bill No.: HB0018 (Enrolled Act No.: HEA No. 0019) Nonresident employer bonding
Effective: 7/1/2018
Prime Sponsor: Joint Labor, Health & Social Services Interim Committee
Subject: Lowers the threshold for when a surety bond is required from a nonresident employer and amending bond amounts.
Major Elements:
• This bill lowers the threshold for when a nonresident employer operating in Wyoming must provide a surety bond or other security. Before this bill, the threshold for an employer to provide a surety bond was when the employer expected to pay wages exceeding $10,000 monthly or $120,000 annually. This bill adopts the requirement to provide a surety bond when expected wages reach $4,000 in any month.
• This bill amends the required surety bond amount proportionately with the wages of the employee, beginning with a bond of $8,000 and increasing by specified increments for each additional $1,000 of expected monthly wages.
For more info: call (307) 777-5476 or email DWS-AskMeWC@wyo.gov

Bill No.: SF0034 (Enrolled Act No.: SEA No. 0068) Military spouse unemployment sunset repeal
Effective: Immediately upon passage (March 14, 2018)
Prime Sponsor: Joint Transportation, Highways & Military Affairs Interim Committee
Subject: Repeals a sunset provision to continue unemployment benefits for military spouses.
Major Elements:
• This bill repeals a sunset provision that would have terminated unemployment benefits July 1, 2018 for military spouses who are unemployed as the result of a military member’s relocation assignment. Unemployment benefits under this provision are federally reimbursed and are not charged to an employer’s experience rating account.
For more info: call (307) 235-3264

Bill No: SF119 (SEA No. 0059) Workforce development-priority economic sector program
Effective: Multiple Dates
Prime Sponsor: Management Council
Subject: Creates a grant program for worker training for employers providing new jobs.
Summary/Major Elements:
• Creates the Wyoming workforce development-priority economic sector partnership program, administered by the department of workforce services.
• The program provides for funding for workforce training pursuant to agreements between the department of workforce services, workforce training providers and employers creating new jobs in the state.
• Matching funds are required from the employers (which may be in-kind contributions).
• The maximum amount of funding is $5,000 per full time job and $2,500 for part-time jobs (with an exception provision for higher paying jobs requiring more expensive training as determined by the department).
• Jobs must meet specified wage requirements and be in the priority economic sectors identified in a plan by the ENDOW executive council and approved by the governor.
• The funds will be provided to the training providers in accordance with the agreements. (Eligible training providers are the University, community colleges, entities operated by a tribal government of the Northern Arapaho or Eastern Shoshone tribe, or an entity approved by the department.)
• Provides $5 million in total funding for the program ($3.5 million from the legislative stabilization reserve account and $1.5 million from a previous appropriation to the ENDOW account.)
For more information, call (307) 777-8717

Information for this article was derived from the Legislative Service Office (wyoleg.gov)

Attention Businesses!
Wyoming Department of Workforce Services
Safety & Workforce Summit 2018
If you would like to be a sponsor, please call (307) 777-6513.