



Press Release

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Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Receives National Acclaim

The Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology Selects Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center as Recipient of its 2006 Member Program of the Year Award.

Fishersville, VA –The Commonwealth’s premier rehabilitation facility, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC), has recently received national recognition for its Business Information Technology program, a training program which prepares people with disabilities for careers in the field of information technology. The Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology (ARPCT) named WWRC’s program the “2006 Member Program of the Year”.

“The center is to be commended for garnering national regard for its IT program, one of many programs at the center designed to help people with disabilities enter or re-enter the workforce and live more independently,” said Governor Kaine.

WWRC, which is a division of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) located in Fishersville, Virginia, offers comprehensive rehabilitation services on a residential and outpatient basis for persons with physical, mental, sensory and/or emotional disabilities. WWRC is a resource not only for Virginians with disabilities, but for persons with disabilities from around the globe who come to the center for its wide array of services.

The center’s Business Information Technology program was started over 30 years ago when IBM’s Irwin Kaplan and Norm Hammond launched their first “Project to Train the Handicapped” training program in 1972-73. Over the years, the training program has expanded its course offerings several times through collaborative efforts between DRS, other Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Network partners, and corporate sponsors. Today students in the program can take advantage of diverse, up-to-date curricula, including distance learning courses that will prepare them for promising IT careers.

“In Virginia, we are committed to building thriving public-private partnerships. The success and acclaim of the IT program at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center is a great example of how public and private sectors are working together to create opportunities for Virginians with disabilities,” commented Governor Kaine.

For BIT students who require a distance learning training program, TRAIN IT offers flexible and individualized home and community training. This new training program originated in 2001 via a three-year Department of Labor demonstration grant awarded to the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Investment Board and WWRC. TRAIN IT recently “transitioned” to full program status through WWRC, and represents a partnership between the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, other Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Network partners, and corporate sponsors.

“The Center was excited to see this level of recognition about a program that is so effective. We are proud of our staff and the programs that they offer to support people with disabilities.” Commented Rick Sizemore, Director of the Center.

About WWRC

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center is the first state-owned and operated comprehensive rehabilitation center in the country. WWRC provides comprehensive medical, assistive technology and vocational rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities to help them gain increased independence and employment. WWRC is a division of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services. For more information about WWRC, visit www.wwrc.virginia.gov

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