

NDEAM

National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2021

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and this year's theme is "America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion."

Historically, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities has been unacceptably high. Although unemployment due to the Covid crisis has been felt on a global scale, people with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted.

The Department of Rehabilitation's (DOR) mission is to ensure that through competitive integrative employment, people with disabilities can achieve independence and live a life that they desire and deserve.

In the recent state budget, DOR and the Department of Developmental Services received funding to create a three-year employer incentive program that will provide resources, technical support and help with recruitment and retention practices for employers who hire people with disabilities.

As a person with a disability, I am proud to work for a state that is committed to advancing inclusive and equitable hiring practices to ensure that people with disabilities are represented.

For people with disabilities, what NDEAM symbolizes extends beyond the month of October: Acknowledgement of the value, diversity, and talent that they bring to workforce. As the state and nation begin to build a pathway to economic recovery, I encourage business leaders to not overlook individuals who are qualified, able, and ready to work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Xavier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" being more prominent than the last name "Xavier".

Joe Xavier

Director, California Department of Rehabilitation