



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING  
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **HERSHEY'S HR REPRESENTATIVE TO SPEAK ABOUT CHAMPIONING DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT**

(STAUNTON, Va.) — A representative of the human resources department at The Hershey Co. will discuss the confectioner's efforts to hire more individuals with disabilities during a program held May 14 by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services.

The event, hosted by DARS' Shenandoah Valley regional field offices, will honor Hershey's and other area employers as well as individuals for their outstanding commitment to hiring and supporting people with disabilities in the workplace. The program will begin at 9:30 a.m., May 14, at the [Frontier Culture Museum](#) in Staunton, with opening remarks by DARS Commissioner Jim Rothrock.

During the past year, Hershey's has worked with DARS' [Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center](#) in Fishersville to hire several of the center's clients with disabilities to work at the company's manufacturing plant in Stuarts Draft. The partnership is an outgrowth of the Hershey Extends Real Opportunities to Succeed, or H.E.R.O.S., program.

"The H.E.R.O.S. program reflects Hershey's commitment to create a diverse and inclusive workplace and opens up employment opportunities for a dedicated and talented pool of employees that will make Hershey and the communities in which it operates better," said Victoria Zefran, a human resources business partner at the candy manufacturer's corporate headquarters in Pennsylvania.

Ms. Zefran is co-chair of H.E.R.O.S. and also serves as co-chair of the company's Abilities First Business Resource Group, a team of employees who support the company's mission to provide opportunities for people with diverse abilities and unique needs by cultivating

a welcoming culture that is inclusive of people with disabilities. She will discuss the H.E.R.O.S. program and its impact on Hershey's recruitment efforts.

Rick Sizemore, director of Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, will discuss the vocational training offered at the center, where clients with disabilities learn job skills sought by Virginia employers.

This year's champions of disability employment include:

- Blue Ridge Region of [Career Support Systems, Inc.](#)
- [Carter Dressage](#), Marshall
- Chef Marco Pantano, [Hilton Garden Inn](#), Winchester
- Human Resources, [The Hershey Company, Stuarts Draft](#)
- [James Madison University Facilities Management](#)
- [University of Virginia Human Resources' Super Temps program](#)

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The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, in collaboration with community partners, provides and advocates for resources and services to improve the employment, quality of life, security, and independence of older Virginians, Virginians with disabilities, and their families. For more information, visit [www.vadars.org](http://www.vadars.org). Follow DARS at [Facebook.com/vadars](https://www.facebook.com/vadars) or on Twitter at @vadars.