OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

READINESS AND FORCE MANAGEMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Department of Defense 2012 National Disability Employment Awareness Month

The Department of Defense will join the nation in observing National Disability Employment Awareness Month during October 2012. Congress and the President established National Disability Employment Awareness Month as a way to raise awareness about disability employment issues and to celebrate the many and varied contributions of individuals with disabilities.

The Department of Labor has set the theme for 2012's National Disability Employment Awareness Month as: "A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?" Department of Defense Components are encouraged to conduct appropriate activities and programs in support of National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month's history goes back to 1945, when Congress passed a Joint Resolution, 79th Congress, Chapter 363, Public Law 176, declaring the first week in October of each year to be "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1988, Public Law 100-630 was enacted which, in part, expanded the observance to a month and designated it as "National Disability Employment Awareness Month." Subsequently, in 1998, the designation of October as "National Disability Awareness Month' was codified as section 121 of title 36, United States Code, which also requests the President to issue each year a suitable proclamation.

Certificates signed by the Secretary of Defense will be awarded to outstanding Department of Defense civilian employees and Service members with disabilities, as well as trophies to Department of Defense Components with outstanding programs for employment of individuals with disabilities. Recipients of these awards will be announced during National Disability Employment Awareness Month. It is planned that the awards will be presented at the 32nd Annual Department of Defense Disability Awards Ceremony. This ceremony is intended to be held on Tuesday, December 4, 2012 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda in Bethesda, Maryland.

I urge each of you to renew your commitment to employment and advancement of Americans with disabilities. Any questions may be directed to Mr. Stephen M. King of my staff. You may reach him at (703) 571-9327 or stephen.king@osd.mil.

Clarence A. Johnson
Director
Office of Diversity Management
and Equal Opportunity

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