

Diversity In the Work Place:

A Win/Win That Makes Good "Cents" For Business

**BY JEFF NICHOLS, CEO MESA
DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**



Not since the great depression have we seen so many people competing for jobs. There are an abundance of applicants now for those previously hard-to-fill, high turnover, entry level positions that end up costing employers too much in turnover, recruitment and retraining. More applicants to choose from sounds like a potential business advantage, but too often the larger pool of applicants does not

necessarily represent a larger pool of potential good employees; the type of dedicated worker with a strong work ethic you are looking for. Many businesses are finding wisdom in outsourcing certain labor needs for cost savings and greater efficiencies, and they are taking a closer look at an often overlooked labor pool – qualified people with disabilities.

For over 25 years, Mesa Developmental Services has been supporting employment goals of people with disabilities through targeted training that includes employee dedication and loyalty, job responsibility, strong work ethic and self sufficiency. We also advocate for their right to employment opportunity, help break down barriers to employment, and dispel the stigma that a person with special needs cannot do the job as well as their non-disabled counterparts. Through these efforts, more and more local businesses have learned the advantage of a diverse workforce that values opportunity for all, social responsibility and assisting people with disabilities to be tax payers rather than system reliant.

In conjunction with the Home, Garden and Remodel theme of this issue of The Business Times, let me introduce you to just one of the many services offered by SPEC-TRA, the vocational Division of MDS ... our Lawn and Grounds Maintenance Crews.

As a stepping stone to individual competitive employment, many people supported in their life goals by MDS begin their work experience on a crew of typically five people in services and an MDS training specialist to supervise their work. It's a contract relationship between SPEC-TRA and the business that can be terminated at any time if you are not completely satisfied with the work. Pricing is competitive with other local vendors providing similar services.

Our list of current lawn and grounds upkeep customers includes: St. Mary's, Community and VA Hospitals; a multi county subcontract preparing HUD foreclosure homes for resale; Colorado Credit Union; Loco Food Stores; John Hildebrand for Home Owner Association subcontracts; and Eide Bailly, LLC.

SPEC-TRA Lawn and Grounds Maintenance crews provide, mowing, trimming, de-thatching, hedging, pruning, fertilizing, weed control, sod and grass plug installation, retaining wall installation and basic landscaping services. Call them at 245-3422, extension 3 to discuss your needs. You just might be surprised at the side benefits of hiring people with disabilities when your employees and customers notice your corporate efforts to improve the lives of people with disabilities through offering employment opportunities.

Jeffery S. Nichols is the Chief Executive Officer of Mesa Developmental Services in Grand Junction. He can be reached at 970-256-8601 or email jnichols@mesadev.org.



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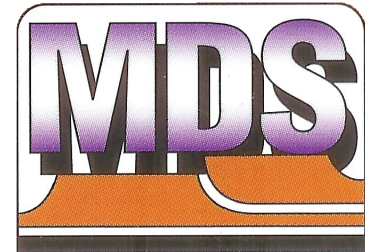
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a
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Call SPEC-TRA for more information
245-3422 ext. 3



Proceeds help support vocational programs for people with developmental disabilities



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