



News from THE WALLACE GROUP

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**Minn.Governor's Council on
Developmental Disabilities**

**For Immediate
Release**

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MINNESOTA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY NAMED 'INNOVATIVE EMPLOYER' BY STATE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities cites affordable housing agency for creatively utilizing the skills of people with disabilities in nontraditional ways

Recognized for its work in employing people with developmental disabilities, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) in St. Paul was honored as an "Innovative Employer" by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD Council).

Among government agencies, MHFA was a pioneer in hiring people with developmental disabilities. Its first hire was in 1992 and the employee has remained with the group. MHFA Supervisor Ann Thomson said the employee, Kris Nelson is an expert in document imaging. "When she's not here, it affects the way the whole department runs," said Thomson. "She knows all the specifics about how to do some of the detailed printing and packaging of time-sensitive materials."

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A survey of employers conducted jointly for the DD Council and the Department of Employment and Economic Development found that in general work situations, people with developmental disabilities performed as well or better than other employees by every standard, other than speed.

Companies and organizations engage people with disabilities either as direct employees or through organizations that provide employment services and training for people with disabilities. A recent survey revealed that there are now nonprofits serving all regions of the state that can provide such access to qualified employees.

A total of 11 Innovative Employers were chosen from 45 Minnesota nominations for recognition made to the DD Council. Winners were selected based on site visits and analysis of employer practices. The nominees chosen were also found to have an inclusive work environment and typically offered opportunities for advancement.

MHFA finances and advances affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income Minnesotans to enhance their quality of life and foster strong communities.

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