To all Arkansas business owners and managers:

Governor Asa Hutchinson has proclaimed March 21, 2019, as Individuals with Developmental Disabilities Employment Support Day.

The Governor’s Office, in cooperation with the Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), encourages all Arkansas businesses to take part by opening their businesses to individuals with developmental disabilities on Employment Support Day. Businesses can choose how they want to participate; a business could hold an “open house” that day to showcase certain jobs it offers, or a business could choose to allow an individual to shadow one of its employees performing job duties for an hour that day.

In the past year, more than 40 individuals with developmental disabilities have participated in the State’s Supported Employment Program, and these people have proven to be loyal and valuable employees. When given a chance, people with developmental disabilities show their tremendous talent and abilities. They want to contribute to their communities.

If you want to participate, DHS will be happy to highlight you as a participating business. Please respond to Yvette Swift (Yvette.Swift@dhs.arkansas.gov) by March 11, 2019 and let her know if you plan to take part. Please send the name and contact information of the person who will coordinate participation for your business. Feel free to let us know how you plan to participate or if you need to limit your participation to a certain number of individuals for a specific time frame on that day.

We hope you will participate on March 21 to help encourage inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities in the workplace. DHS believes that employers will see the capability of these individuals during this interaction. The ultimate hope is that Individuals with Developmental Disabilities Employment Support Day will lead to more employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities in their communities across the state.

Sincerely,

DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities Services