



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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TENNESSEE REHABILITATION CENTER GRADUATES TAKE STEPS TO MORE INDEPENDENT LIVES

STUDENTS FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE STATE OVERCOME BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

SMYRNA, Tenn.— Seventy-five students with significant disabilities donned cap and gown on Friday, August 25 and proudly walked or rolled across the stage at the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center (TRC) in Smyrna. The men and women, who represent 31 counties from across Tennessee, are both dedicated and driven to enter or re-enter the workforce and better their lives. Their studies and hard work in programs like Building Maintenance, Business Education Training, Food Service, Custodial Training and Warehouse Training have enabled them to do just that. With certificate in hand, these new graduates are now moving on to the next stage in their lives.

“The Department of Human Services is committed to working with individuals with disabilities and teaching them the skills they need to become successfully employed in their own communities,” said Assistant Commissioner for Rehabilitation Services Andrea Cooper. “The services offered at TRC truly do assist individuals in achieving their highest level of functioning so they can live and work as independently as possible.”

The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center is a state-operated comprehensive rehabilitation facility. It is one of only nine such centers in the nation. Services are provided on campus, and the majority of clients live on site while receiving services. The length of programs offered at TRC varies, depending upon the individual client’s interest, abilities and needs. Support services are also offered to clients, including residential living skills training, driver’s education, and physical and occupational therapy.

The TRC recently began a new Hospitality Training program to meet the needs of the growing hospitality and entertainment industry. Hospitality Training will offer instruction to students in areas of banquet preparation. Students will learn table set up, food preparation and serving, take down and clean up, inventory control, stocking supplies, sanitation skills and safety awareness. This program will target components of the already existing Food Service, Custodial, and Warehouse training programs and is designated to prepare students to work at larger hotels that focus on catering and banquet events.

TRC is part of the Division of Rehabilitation Services within the Tennessee Department of Human Services. TRC serves more than 1,000 Tennesseans with disabilities each year. Since opening its doors in 1977, TRC has served more than 25,000 individuals. For more information about the Division of Rehabilitation Services, please visit: <http://state.tn.us/humanserv/rehab/trc.htm>

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