

**Iowa Workforce
Development****For Immediate Release****Date:** October 2, 2023**Contact: Jesse Dougherty** (515) 725-5487
communications@iwd.iowa.gov**IWD Welcomes James Williams as New Administrator of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) announced the hiring of James Williams, Ed.D. as the new Division Administrator for Vocational Rehabilitation Services, effective today. Williams will oversee the state's vocational rehabilitation program, which moved to IWD as part of the state's alignment effort. The move is designed to make it easier for Iowans to access all available workforce services in a single location and working with a single team.

"IWD is very excited to have James join our team and to lead the Vocational Rehabilitation Services division. James has spent his professional life serving individuals with disabilities, beginning as a Special Education teacher in Texas and progressing in both his education and work experience to being the CEO of Bloom Consulting, a company that oversees delivery of rehabilitative services in seven states," said Beth Townsend, Executive Director of Iowa Workforce Development. "We are so fortunate to find James, as he is the perfect combination of passion for the work plus a wealth of experience, education, and expertise. Additionally, through his work in multiple states including Texas, which realigned VR services with its workforce commission in 2017, he knows the best practices utilized around the country and can ensure that Iowa provides services to Iowans with disabilities at a level we've only previously imagined when contemplating the benefits of alignment."

Before starting the position, Williams previously was CEO of Bloom Consulting in Round Rock, Texas – a firm that specializes in providing vocational services, evaluations, and training to individuals with disabilities, particularly those diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. In 2021, Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas appointed Williams to serve as Vice Chair of the Texas State Rehabilitative Council.

Williams is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, an Advanced Certified Autism Specialist, and a certified Special Education Teacher. He describes himself as a "proud former recipient" of vocational rehabilitation services, with his own history of going through the vocational rehabilitation process to pair with experience at state-level oversight.

"I'm thrilled for this opportunity to expand on the great work done in vocational rehabilitation to help create the best possible employment outcomes for Iowans with disabilities, regardless of the barriers they face," said Williams. "The recent alignment of workforce programs also helps us create more pathways for serving the individual and helping them find meaningful employment."

Earlier this summer, Iowa's Vocational Rehabilitation Services moved to become its own division within Iowa Workforce Development, centralizing the state's workforce-related programs and services. For more information on the services available, visit ivrs.iowa.gov. To learn more about the reorganization of workforce programs, [visit this link](#).

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