

# WINDMILLS

## Changing the Perception of Ability

A brief introduction...



**DARS**

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING  
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

# WINDMILLS

## Changing the Perception of Ability

What is Windmills?

“Windmills” is a high-impact, changing the perception of disability training curriculum consisting of 12 modules that use participation and discovery as learning vehicles, and which has a proven history of assisting those with and without disabilities to better understand the culture of disability in the workplace. It is best defined as an employer-employee training tool designed to change attitudinal barriers and create a new perspective on the unique abilities of individuals.



- Proven history of assisting those with/without disabilities to better understand the culture of disability in the workplace.
- Employer-Employee training tool designed to change altitudinal barriers and create a new perspective on the unique abilities of individuals.
- Designed to increase awareness of the role that attitudes play in the employment of people with disabilities.
- Promotes the employment and advancement of persons with disabilities.

- **TARGETS**

- ✓ For Profit & Corporate Businesses
- ✓ Non-Profit Organizations
- ✓ Government Agencies at the local, state and national levels
- ✓ Advocacy Groups
- ✓ Academic Institutions

# HOW CAN THE "WINDMILLS" PROGRAM HELP MY ORGANIZATION?

Many organizations would like to employ persons with disabilities but find that fears, biases and myths create barriers in the hiring process. The training focuses on attitudes and human factors, while addressing concerns including legal requirements and accommodation. The modules primarily consist of exercises relevant to the everyday world of work to which participants can relate and then remember on the job. The new "Windmills" program also incorporates language and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act ADAAA.

WINDMILLS is based on the concept that attitudes about persons with disabilities are instrumental in forming behaviors toward individuals with disabilities. If supervisors change the attitudes they have about persons with disabilities, they will be more open to changing their own behaviors.

# Learning Objectives for Today

- ▶ Understand what Windmills training is and how it can be utilized as an effective tool to expand the recruitment, interviewing, hiring, onboarding, training, and professional development individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ Learn how Windmills training can create opportunities for collaborative partnership that result in increased employment opportunities and successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ Learn how to connect with the DARS Business Services Team to develop a Windmills training program for a business or organization you are working with.

We want to stretch the boundaries of  
your “Comfort Zone”.

But it doesn't have to be Awkward!



In Case Of Fire  
Evacuate  
Immediately



## Activity #1

# Disability: What's it to you?

### MODULE OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ To examine stereotypes associated with common disabilities
- ▶ To illustrate participants' emotional reactions to specific disabilities
- ▶ To better understand the impact of attitudes about people with disabilities and the effect they can have on our relationships with each other



Choose the Disability that you feel would be the **Least Difficult/ Least Challenging** for you to adjust to and manage in your life.

- ▶ 1. Blind using a cane/service animal
- ▶ 2. Down Syndrome/Developmental Intellectual Challenge
- ▶ 3. Para-plegic (paralyzed from the waist down)
- ▶ 4. Anxiety /Post-Traumatic Stress  
(immobilizing fear, event association, anger)
- ▶ 5. Bi-Polar Disorder

Choose the Disability that you feel would be the **Most Difficult/ Most Challenging** for you to adjust to and manage in your life.

- ▶ 1. Blind using a cane/service animal
- ▶ 2. Down Syndrome/Developmental Intellectual Challenge
- ▶ 3. Para-plegic (paralyzed from the waist down)
- ▶ 4.. Anxiety /Post-Traumatic Stress  
(immobilizing fear, event association, anger)
- ▶ 5. Bi-Polar Disorder

What did you choose and why?

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The overall composition is clean and modern, with the text centered on a white background.

**“Perception is reality.”**

This is saying that **you have a mental impression of something**, and it defines how you see that something, regardless of the truth.

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect. The rest of the background is plain white.

Did this exercise make any of you feel  
uncomfortable?

## Activity #2

# Whose Fault?

In this exercise you will review a scenario that tells a story about disability related employment issues. After each scenario the group will be invited to evaluate how the characters in the story performed, and to determine if one of the characters is more at fault than the others?

## Module Objectives:

- ▶ To improve participants' awareness of the different players and roles in a successful business program employing persons with disabilities
- ▶ To assist participants in considering their own roles in making a program successful
- ▶ To identify more effective ways to communicate and resolve conflict
- ▶ To review methods that participants can implement to improve the way they work with persons with disabilities

**ABC Company**

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect. The rest of the background is plain white.



# ABC Company

## Whose Fault?

- ▶ A. Diversity Manager.
- ▶ B. Supervisor.
- ▶ C. Coworker.
- ▶ D. Employee.

# A-Z Tool Company

# A-Z Tool Company

## Whose Fault?

- ▶ A. Human Resource (HR) Manager.
- ▶ B. Rehabilitation Professional.
- ▶ C. Manufacturing Manager.
- ▶ D. Supervisor of the Quality Control Department.
- ▶ E. The Applicant.

**How will you incorporate what you learned  
today into your work / life?**

# Thank you!

To learn more contact your DARS Business  
Development Manager

[www.vdars.org/team.htm](http://www.vdars.org/team.htm)



**Put Ability to Work**  
BUSINESS SERVICES

# Resources

- Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) [www.vadars.org](http://www.vadars.org)
- VA Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) [www.vdbvi.org](http://www.vdbvi.org)
- Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) [www.vats.org](http://www.vats.org)
- VR Workforce Studio [www.vrworkforcestudio.com](http://www.vrworkforcestudio.com)
- Wilson Workforce Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) [www.wwrc.net](http://www.wwrc.net)
- JAN - Job Accommodation Network [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)

# DARS Business Development Managers

- Southwest/South Central District  
Beth Groff - [Beth.Groff@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:Beth.Groff@dars.virginia.gov)
- Blue Ridge District  
Nate Mahanes - [Nate.Mahanes@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:Nate.Mahanes@dars.virginia.gov)
- Northern Virginia District  
LaPearl Smith - [Lapearl.Smith@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:Lapearl.Smith@dars.virginia.gov)
- Central District  
Wes Seaton - [William.Seaton@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:William.Seaton@dars.virginia.gov)
- Hampton Roads District  
Missie Edmonds - [Melissa.Edmonds@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:Melissa.Edmonds@dars.virginia.gov)



# Division of Rehabilitative Services Business Development Manager Areas

### David Leon

Deputy Director Workforce Programs  
david.leon@dars.virginia.gov

### Kate Kaegi

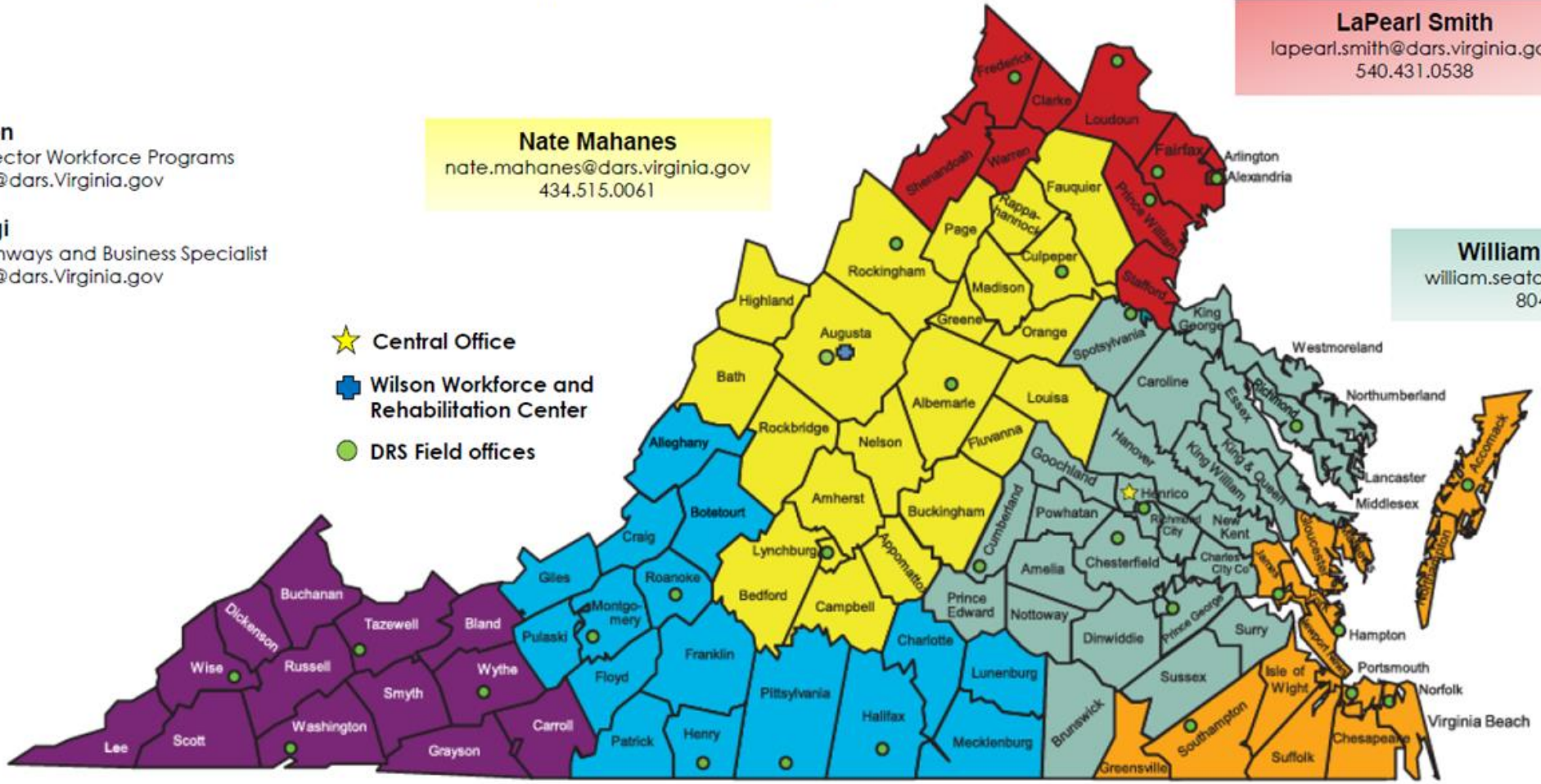
Career Pathways and Business Specialist  
kate.kaegi@dars.virginia.gov

**Nate Mahanes**  
nate.mahanes@dars.virginia.gov  
434.515.0061

**LaPearl Smith**  
lapearl.smith@dars.virginia.gov  
540.431.0538

**William 'Wes' Seaton**  
william.seaton@dars.virginia.gov  
804.652.7706

- ★ Central Office
- ⊕ Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center
- DRS Field offices



**Beth Groff**  
beth.groff@dars.virginia.gov  
804.895.1696

**Beth Groff**  
beth.groff@dars.virginia.gov  
804.895.1696

**Melissa Edmonds**  
melissa.edmonds@dars.virginia.gov  
757.358.2488