



PROMOTING A DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY

DALE ROGERS TRAINING CENTER



Deborah Copeland, M.Ed.
Executive Director

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Goals Driven

I love hearing Tammy's story and seeing the joy she exudes when talking about the future. Her focus and determination are unmistakable. Tammy currently works in DRTC's Production Center, where she engages in paid training on commercial contracts for assembly, kitting, and other manufacturing work. In the recent past, as a person with a disability, Tammy would likely remain in that program for the duration of her career. Statistically, fewer than 5% of people with a significant disability, who work in a more sheltered, center-based environment, will transition to community employment. Multiple factors contribute to this outcome including accessibility, the need for supports, availability of transportation, family concerns for safety

and the navigation of benefits.

DRTC strives to change the trajectory for people with significant disabilities by leading the way to more disability inclusion in the Oklahoma workforce. Multiple programs at DRTC address unique challenges facing people transitioning from the stability of the vocational services program to a competitive employment workforce. Programs include an EmployAbility Academy, a dedicated Community Integrated Employment (CIE) Case Manager and interest-based job exploration.

We hope Tammy's journey will not only shine a light on these challenges, but also foster great hope. Every life challenge involves an element of risk, but those risks can be measured and calculated. When we consider the things most valued in our lives, they all started with taking a risk.

Tammy and so many people just like her at DRTC embody a pioneering spirit. They forge the way for others to live life to the fullest.

You can also help to create more inclusion in your workplace. Consider contacting DRTC to discuss your current hiring needs, ways to create more accessibility, or to ask about our job openings. There is an abundance of ways you can help everyone realize their goals for employment.



Tammy demonstrates a fulfillment project with Jerky.com for DRTC Executive Director Deborah Copeland. Learn more about our partnership with Jerky.com [on Page 6](#).



Dylan, Ntokei, Cody

New Wages

DRTC's Board of Directors has approved a wage increase for employees working at the Federal Contracts. All employees will now earn at least \$15/hour beginning June 1. If you or someone you know is looking for a great job, apply today at DRTC.org/apply-now.

Front cover: Tammy



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Tammy and CIE Case Manager Sue Gill

Goals in Sight

Among all the hustle and bustle of DRTC's Vocational Services Program, where multiple subcontracting jobs are being processed among the different areas, each person is working to accomplish goals - both in employment and personal. Tammy is no exception. While she's working today, she is also making plans for a bright future working in the community that she's earning one day at a time.

Staying Busy

Most days, you'll find Tammy working quietly at one of the many stations setup in DRTC's Vocational Services Program. Her favorites? Payne Education and Jerky.com. Tammy likes the calmness about these jobs. She's able to add documents to binders (Payne Education) or produce kits (Jerky.com) for shipping. Tammy also de-kits components for ATC Drivetrain, a transmission remanufacturer located in Oklahoma City. Needless to say, Tammy has several employment options at DRTC that keep her engaged.

A graduate of Northwest Classen High School, Tammy first started working at DRTC in late 2020. In addition to her work on the main campus, she has also participated in the agency's Mobile Workforce, which sends small groups (3-5 people, along with a DRTC supervisor) to various work and volunteer sites throughout the metro



Tammy and Case Manager Rochatto assembling documents for Payne Education.



Tammy de-kits components for ATC Drivetrain.



Tammy boarding an EMBARK bus.



Barbara and Tammy being interviewed.

Goals in Sight - Continued from Page 3

to complete tasks. She has worked at employers like ATC Drivetrain, Digital Design and the Oklahoma City Zoo.

"It was quiet," Tammy said, recalling one of her favorite parts of working at these locations.

Community Employment

Working independently in the community is one of Tammy's goals in life. While she's taking steps through Mobile Workforce, Tammy is also participating in a renewed effort by DRTC to transition workers currently employed at the main campus into jobs with employers based in the community.

Through a United Way of Central Oklahoma grant-funded program called the EmployAbility Academy, and teaming up with a Community Integrated Employment (CIE) Case Manager, Tammy is working to a brighter future today. The EmployAbility Academy provides a firm foundation for people like Tammy to succeed in outside employment, covering basic employment concepts as well as how to integrate successfully into the workplace and community.

Tammy wants to join the nursing field, and eventually work at an assisted living facility, so she is working closely with CIE Case Manager Sue Gill on that goal. Tammy's friend, who recently passed away, inspired her to pursue this career path.

"He's probably looking down on me right now saying, 'Well you're doing what I said I wanted you to do,'" reflected Tammy.

One thing she has realized recently is the support system behind her.

"I'd say I've learned a lot," Tammy said. "Everybody is proud of me. (I'm) proud of myself."

Spreading the Word

Tammy is among three people either employed or participating in programs offered by DRTC featured in a new video promoting community employment. A grant awarded by the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma is helping tell Tammy's story statewide and beyond. Both she and her sister, Barbara, are featured as they talk about the transition from center-based to community-based employment. Watch the video on [DRTC's YouTube channel!](#)



Gear Up

Businesses and agencies throughout Oklahoma are entrusting DRTC Promotional Items to outfit staff and supporters through Company Stores.

DRTC's Company Stores provide an easy way for employees and customers to purchase custom apparel with agency logo and branding. Our graphic design team can help make your vision a reality, while our screen printing and SWAG team ensure the highest quality, delivered on time and within budget.

Interested in learning more about Company Stores through DRTC Promotional Items? Email promosales@drtc.org or call 405-946-1079 #1807.

We can screen print apparel for your next event! Minimum quantities start at 24 pieces.

Hiring?

You've no doubt seen the plethora of "now hiring" signs and ads. Maybe your business is one of many in a seemingly never-ending hiring cycle. The process could leave you questioning can I find good workers? The answer: yes, if you know where to look. Enter DRTC.



With the nation heading toward focusing on more community-based employment for people with disabilities through pending legislation, DRTC wants to connect you with the right talent for your business.

From accommodations to employee relations, DRTC's Employment Services Program is ready to meet your needs. Contact supportedemployment@drtc.org or call DRTC's DRS Programs Director at 405-606-2876 #1702 to learn more.

Camp T

After a two year hiatus, Camp Tumbleweed resumed in-person activities for 2022 with a fresh look for campers!

This year, instead of offering summer day camp in two sessions (one each for June and July), DRTC refreshed camp into two-week long sessions, comprised of seven campers each. This adjustment allows for even more campers to participate in Camp Tumbleweed throughout the summer, while maintaining safer staff to camper ratios.

Camp staff and volunteers are leading campers in activities such as self expression and basic money skills, as well as fun outings to the Oklahoma City Zoo, Factory Obscura, First Americans Museum and more.

[Like our social media pages](#) to see photos and video from these fun activities!



Jerky.com

DRTC is cooking up new business relationships, and one of our newest contracts is with Jerky.com. Through a customer referral, DRTC connected with the Oklahoma City-based company to package five different tasty gift packages. Our team handles everything from branding the canvas bag (right) to filling the bags with various product ready-to-sell, at times turning into friendly competitions to see who can assemble the product the fastest.

Twelve workers at DRTC have produced 15,000 gift packages since January 2022, and are expected to complete up to 80,000 by the end of the year! You can support our work and Jerky.com by making a purchase on [Jerky.com](https://www.jerky.com) or [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

DRTC thanks Jerky.com for entrusting us with their product and helping promote a more disability-inclusive workplace. We can help your business grow, too! Contact pr@drtc.org to get started.

"I like bagging them up." - Kathy

"I like branding the bags." - Gary

"I really like this job." - Sandra

"Jerky.com views DRTC as an extension of our fulfillment team and this relationship allows us to easily manage high in-stock rates on high-velocity products even during peak-season times."

- Doug, Jerky.com



Kenique





Working Over Time

With more businesses reopening and in-person events taking place in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, DRTC has found itself extremely busy filling all kinds of orders. From awards, to framing, to promotional items, our workers are creating unique items around the clock.

In [DRTC Awards](#), our talented crew continues to produce custom trophies and acrylic awards. Every day, acrylic artists are hard at work not only making awards shine, but highlighting the accomplishments of star employees, volunteers and dedicated board members just to name a few. View our selection online at [DRTC.org/shop](#), or visit us at 2501 N. Utah Ave. to find your next showstopping award.

Across Utah Avenue, recent arts festivals, retirements, and commendations have kept Certified Picture Framer Carla Folks Lavimodiere and our team busy creating custom picture frames. [DRTC Framing](#) can help you with your next project, too. We're operating by appointment only. Email framing@drtc.org or call 405-790-1212 to schedule your private consultation.

DRTC's latest entrepreneurial venture, [promotional items](#), has also taken off recently as more companies attend in-person trade shows. We've been fulfilling orders of



Waneta wrapping a finished, custom picture frame.

custom-branded promo items and displays, ensuring the highest quality for all our customers. In addition, our screen printing machine has been running 'round and 'round, producing great shirts for events of all sizes. Contact promosales@drtc.org or visit promoplace.com/drtcpromos to make your next event a success, while supporting a disability-inclusive employer!

Questions? 405-946-4489



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Promoting a more disability-inclusive
workplace and community



Look for our DRTC-branded EMBARK buses in the Oklahoma City metro!

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LIVE UNITED
United Way

