



2000 Engel St., Suite 100, Madison, WI 53713
Phone: (608) 244-5310 | Fax: (608) 244-9097 | www.rfw.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Robin Kennedy
Director of Agency Relations, [Opportunities Inc.](http://www.opportunitiesinc.com)
rkennedy@wi.rr.com
1.920.563.2437 or cell 1.262.894.6224

In recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, over 400 people with disabilities and advocates will gather at a Grassroots Advocacy Event on October 25 in Jefferson to celebrate the important contributions of participants in Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) as productive members of America's workforce.

[Evelyne Villines](#), a nationally recognized self-advocate who has been honored by [SourceAmerica](#) will share her own inspirational story at the event. The message Ms. Villines shares with advocates, policymakers, and others is that all employment choices and services must be respected and protected, including options for people with severe disabilities to gain valuable work experience and expand their independence in skills training programs. The federal government has proposed a new regulation that threatens to eliminate this option. Advocacy to members of Wisconsin's Congressional delegation by CRP stakeholders this month focused on preserving the right of people with disabilities to freely choose where they want to work.

Ms. Villines has held numerous prominent government and non-profit positions, including her appointment in 1994 by President Bill Clinton as a member of the Committee for Purchase for People Who are Blind or Severely Disabled. State and local policy makers, legislators, and advocates have been invited to this event and a related event in Madison on October 24 to hear her emphasize the critical importance of protecting a full array of services to ensure the availability of employment opportunities for all people with disabilities.

[National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) (NDEAM) is a national campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for 2013 is "Because We Are EQUAL to the Task".

EVENT DETAILS:

Friday, October 25, 2013
Jefferson County Fair Park
503 N. Jackson Ave, Jefferson, WI 53549

- 10:00 a.m. – Participants will arrive.
- 10:30 a.m. – Evelyn Villines will speak.
- 12:00 p.m. – Appreciation luncheon will be served, with a Social to follow.

PARTICIPANTS:

- **Members of the [A-Teams of Wisconsin](#).** This volunteer-led effort was established in October 2011 and now has 7 chapters around the state with over 300 members. Its mission is to ignite the passion and energy of persons with disabilities and their families to advocate in a grassroots movement, create awareness in the community, and advise those who care for Wisconsin's citizens with special needs to ensure their service choices are protected and sustained.
- **Participants in CRPs.** Individuals with disabilities who attend skills training programs and receive a full range of employment services from Wisconsin's CRPs will be in attendance to celebrate their contributions to the workforce with family and friends, while learning self-advocacy skills to help them make their service choices known and respected.

###