



**WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DRS recognizes Sweet Springs Valley Water Company

Beckley, W.Va. (September 29, 2010) – The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) recognized Sweet Springs Valley Water Company of Gap Mills as its Employer of the Year for its Beckley District at an Employer Recognition Banquet at Stonewall Jackson Resort on September 23, 2010.

“This banquet is a way for us to show our appreciation to the businesses nominated and selected by our vocational rehabilitation professionals for their consideration and contributions to the employment of our clients,” said Division of Rehabilitation Services Director Deborah Lovely. These employers are giving someone a chance to prove their employment capabilities. They are empowering individuals with disabilities by providing them with job opportunities.”

Sweet Springs Valley Water Company was founded in 1990. The company began from an idea to develop and utilize a local natural resource in a "start to finish product" business to employ local residents and bolster the local economy. The idea blossomed into a company that captures, bottles and distributes natural spring water, with the springs and bottling plant in Monroe County and a warehouse and distribution center in Bluefield.

The company has been open to hiring DRS clients for a variety of positions throughout the years, but was nominated and selected for its response to an employee who was injured in a non-work related accident. One of the company's employees had an arm amputated, and was fitted with a prosthesis. Throughout his recovery, the company found ways to accommodate the employee so he could return to work. They adapted his job, bought equipment that was easier for him to use and were flexible and supportive.

DRS, a division of the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts, is the state agency responsible for the federal vocational rehabilitation program in West Virginia. DRS assists people whose physical or mental condition is interfering with their ability to get or keep a job. Employers play a critical role in the success of those participating in the vocational rehabilitation program.

DRS offers individualized service to assist employers in retaining valued employees or in hiring qualified employees. DRS can provide consultation related to disability, as well as information about assistive technology, disability resources, potential tax credits, workplace accommodations and other benefits to employers.

Other West Virginia businesses recognized by DRS at the banquet include RPR Industries, Inc., Grantsville; The Op Shop, Fairmont; Fleet Service Company, Inc., Wheeling; WorkForce West Virginia, Huntington; and Food Lion Store #2568, Martinsburg.

The Beckley District consists of Raleigh, Mercer, Summers, Monroe, Greenbrier, Fayette, Nicholas, Braxton, Webster and Pocahontas counties.

For more information about DRS and its programs, call 1-800-642-8207 (V/TDD) or visit the division's Web site at www.wvdrs.org/. In the Beckley District, call (304) 256-6900.