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DETR and OfficeMax Partner to Train People with Disabilities ***Two-Year Grant Provided From Kessler Foundation***

Las Vegas, NV —The Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR), Kessler Foundation and OfficeMax[®] Incorporated, now part of the new company formed through the merger of equals with Office Depot, Inc. (NYSE: ODP), a leading global provider of office products, services, and solutions, will celebrate their new partnership that helps provide employment training for people with disabilities. The celebration will include a ribbon cutting and graduation ceremony for the first class of work training participants on Jan. 10, 2014 at 2 p.m. at the OfficeMax distribution center at 2821 Marion Drive in Las Vegas.

The work training partnership, part of the OfficeMax Maxing out Diversity program, is designed to provide work training and create career opportunities for individuals with disabilities who otherwise may experience significant barriers to employment, said Scott McKenzie, director of operations for the OfficeMax PowerMax distribution facility in Las Vegas.

The innovative partnership, facilitated through a two-year grant from Kessler Foundation – a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the lives of people with disabilities through rehabilitation research and funding disability employment initiatives – will utilize a real-world work environment and specialized curriculum to train people with disabilities for meaningful careers within OfficeMax’s distribution and retail centers. The DETR’s Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) program will recommend its clients for participation in the program.

Many of the candidates entering this training program have not had job experience or their experience may be very limited, said Shelley Hendren, administrator for DETR’s Rehabilitation Division.

“This is an exciting opportunity for people with disabilities who need assistance in developing work readiness skills,” Hendren said. “Statistics show that people with disabilities are just as capable of succeeding in the workplace as people who don’t have disabilities. Often they just need minimal assistance to be successful employees.”

OfficeMax in partnership with the Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst (APSE) was awarded a two-year grant from the Kessler Foundation to expand OfficeMax’s employment program for people with disabilities. The resulting grant project was designed to assist

OfficeMax in developing local and national partnerships within the disability community to create career training programs aimed at increasing its hiring of people with disabilities. Nevada, along with three other states, is working on this pilot program.

“OfficeMax is proud to partner with the state of Nevada on this worthwhile program,” McKenzie said. “OfficeMax is tremendously committed to helping to improve the lives of the people in the communities who support us. This is a great opportunity for us to give back and make a difference in the lives of people who dream of joining the workforce.”

BVR has collaborated with OfficeMax and the Kessler Foundation, and is the first organization nationwide to graduate trainees through the training program. BVR not only refers the candidates, but also funds the instructor’s position while OfficeMax provides the classroom site, work locations and job expertise.

The program, located in Las Vegas, provides eight weeks of pre-training on-site with curriculum and utilizing a real world work environment to give the participants the skill sets for employment in the OfficeMax /PowerMax logistics environment or the retail store setting.

The candidates participate in three hours of classroom instruction and three hours of actual work each day for the first six weeks. During the final two weeks the candidate selects the work environment that best matches his or her interests, skills, and abilities and completes an internship in this site (Warehouse or Retail). Upon successful completion of the program the candidates will be awarded a Certificate that will be of great value to secure employment in the distribution center or retail location, not only within the OfficeMax umbrella, but also with other local companies. Eight candidates began the program in November and will participate in the January 10th graduation.

Ongoing OfficeMax Commitment to Diversity

OfficeMax’s partnership with DETR is just the latest in OfficeMax’s ongoing commitment to working with veterans and people with disabilities. As part the company’s *Maxing Out Diversity* program, last year OfficeMax partnered with Aspire of Illinois to launch a work training facility in Illinois under the Kessler Foundation grant. OfficeMax also is working with the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and local organizations to create career-training facilities in other markets including Dallas and Columbus, Ohio. In 2013 OfficeMax was awarded the National Employment Team “Private Sector Business of the Year” by the CSAVR for its commitment to employing veterans and people with disabilities, including OfficeMax’s PowerMax distribution center in McCalla, Alabama, which has employed more than 60 people with disabilities. Additionally, OfficeMax has partnered with the Turning Pointe Autism Foundation to develop a work training facility for young adults with autism.

About Kessler Foundation

Kessler Foundation, a major nonprofit organization in the field of disability, is a global leader in rehabilitation research that seeks to improve cognition, mobility and long-term outcomes, including employment, for people with neurological disabilities caused by diseases and injuries

of the brain and spinal cord. Kessler Foundation leads the nation in funding innovative programs that expand opportunities for employment for people with disabilities. For more information, visit KesslerFoundation.org.

About the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation

The Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation consists of divisions that offer assistance in job training and placement, vocational rehabilitation, workplace discrimination and in collecting and analyzing workforce and economic data. Many of these services are provided through DETR's partnership with the Nevada JobConnect system.

DETR's Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation is a state and federally funded program designed to help people with disabilities become employed and to help those already employed perform more successfully through training, counseling and other support methods.

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