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## **L&I's Hiram G. Andrews Center Celebrates 2023 Autism Awareness & Acceptance Walk and Resource Fair Highlighting Services for Pennsylvania Students**

**Johnstown, PA** – More than 400 students from a dozen area school districts participated in the 2023 Autism Awareness & Acceptance Walk and Resource Fair at the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC). This event provided opportunities for individuals on the autism spectrum and local students to experience the state-operated facility's offerings of postsecondary education, pre-employment transition and support services.

Established in 1959 and operated through the **Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation**, the HGAC specializes in providing barrier-free education and job-readiness programs to people of all backgrounds and ability levels.

"This annual event at the HGAC reinforces our commitment to helping individuals with disabilities connect to the right employment opportunities and support systems needed to excel in careers that showcase their talents," **said L&I Acting Secretary Nancy Walker**. "At Labor & Industry, we value the diversity and unique abilities that these individuals possess and support their efforts to work to their full potential, leveraging their strengths and independence."

The HGAC's offerings include the Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI), a postsecondary trade and technical school licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges. CTI offers four associate degree programs and seven diploma programs with disability support services, deaf/hard of hearing services, autism-support services, services for students with visual impairments, therapeutic services, Career Guidance Center services, driver training, independent living skills services and more available to students.

The L&I Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, which the CTI falls under, is both state (\$52.82M) and federally (\$182.93M) funded, with emphasis placed on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. [Governor Josh Shapiro's budget](#) prioritizes services for Pennsylvanians with disabilities that support independence without barriers. A Transfer to the Vocational Rehabilitation Fund of almost \$48M enables OVR to match their estimated federal funding to further advance the career and independence goals of

Pennsylvanians with disabilities. Over 50,000 individuals with disabilities and an additional 17,000 students with disabilities utilize OVR's Pre-Employment Transition Services program annually.

Through CTI, the center offers associate degree programs to prepare students for work in medical offices, culinary arts, and networking technology. Seven diploma programs offer administrative assistant, automotive technology, building maintenance, culinary arts, materials management and distribution, nurse aide and welding technology credentials.

Prospective students, their teachers and family are always invited to tour the campus. Schedule a tour by calling 800-762-4211 ext. 0582, or 814-254-0582. [Information is available on L&I's website.](#)

For information about applying for admission, please contact HGAC/CTI's Admissions Office at 800-762-4211 ext. 0564 or 814-254-0564.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, please visit the [website](#) or follow L&I on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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