



Matthew H. Mead
Governor

State of Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

Office of the Director
122 W. 25th Street, Herschler 2-East
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002
307.777.8650 ■ Fax: 307.777.5857
www.wyomingworkforce.org



Joan K. Evans
Director
Lisa M. Osvold
Deputy Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Hayley Douglass](mailto:Hayley.Douglass@wyomingworkforce.org)

(307) 777-8229

September 14, 2012

DWS: Dads Making a Difference Program Honored with National Award

CHEYENNE – The Department of Workforce Services’s (DWS) Dads Making a Difference Program was recognized nationally this week with the State Excellence Award for Leadership (SEAL) at the National Association of State Workforce Agencies Conference (NASWA).

The State Excellence Award for Leadership (SEAL) honors a state for a workforce-related program, project or initiative which addresses an issue or challenge. The award recognizes programs that are innovative and result in significant improvements in service or performance.

“The success of the Dads Making a Difference program is a tribute to these Wyoming fathers who rose beyond their circumstances,” said Director of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Joan Evans. “This innovative initiative was inspired by a need to serve a forgotten population in Wyoming: low income fathers. The SEAL award is a great honor, and adds to the proud history of the Department of Workforce Services’s Dads Making a Difference program.”

Dads Making a Difference is a training-to-work program for low income fathers who are experiencing multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. The program provides the services necessary for the participants to actively improve the quality of their own lives, as well as the lives of their children and families. Each participant is provided with nationally certified training in high growth, high demand occupations, along with nationally recognized life skills curriculum including Love and Logic parenting courses, PAIRS healthy relationship classes, financial literacy courses, job seeking skills, employment retention, debt resolution and credit recovery classes, individual and group counseling by a licensed professional counselor, resource development education, self-guided planning, and community leadership opportunities.

In its first three years, the Dads Making a Difference program boasted an 83% graduation rate, a 64% employment rate within 90 days of graduation, and a 90% employment rate within one year of graduation. In 2011, the program had a 100% graduation rate, a 90% employment rate within

90 days of graduation, and a 100% employment rate within one year of graduation. A 100% graduation rate continued with the program's most recent group of dads who celebrated their success this last June. As of this date, 9 of the 10 graduates are employed and making a wage well above the self-sufficiency level.

Plans are in progress to introduce Dads Making a Difference into additional communities around the state. As more participants successfully complete the program, alumni involvement in the community grows, providing an even greater net of support for the participants.

####