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Gov. Daugaard Honors NCRC Recipients

YANKTON, S.D. – Commemorating more than 2,000 South Dakotans who have earned National Career Readiness Certificates™ (NCRC), Gov. Dennis Daugaard today honored John Backhaus of Vermillion and Lonnie Pinkelman of Tyndall for recently obtaining this valuable workplace credential.

NCRC is an assessment-based credential used to verify an individual's core employability skills. It measures three essential areas: reading for information, applied mathematics and locating information.

"This job-profiling analysis, which was developed by the ACT organization, is a great aid to businesses," Gov. Daugaard said. "It identifies the skills and skill levels employees must have to do certain jobs effectively. Individuals then have a clear picture of the skill levels they need in order to qualify for and be successful in the jobs they want."

Backhaus came to the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) for workforce training assistance in January. He worked with Southeast Job Link in Vermillion to complete the NCRC.

Backhaus also completed a six-week Welding Boot Camp through the Vermillion Chamber and Development Corporation, the Vermillion School District and Masaba Mining, Inc. DLR then arranged on-the-job training for him at Dakota Trailer in Yankton. Backhaus is now a full-time saw operator at the company.

"I appreciate the help and training the Department of Labor and Regulation gave me so I could get back to work right away," said Backhaus. "The NCRC helped me prove the skills I need at Dakota Trailer. They've been patient and helpful while I've learned their systems, and I enjoy my new job."

Dakota Trailer Human Resources Manager Jaci Benjamin says DLR is a good partner when it comes to employment resources.

"Working with John Backhaus through the workforce training program has been a perfect example of someone who came to us with some experience, plus a willingness to learn and take on new challenges," Benjamin said. "With John's recent skill training and veteran's background, he is a good addition for the growth of our company."

Pinkelman started participating in DLR re-employment services in January 2011. After he earned a National Career Readiness Certificate, the department provided him tuition assistance to attend an equipment maintenance program.

“I was previously a machine operator,” Pinkelman said. “I thought learning how to set up, maintain and repair equipment would be a great opportunity to advance my career.”

Pinkelman is now enrolled in the Industrial Maintenance program at Regional Technical Education Center (RTEC) in Yankton. He will graduate this May. A DLR grant funds the program, which is delivered through a partnership between RTEC and Mitchell Technical Institute.

“The funding and resources provided by the Department of Labor and Regulation, including the NCRC, have been a great help,” Pinkelman said. “My employer has also been very accommodating by allowing me the flexibility to adjust my work schedule to meet my class schedule.”

Pinkelman is currently employed at L&M Radiator in Yankton as a warehouse worker.

“At L&M, we believe in allowing individuals the chance to improve themselves,” said Dan Ferden, production coordinator at L&M Radiator. “Lonnie has been part of our second-shift production, and we’re glad to be able to work with him.”

NCRC is one component of Gov. Daugaard’s South Dakota WINS (Workforce Initiative) to develop a more-educated workforce. The certificate is designed to complement other traditional credentials, such as a high school diploma, technical institute degree or college degree. DLR launched the program in April 2010. [Learn more.](#)

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*Backhaus (BAK'-uhs)

*Jaci (JAK'-ee)