

## CONGRATULATIONS SWCMHC VESTED TEAM!



La Plata County Department of Human Services, Betty Bewley, nominated the SWCMHC VESTED Program for a Partner Award for their outstanding Customer Services. The nomination was forwarded to the Colorado Works State office and reviewed by State Administrators and awarded TOP PROGRAM out of about 35 other County nominations. VESTED, a program through Southwest Mental Health Center, directed by Bob Medearis, has provided pre-vocational case management, job preparedness workshops, job skills, job

development/placement, and post-employment follow up services for La Plata County Colorado Works program participants.

This year VESTED counselors revised their programming and classes to focus more on overcoming barriers and work preparation. Counselors work closely with clients, TANF staff and our partners providing services from the first IRC and often continuing for prolonged periods after case closure if necessary. Client's have access to 32 hours of job preparedness training, and work one-on-one with counselors for vocational testing and vocational exploration counseling. Vested counselors attend IRC appointments with clients, create CWEP sites, and meet with employers on client's behalf if requested.

VESTED acts as a liaison between the Mental Health Center and the Colorado Works staff assuring the seamless integration of service and providing comprehensive case management needed to better coordinate and connect participants with the services they need. Counselors participate as coaches, consultation team members, and group leaders for SUCCESS, a Dialectical Behavioral Treatment (DBT) program. SUCCESS group leaders address many barriers to employment such as mental health issues, substance abuse, and domestic violence, helping participants to understand and minimize the impact it has on their ability to succeed in the workplace. VESTED counselors then reinforce the skills taught in the DBT group in all of their interactions with the participants.

The continued commitment of VESTED to work with clients in developing a plan and a desire to succeed is truly "Framing a Future for Families in Colorado - TANF After 10 Years"

*The award was presented to our Vested Staff, Jane Hunt, Dena Lee, Melinda Loyst and Bob Medearis, at the recent Colorado Works Professional Development Academy Conference in Vail, Colorado at the evening banquet. Approximately 450 human service professionals were in attendance to recognize our staff.*