



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION
July 14, 2004

CONTACT: Jonah Weinberg (619) 515-6535

COUNTY AWARDED FOR EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE FOR DISABLED WORKERS *“You Can Work” Program Helps Disabled Keep Working Without Risking Benefits*

The County of San Diego has been awarded the “2004 Award of Excellence” by the [National Organization on Disability](#) and the [National Association of Counties](#) (NACo). The award recognizes the “You Can Work” employment initiative, which assists the disabled in San Diego County to work without placing their benefits at risk.

“It is an honor to have San Diego recognized out of all the counties in the nation,” said Dianne Jacob, Chair of the County Board of Supervisors. “This award demonstrates our county’s dedication to diversity and to helping people achieve self-sufficiency.”

Over the past year, the “You Can Work” program has resulted in a 30 percent increase in enrollment for Medi-Cal’s program for the working disabled, which provides guidelines for individuals with disabilities who want to continue working, so they can maintain their full-scope benefits.

“San Diego County has shown an outstanding dedication to training the staff of its organizations that serve its residents with disabilities,” said NACo Executive Director Larry Naake. “It is my sincere hope that other counties will follow the lead of San Diego and institute similar initiatives that promote increased employment opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities.”

“You Can Work” is a partnership between the County and disability service agencies in the area, who worked together to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities throughout the county. One-day workshops have been designed to educate professionals in the field about changes in federal and state law so they can better serve their clients with disabilities. To date, “You Can Work” has trained over 200 people from public and non-profit agencies.

The “2004 Award of Excellence” will be officially presented to the County of San Diego at NACo’s annual conference on July 18, which will take place in Phoenix, AZ.

###