



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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GOVERNOR BREDESEN LAUDS THE SUCCESS OF THE TENNESSEE REHABILITATION CENTER'S GRADUATES

SMYRNA , Tenn.— More than 70 young men and women with significant disabilities walked or rolled their wheelchairs across the stage this morning during a graduation ceremony at the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center. The students, whose disabilities include traumatic brain injury, mental retardation and even blindness, overcame tremendous barriers to get here today. On stage to offer congratulations on their hard work and dedication was Governor Phil Bredesen, the first Tennessee governor to attend a TRC graduation.

"It's an honor to share this milestone with our Tennessee Rehabilitation Center graduates," said Governor Bredesen. "The opportunities that await them are great, and with the job skills, life skills and confidence they have learned here at TRC, they now have the keys to success."

The 74 new graduates took advantage of the diverse programs offered at TRC, including Building Maintenance, Business Education Training, Food Service Training, Custodial Training and Warehouse Training. Students are referred to the TRC by Vocational Rehabilitation counselors in their home counties.

"The students and instructors at the TRC are an inspiration to us all," said DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge. "The 'never-give-up' attitude and enthusiasm that is displayed by each and every one of these students and teachers makes a difference in so many lives across every corner of the state."

The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center is a state-operated comprehensive rehabilitation facility. It is one of only eight such centers in the nation. Services are provided on campus, and the majority of clients live on-site while receiving services. The length of programs offered at TRC varies, depending upon the individual client's interest, abilities and needs. TRC is part of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

TRC serves more than 1,300 Tennesseans each year. Since opening its doors in 1977, TRC has served more than 30,000 individuals. For more information about TRC, the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Tennessee Department of Human Services, visit:

<http://state.tn.us/humanserv/rehab/trc.htm> .

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Governor Bredesen in TRC gymnasium in Smyrna.



Retired State Rep. John Hood, State Senator Bill Ketron, Gov. Bredesen, TRC instructor Kathryn Hinton, DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge..

