

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, July 14, 2023

CONTACT: [Mary Stadick Smith](#), South Dakota Department of Education, (605) 773-7228
[Nancy Van Der Weide](#), South Dakota Department of Education, (605) 773-2593

South Dakota earns JAG’s prestigious 6-of-6 National Network Award

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota and three local Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) programs were recognized for achieving the prestigious “6-of-6 Award” at the JAG National Training Seminar in Louisville, Ky., this week. The local programs were Andes Central High School, Lyman High School (Presho), and Wagner High School.

The JAG 6-of-6 National Network Award acknowledges the highest-achieving states, regions, and programs that exceed national performance metrics for graduation, employment rate, full-time employment, total full-time positive outcomes, connectivity rate, and continued education rate.

“We’re proud of the work we’re doing in JAG-South Dakota to help our students achieve higher than average high school graduation rates and move into postsecondary or the workforce,” said Secretary of Education Joseph Graves. “JAG is making a difference in our students’ lives.”

Also at the event, Lyman High School teacher Chad Johnson was one of only 96 educators across the nation recognized as an Outstanding JAG Specialist. In his second year as a JAG specialist, Johnson served 46 students, helping them learn about postsecondary educational opportunities, develop employment skills, and participate in community service projects.

JAG-South Dakota is part of the national JAG network, which helps at-risk students to graduate high school and be prepared to meaningfully enter postsecondary and the workforce.

In its 14 years in the state, JAG-South Dakota has served more than 2,500 middle and high school students. Over that time, the state-level graduation rate for JAG students has been nearly 100 percent.