

Denise M. Berry, Major (RET), MBA, MA, MSA, SPHR

President/CEO, SVRC Industries, Inc. and Westlund Guidance Clinic

Denise M. Berry is an accomplished leader with a distinguished career spanning over 25 years in strategic leadership, workforce development, and advocacy. As the President and CEO of SVRC Industries, Inc. and Westlund Guidance Clinic, she directs an organization dedicated to providing vocational rehabilitation, employment opportunities, mental health services, and entrepreneurial incubation to individuals with disabilities and other underserved populations. She leads a team of 135 professionals, overseeing comprehensive programs that drive meaningful employment, community engagement, and social impact.

Prior to her current role, Ms. Berry served as the Executive Director of Shelterhouse of Midland & Gladwin Counties and CEO of Family & Children's Services of Mid-Michigan, where she successfully expanded service reach, secured critical funding, and strengthened community partnerships. She has a strong record of advocating for policy changes, securing historic funding allocations, and leading organizations to national recognition for excellence.

A retired U.S. Army engineer, Ms. Berry's military service includes leadership roles in operational planning, logistics, and human resources. She later became the inaugural Director of Military Student Affairs at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU), where she developed a nationally recognized program for military-affiliated students. She also played a pivotal role at Emory Healthcare's Veterans Program at Emory University's School of Medicine, supporting veterans with seeking treatment for PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and military sexual trauma.

Ms. Berry holds advanced degrees from Columbia University, Webster University, and Central Michigan University. She is a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and holds a certificate in Applied Positive Psychology, demonstrating her expertise in leadership development and organizational strategy. Her professional excellence has been recognized with awards such as SVSU's Outstanding Performance Award (2015-16) and the Visionary Voice Award (2022) from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center.

As a dedicated advocate for disability rights, Ms. Berry is deeply committed to creating inclusive employment opportunities and breaking down barriers for individuals with disabilities. In her leadership at SVRC Industries, she works to ensure that individuals of all abilities have access to meaningful work, professional development, and community engagement. Her advocacy extends to policy work, public awareness initiatives, and mentorship, amplifying the voices of those with disabilities in the workforce.

Ms. Berry's passion for disability advocacy is also personal—she is a disabled veteran and service dog handler, relying on her highly trained service dog for assistance. Through her own experiences, she actively educates communities and workplaces about service dog accessibility, disability inclusion, and the importance of reasonable accommodations. She strives to foster understanding, acceptance, and equitable opportunities for individuals with disabilities, making her a strong voice in disability rights and workforce integration.

Beyond her professional career, Ms. Berry has been deeply involved in community service and advocacy. She has served on the boards of the American Legion Post #439, the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence, the SOGI Youth Advisory Council, and United Way of Midland County. She is also a passionate athlete and coach, having competed for the U.S. Women's National Ringette Team, earning a gold medal at the 2022 World Ringette Championships in Finland, and coaching multiple teams, including Men's Inline Hockey at the United States Military Academy at West Point and Team USA at the 2017 World Ringette Championships.

Ms. Berry's extensive leadership experience, deep commitment to workforce inclusion, and dedication to advancing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities make her an outstanding candidate

for the National Council of SourceAmerica Employers North Central Regional Representative position. She brings a proven track record of organizational excellence, policy advocacy, and community engagement to support the mission of SourceAmerica and its stakeholders.

Priority Statement

As a dedicated advocate for workforce inclusion, my priority as the North Central Regional Representative for the National Council of SourceAmerica Employers (NCSE) will be to champion employment opportunities, policy advocacy, and resources that empower individuals with disabilities. I am committed to advocating for SourceAmerica's network of nonprofit agencies for tools, support, and representation necessary to drive sustainable employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

1. Strengthening Workforce Development & Employment Opportunities

- Advocate for expanded job training, professional development, and career pathways that enable individuals with disabilities to achieve long-term success.
- Promote best practices in inclusive hiring, reasonable accommodations, and adaptive technologies to enhance workplace accessibility.

2. Advocating for Policy & Funding Support

- Work with policymakers to secure legislative support and regulatory improvements that directly benefit SourceAmerica-affiliated nonprofits and the individuals they serve.
- Support efforts to protect and enhance the AbilityOne Program and other critical workforce initiatives.

3. Enhancing Collaboration & Regional Support

- Build connections among North Central Region nonprofit agencies, fostering peer support, knowledge sharing, and collective advocacy efforts.
- Serve as a liaison between SourceAmerica leadership and regional employers, ensuring that the unique challenges and needs of the region are addressed.

4. Promoting Disability Advocacy & Inclusive Workplace Culture

- Leverage my experience as a service dog handler and disability advocate to promote education and awareness around accessibility, inclusion, and workplace equity.
- Champion initiatives that break down employment barriers and create a more inclusive workforce for individuals with disabilities.

5. Expanding Employer & Community Partnerships

- Engage with businesses, community organizations, and educational institutions to expand employment pipelines and create stronger, more sustainable job opportunities.
- Encourage corporate social responsibility initiatives that support workforce inclusion and disability hiring programs.

As the North Central Regional Representative, I will work to amplify the voices of our nonprofit partners and drive meaningful changes that strengthen employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. I would be honored to be considered for this role and look forward to serving, advocating, and driving progress for our region and the SourceAmerica network.