

August 2008 (Vol. 7, No. 8)

Did You Know...?

The Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA) is preparing to commemorate 10 years of serving as the collective voice of the Assistive Technology (AT) industry! In 2009, in celebration of this important anniversary, ATIA will offer even more AT education, products, and networking opportunities. In addition, the third annual ATIA Leadership Forum on Accessibility will take place in Orlando in January. For complete details on dates to save, visit the [ATIA Events page](#).

ODEP recently released [Recruiting Young People with Disabilities: A Hiring Strategy with Bottom Line Benefits](#). It provides you with practical information on why hiring young people with disabilities is smart for business and guidance on how to get started. It also lists several resources, including the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP), which produces a database comprised of profiles of college students and graduates with disabilities seeking internships or employment. If you are with a Federal agency, [visit the WRP website to enroll](#). You can [request a search](#) through EARN if you are with a private, non-profit organization or state or local government agency.

New Content in EARN Veterans Section on EARNWorks

EARN recently updated the Veterans section of EARNWorks. The section not only presents the business reasons for hiring disabled veterans, but also now provides management tips and techniques. In addition, the section offers a host of resources to assist you in recruiting and retaining our service members. [Visit the EARNWorks Veterans Section](#) for more information.

New Website Launched to Assist You in Employing Disabled Veterans with TBI and PTSD

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced a new online resource to help employers in their employment of veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), two increasingly common battlefield conditions. The new America's Heroes at Work website provides information about TBI and PTSD as well as tools and guidance on how to implement workplace accommodations and other services that benefit affected individuals. In addition, the website includes the toll-free phone number of the Job Accommodation Network, which employers can call to receive personal assistance relating to job accommodations for veterans with disabilities.

"This America's Heroes at Work initiative focuses on the employment challenges of returning service members who are living with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder," said Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. "One of the best ways we can help these courageous men and women and honor their sacrifice is to help them return to full, productive lives through work. Employment can also play a role in their recovery."

Chao unveiled the initiative at the National Press Club, along with a number of federal and private partners including the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Society for Human Resource Management.

Although their injuries may not be visible, people with TBI or PTSD may face some difficulties--especially with respect to employment. In many cases, a few workplace supports can help resolve these issues. Through America's Heroes at Work, employers can leverage a variety of promising practices such as job coaching and mentoring programs to create a positive, successful workplace experience for disabled veterans, and non-veteran employees such as first responders, who have experienced traumatic events.

America's Heroes at Work is managed jointly by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), in collaboration with other federal agencies engaged in TBI and PTSD programs, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, and the Social Security Administration.

[Visit the America's Heroes at Work website](#) or [view this video](#) for more information.

Resources on OFCCP's New Directive Now Available on EARNWorks

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) issued a Directive outlining federal contractors' obligation to ensure equal employment opportunity for individuals with disabilities and disabled veterans when they use an online application system. This obligation includes providing necessary reasonable accommodation when requested by an individual or veteran with a disability, unless doing so would cause an undue hardship. The Directive was accompanied by valuable sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) directed at both employers and employees. To assist companies in evaluating their online application systems, EARN has loaded the Directive, FAQs, and technical assistance materials regarding online accessibility and universal design on EARNWorks. [Visit the site](#) for more information.

Website on ODEP's First Disability Employment Policy Summit Launched

On June 3 and 4, 2008, hundreds of leaders from business, government, and non-profit organizations convened in Washington, D.C., to discuss how today's global marketplace has the power to open doors to employment for people with disabilities. One message resonated loud and clear—hiring people with disabilities is good for business.

Employees with disabilities have proven they have a positive impact on businesses' bottom line. They adapt to different situations and circumstances. They add to the range of viewpoints businesses need to succeed, offering fresh ideas on how to solve problems, accomplish tasks, and implement strategies. To learn more about the disability dividend, read [Diverse Perspectives: People with Disabilities Fulfilling Your Business Goals](#), one of several publications available from ODEP's website, or visit the [Disability Employment Policy Summit website](#).

Proving Individuals with Talent Can Help

Under the leadership of ODEP Assistant Secretary Neil Romano, Jim Abbott, a former major league pitcher and a person with a physical disability, will be assisting in educating the public on the benefits of employing people with disabilities. Abbott will partner with ODEP on many initiatives, including the recently launched Proving Individuals with Talent Can Help (PITCH) campaign.

Jim Abbott is a former Major League Baseball pitcher who played for the New York Yankees, California Angels, Chicago White Sox and the Milwaukee Brewers from 1989 to 1998. Abbott, who played baseball despite having been born without a right hand, tossed a memorable no-hitter in 1993 as a member of the New York Yankees.

[Visit the PITCH website](#) for more information.

GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

IF YOU HAVE AN EARN SUCCESS STORY, TELL US ABOUT IT. WE WOULD LIKE TO FEATURE YOUR STORY IN THIS NEWSLETTER AND ON OUR WEB SITE.

E-MAIL YOUR STORY TO:
EARN@EARNWORKS.COM

EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

- [DisabilityInfo.gov](#)
- [Office of Disability Employment Policy](#)
- [Ticket to Work](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [National Organization on Disability](#)

INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

The theme for this October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is:

"America's People...
America's Talent...
America's Strength!"

You can request copies of the NDEAM poster or download it by [visiting ODEP's website](#).

EARN SUPPORT

EARN is funded by the [U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy](#).

EARN is managed and operated by [CESSI, Division of Axiom](#).

EARN offers employers free consultation and recruiting services for successful workplace integration of people with disabilities. To sign up with EARN and to learn more about EARN services, go to www.earnworks.com or call us toll-free at:

1-866-EARN-NOW (1-866-327-6669, V/TTY)